



KEYNOTES

The newsletter of the Romance Writers of America New York City Chapter #6

FEBRUARY 2016

NEXT CHAPTER MEETING: FEBRUARY 6

TRS, 40 Exchange Place, 3rd Floor, 12:00-4:00pm

PRESENTATION: WHAT TO DO AFTER THE QUERY

Speaker: Esi Sogah, Senior Editor, Kensington Publishing

Esi Sogah joined Kensington Publishing in January 2013 as a Senior Editor, working with such authors as Sally MacKenzie, Jennifer Dawson, Christine d'Abo, and Dana Bate. She is looking to acquire mainly romance, mystery, and commercial fiction. Prior to Kensington, Esi worked at William Morrow & Avon, helping to launch the Avon Impulse digital-first imprint. When not reading or editing, you can find her on Twitter at @esisogah, usually dissecting a Broadway show.

Social media:

Twitter: twitter.com/esisogah

[Twitter.com/Kensingtonbooks](https://twitter.com/Kensingtonbooks)

Facebook: facebook.com/kensingtonpublishing

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HAPPINESS IS...



starting to write
a new story

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[instagram.com/the.official.happiness.is](https://Instagram.com/the.official.happiness.is)
facebook.com/isthehappyface



WRITING MARATHON **from 3:00-4:00**

Stay with us!

Bring your laptop, smartphone or notepad and let's write the afternoon away. You can work on your novel or write a 100-word Paper Doll Flash Fiction piece; see page 13.



REMINDER!

DUES ARE DUE BY MARCH 5. RENEW TODAY. FORM ON P27.

celebrate
BLACK
history MONTH

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THANK YOU!

To Our Contributing Writers
*Kim Black, Elizabeth Cole, Maria Cox,
 Anna DePalo, Lis Eng, Maria Ferrer,
 Lise Horton, Isabo Kelly, LaQuette,
 Briana MacPerry, Kate McMurray,
 Alice Orr, Ursula Renée & A.C. Rose*

2016 CHAPTER CALENDAR

Jan 9	Feb 6	Mar 5	Apr 2	May 7	Jun 4
Jul 9	Aug 6	Sep 10	Oct 1	Nov 5	Dec 3

KEYNOTES DEADLINE

Send articles to keynoteseditor@gmail.com
 by the 15th of the month. All articles
 must be typed and up to 500 words.

RWA/NYC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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 Maria Cox
 Website: Ursula Renée

ATTENTION: The Board welcomes all
 comments/suggestions/etc. Please send emails
 to info@rwanyc.com.

MEETING INFO: RWA/NYC meets the first
 Saturday of each month. Meetings are held at
 TRS, 40 Exchange Place, NYC. 12 noon.
 Membership is at the discretion of the Board.
 Annual dues are \$40. Make all checks payable
 to RWA/NYC. There will be a \$20 fee on
 returned checks.

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 Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163
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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: INSPIRATION IS EVERYWHERE
BY PRESIDENT KATE MCMURRAY



Where do you get your story ideas?

It's one of those questions that makes all writers roll their eyes, because, geez, everyone asks that. All of us probably have different answers to the question, too. We draw from our own lives or pop culture or we just have a bunch of voices rattling around in our heads who talk to us sometimes (but we totally aren't crazy).

Sometimes those ideas dry up, though.

So where does one get inspiration?

Look around you.

I was looking for something to read one night over the holidays. I'd decided that I had to start making a serious dent in the Mount To-Be-Read, which in my case is a literal stack of paperbacks, most of which I've picked up at conferences the last couple of years. I found a book in the stack written (and autographed!) by one of my favorite romance writers and couldn't believe I hadn't read it yet, so that was a good start. (The book was *ANY DUCHESS WILL DO* by Tessa Dare.) There's a scene in the book that stuck with me for a few days after I put it down; I don't want to spoil it, but suffice it to say, it's a deeply emotionally resonant scene in which the hero finally confronts something traumatic he hasn't let himself process and deal with. I put the book down and then went back later and reread that scene. It got to me as a reader, and I wanted to work out how, as a writer, I could evoke that same emotion in my reader. I do that sometimes. I'll pull apart a really good book and try to work out what made it so good. What is the writer doing that gets me to have such a reaction?

I've been reading a lot over the last couple of weeks, more than I usually do. I was a big reader as a kid, and I still buy books like they're going out of style, but my schedule is unrelenting at times, and I'll go for weeks without really reading much at all. But a really good book will get my brain churning. "I want



to do that!" I'll think. I read a lot of nonfiction, too, mostly biographies and history, and those will give me ideas, too. I've run into obscure historical figures on whom I'd like to base characters, or settings and historical periods I'd like to explore more by writing fiction.

I spent some downtime in early January watching movies that were released over the last year or so but that I never got around to seeing. For me, inspiration from movies often comes in the form of wanting to evoke a particular feeling more than the stories themselves. But movies can be a good thing to analyze—they often have to say more with less, convincing you that two people have fallen in love or conquered their demons in less than two hours.

In *THE ARTIST'S WAY*, Julia Cameron recommends going on “artist’s dates,” days where you refill the creative well, so to speak. Reading or going to a movie can do this, but so can going to a museum, taking a trip out of town, or even just walking around the neighborhood. Sometimes we just get tired and tapped out and have to find ways to get our creativity back.

There are dozens of ways to do this: read books, see movies, listen to music. Maybe a lyric in a song will give you an idea. Maybe a movie will give you a feeling. Maybe seeing a piece of art will jog something. Maybe just taking a journal to the park and freewriting until you think of something clever is the way to get your mojo back. Carry a notebook around with you so that you can jot all your ideas down as they occur to you—no matter how silly. Maybe that’s just the thing when you come back to it later.

I encourage you to find ways to refill the creative well, to make your writing even better than it already is!♥

Kate McMurray is an award-winning author of gay romance and an unabashed romance fan. When she’s not writing, she works as a nonfiction editor, dabbles in various crafts, and is maybe a tiny bit obsessed with baseball. She has served as President of Rainbow Romance Writers, the LGBT romance chapter of Romance Writers of America; and as Vice President of RWA/NYC. She lives in Brooklyn, NY. Visit her at www.katemcmurray.com.

CHAPTER MINUTES: JANUARY 2016

Board Members Present:

Kate McMurray – President
Mimi Pizzario-Lodgson – Vice President
Tamara Lynch – Treasurer
Ursula Renée – Past President



Board Members Absent:

Racheline Maltese – Vice President
Stacey Agdern - Secretary

The meeting was called to order by President Kate McMurray at 12:12 pm. The November 2015 Chapter Minutes were accepted by Mimi Pizzario-Lodgson and second by Ursula Renée.

Tamara Lynch reported that RWA/NYC currently has \$6,682 in the bank. The chapter suffered a loss in 2015 due to a few expenditures, including the chapter pins and the chapter banner.

Kate McMurray stated that the chapter has approximately 90 members. She also announced that the board will start work on the Golden Apple Awards and the contest.

Maria Ferrer reported that the Holiday blog tour went well and we continue to sponsor the Friday Book Cover. She will announce the upcoming blog tours soon.

The theme for the February 2016 issue of Keynotes is Romantic Research. The submission deadline will be January 15, 2016.

Mimi Pizzario-Lodgson announced that the next critique meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 13, 2016 at 6:00 pm at the Atrium at the Citicorp Building.

Maria Cox, the PRO Liaison, reminded members that becoming PRO proves a member is actively pursuing a writing career and fulfills the requirement for General Membership. Those who are already PRO are welcome to join the PRO loop.

Michael Molloy has reached out to the organizers of the Brooklyn Book Festival. The applications will be sent out in February. He has suggested a panel for the romance genre and the organizers will take it into consideration.

Michael and Maria Cox will start planning for the Romance Festival. Jean Joachim has volunteered to provide postcards for the event.

Ursula Renée reminded members to contact her if they needed to be added to the “Meet Our Members” page on the RWA/NYC website.

Kate McMurrery opened the time capsule and passed out member’s 2015 goals. She also collected her 2016 goals and sealed them in the time capsule for next January.

The business meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm.♥



PRO COMMUNITY BY MARIA COX

Hello fellow RWA/NYC chapter mates! Maria Cox, your PRO Liaison here.

If you are a PRO member of RWA you can now join our Yahoo! Group.

Please use this link and I will approve your request:

<https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/rwanycpro/info>

About PRO: The purpose of the PRO Community of Practice is to establish within RWA a network of communication and support to effectively promote and protect the interests of romance writers in the areas between manuscript completion and PAN eligibility.

To help members reach the next level, PRO focuses on the business side of writing rather than craft.

This program is available to any active General or Honorary member who: (1) is not PAN-eligible and (2) has one complete original work of romance fiction of at least 20,000 words, or multiple complete original works of romance fiction which combine for a total of at least 20,000 words. (Revised guidelines, April 2015)

Questions: Please send me an email at maria@mywritingden.net.♥

MEMBER NEWS



On January 19, chapter president **Kate McMurray** and members **Ursula Renee, Jean Joachim,** and **LaQuette** had a panel discussion sponsored by the Queens Library at Mandicatus Rustica in Long Island City. The crowd was a mix of romance fans and library patrons new to romance. We had a lively discussion about everything from sub-genres to heat levels to what we read when we're not reading romance. We also answered a number of questions from the crowd, hopefully inspiring those who had never read a romance to pick one up.

Kim Black is out in a new anthology, **RECKLESS: A BAD BOYZ ANTHOLOGY**, with fellow chapter member Xyla Turner. All proceeds from this super sexy anthology will be donated to the Hidradenitis Suppurativa Trust. Kim's second book in her The Cover Series, **COVER UP**, is also available now.

Alyssa Cole is re-releasing her American Revolution story. She's made it longer and more romantic; and the new cover is gorgeous; see next page.

Maria Cox has released her story, **FORBIDDEN**, with a stunning cover; see next page.

Anna DePalo's new book, **SECOND CHANCE WITH THE CEO**, will be out in September 2016.

Alice Orr has a great article on "How Marketable is Your Manuscript," on her blog at www.aliceorrbooks.com. Meanwhile, see her "Ask Alice" column in Keynotes.

Congratulations to Catherine Stine! Her new YA contemporary romance, **HEART IN A BOX**, published by Inkspell Teen has been on the Amazon Top 100 in Teen for six weeks!

Xyla Turner has a new erotic series out, **Legion of Guardians**, all about bikers. Book 1, **JUST RIDE**, is out now. Plus, she has a short story in the **RECKLESS** anthology with Kim Black, all about bad boys.

Lisa Ann Verge has a new Romantic Journeys Collection available now; see cover on next page.

FREE PROMOTION!

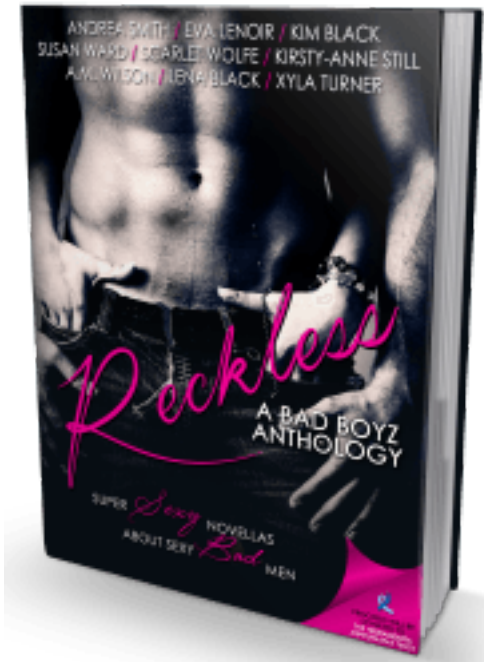


Keynotes is a FREE Promotion Opportunity. We welcome all subjects.

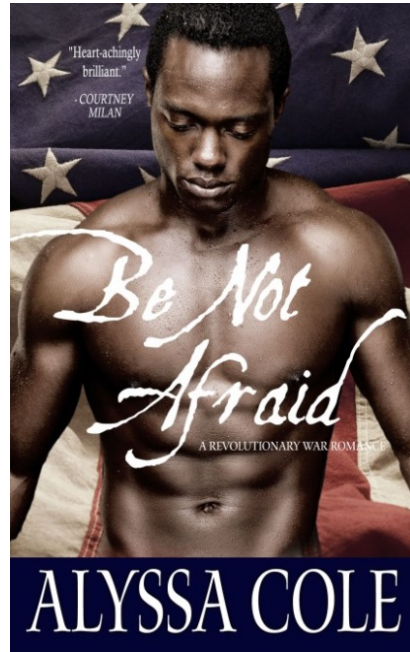
Have a new book out? Entered/won a contest? Interesting topic, research, tips to share? An event, book, conference you'd like to review? Send in your articles, news, book covers, reviews, etc., to keynoteseditor@gmail.com. Articles will also be published on the Chapter Blog for **DOUBLE** the promotion!

Deadline: the 15th of every month. Take advantage of us!♥

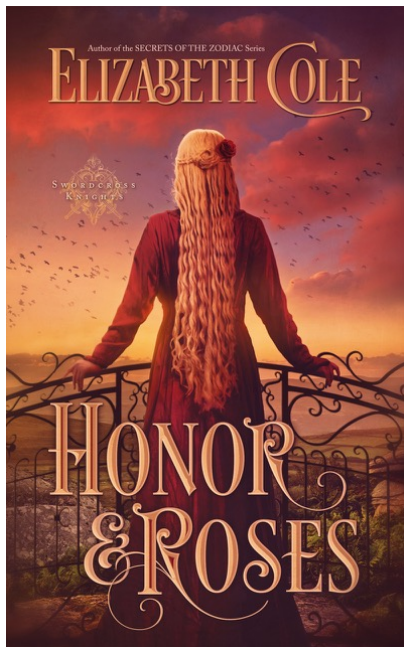
MEMBERS ON THE SHELF



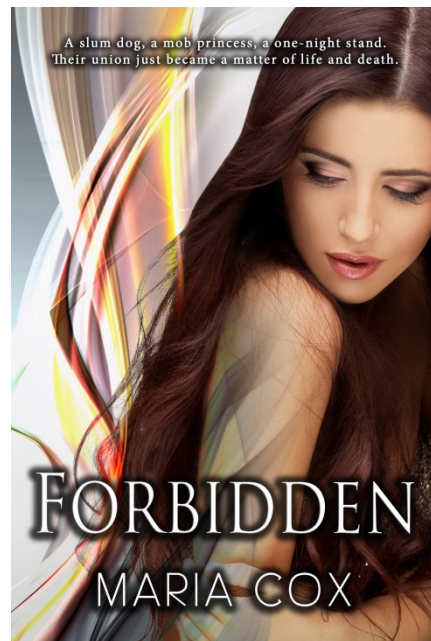
RECKLESS
A Bad Boyz Anthology
by Kim Black



BE NOT AFRAID
by Alyssa Cole



HONOR & ROSES
by Elizabeth Cole



FORBIDDEN
by Maria Cox

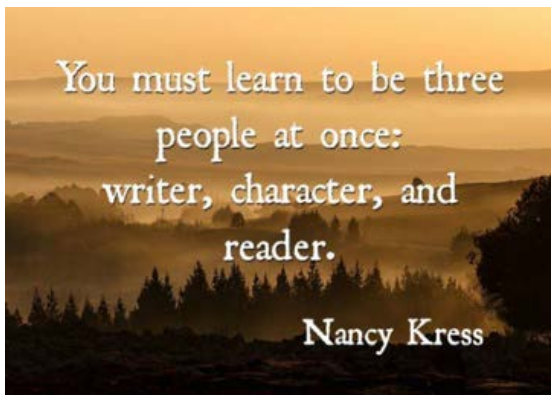
MEMBERS ON THE SHELF -- CONTINUED



HEART IN A BOX
by Catherine Stine
Inkspell Teen



JUST RIDE
Legion of Guardians
by Xyla Turner



ROMANTIC JOURNEYS COLLECTION
by Lisa Ann Verge



Our theme this month is

RESEARCH

Here's what our members have to say.

DIG DEEP – EXPLORING HUMANITY TO CRAFT ELOQUENT FICTION BY LISE HORTON

When writers talk about research, we're generally referring to the specifics we delve into in order to make our manuscript correct: historical detail for our Regency, aspects of a particular profession we want accurate, or elements of world-building to ensure that our "world" – be it real or paranormal – is recognizable to our readers, sociologically speaking.

But there is an entirely different avenue to explore when researching, as a writer; one that is important across the board, for every story we write.

That is research into the human condition. The science and psychology of mankind, like society and sex, which can help you establish powerful characters, with identifiable goals, motivations and conflicts; and history and sociology exploring social structures, communities, how taboos work, etc.

This type of research is ongoing. There's always something new or more to learn than can add another kernel of nuance and detail to your storytelling to make it as immediate as possible for your readers. Ensure that your world and characters are such readers can empathize and identify with your heroes and heroines. To guarantee that they read as "real": flesh and blood, living, breathing, yearning "humans" and to make sure your world is driven by familiar rules and logic.

For example, how much time do you devote to the study of human physiology, neurobiology, psychology and sociology when you craft your stories? We research sex and relationships, certainly, to ensure honest portrayals of what we write: love. But there are more discoveries that can add richness, and astute detail and, at the same time, be created to be read with the greatest impact.

Then there is the actual ACT of reading. How much thought do you give to the experience of a reader's reading of your novel when writing? Not just the craft questions like plot, pacing, grammar and myriad other details: Do you think of *how* readers read? How the physical act of viewing words becomes recognition and how they engage, and are translated in, a reader's mind?

In past workshops I've discussed the fact that the average reader "hears" the words she is reading, and how that knowledge can help author craft successful passages by choosing and arranging words to maximum effect. In another workshop on the five senses, I pointed out the difference in the way scent is interpreted by our brains from touch, sound and sight; scent is the one sense that links the sensory experience with memory and feelings, making scent an exceptionally powerful sensory detail to use.



Two articles in The New York Times, “Your Brain On Fiction” by Anne Murphy Paul (*Sunday Review sec.*, 3/18/12) and “The Brain On Love” by Diane Ackerman (*Sunday Review sec.*, 3/25/12) offer amazing theory and research.

In Paul’s article, for example, the choice of descriptive words being read alters the neurological response in a reader. Words that invoke touch sensations, “rouse the sensory cortex”. “The singer had a velvet voice” evokes a more potent response than does “the singer had a pleasing voice”. Words like lavender and cinnamon and other scent descriptors elicit a response not just from the expected areas where language is processed, but other areas devoted to scent interpretation. And a final observation indicates that the brain “does not make much of a distinction between reading about an experience and encountering it in real life”.

In addition to the physical, there are the social implications. One psychologist uncovered that “there was substantial overlap in the brain networks used to understand stories and the networks used to navigate interactions with other individuals”, and as readers we “identify with characters’ longings and frustrations, guess at their hidden motives and track their encounters with friends and enemies, neighbors and lovers”.

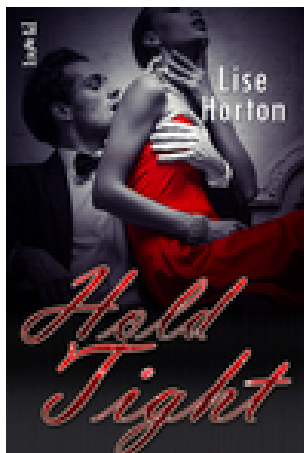
Beyond the understanding of a reader’s physical perception, there is also the psychology and sociology of love, sex, romance and human relationships to explore.

Articles and books on these subjects can prove wonderfully enlightening for a writer who seeks to imbue her human characters with as much complex subtlety as possible, while engaging her readers on every level, from the conscious to the subconscious.

In addition to the straightforward books and articles on psychology, personality, sociology, sexuality, here are a few titles to add to your library that are specifically geared to authors:

Angela Ackerman’s *THE NEGATIVE TRAIT THESAURUS*, *THE POSITIVE TRAIT THESAURUS*, AND *THE EMOTION THESAURUS* (for writers);

WRITER’S GUIDE TO CHARACTER TRAITS by Dr. Linda Edelstein



BULLIES, BASTARDS AND BITCHES: HOW TO WRITE THE BAD GUYS OF FICTION by Jessica Morrell♥

[Note: This article contains excerpts of a Keynotes article from April 2012, expanded and revised.]

Lise Horton is a published author of erotica and erotic romance, including BDSM/kink stories. You can visit her at www.lisehorton.com. Her current BDSM erotic romance, *Hold Tight*, has been nominated for a 2016 Golden Flogger Award in the Advanced BDSM Category.



GETTING YOUR FACTS STRAIGHT: IMPORTANCE OF RESEARCH BY URSULA RENÉE

Michael opened the folder containing all the information Desiree had gathered on Angelo. On top were notes she made, summarizing his movements the previous Wednesday afternoon – starting with him swiping his Metrocard at the 86th Street Station, the delay on the G line, and his exit at the East Broadway Station 45 minutes later. Underneath documents that supported Angelo’s statement.

He was more than impressed. Desiree had been thorough in her research and after reviewing the information, there would be no doubt in anyone’s mind regarding his nephew’s innocence.

Unfortunately, unless the novel took place in an alternate universe, Desiree’s notes would have an NYPD detective questioning Angelo’s innocence. Anyone familiar with the New York City subway system knows that the G train does not travel into Manhattan and delays on that line would not normally affect someone traveling from the Upper East Side down to the Lower East Side.

Though romance authors write fiction, they should strive to create believable universes. An error can pull a reader out of the story, and in some cases, make her abandon the book. These errors can include, but are not limited to, incorrect placement of landmarks, usage of language, and including fashion and tools that were not invented during the time period in which the story takes place.

Research is the key to creating a believable universe that holds a reader’s attention. How much research is needed depends on the subgenre, how much detail the author plans to include and the author’s level of expertise. When writing a romantic thriller, an officer of the law, or even a lawyer, would have a better understanding of arrest procedures than a person whose only experience with police is what she sees on television dramas.

How authors gather information varies. It is no longer necessary to spend hours in a library, pouring over books to verify facts. The Internet has websites devoted to topics of interests. Authors can also interview experts in the field, visit museums or take classes to get hands-on experience with a skill that a character may have. And, if it is in the author’s budget, she could travel to the location in which the story is set.



In upcoming articles, Getting Your Facts Straight will review resources authors can use or places of interests that will help create believable universes.♥

Ursula Renée writes historical romances set between World War I and 1960’s. When she is not writing, she enjoys drawing, photography and stone carving. Visit her at www.ursularenee.com.



HIT ME WITH YOUR BEST RESEARCH SHOT BY ANNA DEPALO

Research is often not very fun, but every writer has to do it., including me. I'll spare you the obvious (do a Google search!), and with the additional caveat that I write contemporary romance, here are my top research tips:

A little goes a long way. Readers want the flavor of authenticity and believability without being lectured to. Research should be sprinkled into your story so it's not obvious. Like seasoning on a fine dish, it should not overwhelm everything else. So don't feel as if you have to know everything.

It doesn't have to be hard. If you need to include a mass retailer in your current book, and you happen to be thinking about this while passing J. Crew at the mall, why not use J. Crew? More than one successful writer has used this approach. When I first heard about it, I thought, of course! Within reason, this is a fantastic plan. (I mean, you wouldn't want to be in Palm Springs thinking about a book set in New York and have your landscape be cacti—unless we're talking about a fantasy book.)

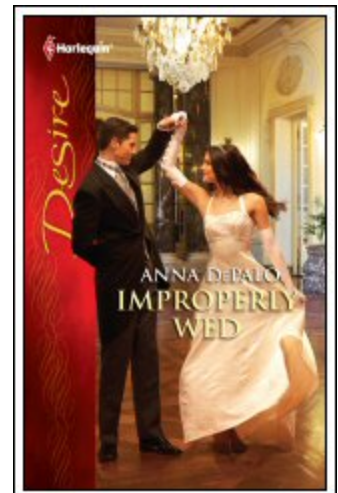
Write what those around you know. At a conference a few years ago, Harlan Coben mentioned that he was married to a pediatrician, and voilà, one appeared in his books.

Magazines. I write contemporaries, so keeping abreast of current popular culture is important. I read *People* and *Vanity Fair*. When I was writing a series about present-day British aristocrats, I read *Tatler*.

Biographies/Memoirs. These books are great for little gems of information. I'm currently writing a book about a Hollywood actress. Lucky for me, Mindy Kaling's latest book, *WHY NOT ME?*, came out. Do actors fake it? Well, according to well-placed source Dr. Mindy Lahiri, aka Kelly Kapoor, aka Mindy Kaling, the unwritten rule in kissing scenes is "no tongue."

Social media. Follow people who might give you insight into a profession or field. For example, the last issue of *People* that I read had a page devoted to celebrity makeup artists and listed their Twitter handles. Similarly, YouTube is a treasure for how-to videos.♥

Anna DePalo is the USA Today best-selling author of a dozen romance novels. Her next book, SECOND CHANCE WITH THE CEO, the first in the Serengetti family series, will be released in September 2016 by Harlequin. You can find Anna online at www.annadepalo.com, www.facebook.com/anna.depaloauthor, www.facebook.com/AnnaDePaloBooks and twitter.com/Anna_DePalo



PAPER DOLLS: THE LOVERS
BY MARIA FERRER



Years ago, Kathryn Hayes – one of this Chapter’s Founding Mothers and first secretary – and I did a workshop called, Paper Dolls. We gave out photographs we cut out from magazines and asked members to come up with a character profile and a story outline. I’ve also seen on the social networks that some authors are doing Flash Fiction Friday, where they write a short scene which they post on their blogs and websites, and include links to other authors doing same.

Hence, I’ve decided to revive the **Paper Dolls with a Flash Fiction Twist** – so this will be a monthly writing exercise and a promotional opportunity.

Take a look at this photograph, which I got from the free digital library at the NY Public Library using the keyword lovers. What do you see? Who do you see? What are they saying? Feeling? Is this their first night together or their last? Is she being coy? Is he being forceful? Are these coworkers? People who met on the train? Maybe she’s the town wild child. Maybe he is the boy next door.

A picture may be worth a 1000 words, but for our Paper Dolls Flash Fiction, we only need a 100.

Write a *100-word* mini scene (about 6 sentences) using this photo and email it--along with your bio--to **keynoteseditor@gmail.com** by February 15. We will print your Paper Dolls Flash Fiction in the Keynotes and on the Chapter Blog. And you can also post on your blog/website for extra exposure.

Let’s play Dolls!♥

Maria Ferrer loved playing with paper dolls as a child and still does. She rips photographs of people and places regularly from magazines, and now with the internet she also copies photos she finds on Facebook and Twitter. As her collection grows so do the ideas in her notebook; sometimes it’s a scene; sometimes a character profile. Paper Dolls are great inspiration. Visit her at www.marializaferrer.blogspot.com, and visit her alter ego, Del Carmen, at www.mydelcarmen.com.

ASK ALICE: HOW SHOULD I BE KIND TO MYSELF AS A WRITER?**BY ALICE ORR**

Answer: You can be kind to yourself as a writer by changing your attitude about the hard times in your career.

You can and will make it through whatever hard times you may have in your writing career. You can make it because you have the skills and resources you need to do that. You will make it because that's your only choice if your passion is to write and bring your writing to the world.

Your first step is to fight back fear. You must struggle against fear as relentlessly as the heroines of your stories struggle against the obstacles they confront in their journey to survive and go on to thrive in the end. Will yourself through the scary places. Every morning say to yourself – “I will not be afraid today.” “I refuse to let anxiety infest my spirit today.”

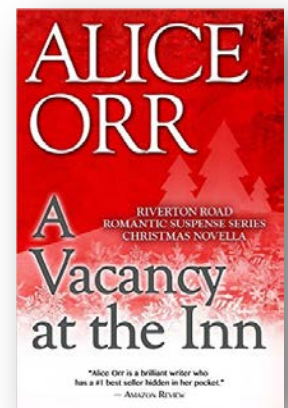
Fight back fear by changing your thinking about now and the future – about today and tomorrow – especially in terms of your goals for yourself. Stop thinking about your goal as far away. Stop thinking of your progress as painfully slow. That kind of thinking ends in discouragement and drains your hope. You lose what Ralph Waldo Emerson called The Power of Enthusiasm. Never let go of your Powerful Enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is the energy you need to fuel you through testing times.

Get your psyche on your side. See your goal as right here with you today. See yourself as progressing toward that goal today. If you see any progress at all – even a small step – then this is a successful day. A day when you've made progress toward your goal. Do this every day. One day at a time. Set a goal for each day. Know what you want to accomplish that day. Make sure it's a realistic goal. Don't defeat yourself before you start by filling your plate impossibly full.

If you want your psyche on your side make sure your To Do List is on your side. Beware the tyranny of the To Do List. It's the monster you create for yourself all by yourself. Set a reasonable realistic self-sensitive goal. Pursue that goal that day deliberately – with intention without anxiety or rushing. Haste really does make waste. It wastes your ability to experience your achievements and savor them as they happen.

Do each day intentionally and well. Think of each day as a jewel on the thread of your career. Place it artfully and never underestimate its worth. Most important – never forget to admire its beauty.♥

A VACANCY AT THE INN is the first Christmas Novella of Alice Orr's Riverton Road Romantic Suspense Series featuring the Kalli family – and now the Miller family too – in stories of Romance and Danger. Visit Alice at www.aliceorrbooks.com.



GOING THE INDIE ROUTE: FINDING YOUR EDITOR**BY ELIZABETH COLE**



No matter how you publish, you should make your book the very best it can be. If you work with a traditional publisher, you'll be assigned to one of the editors on staff. Easy peasy. What if you're going indie? There are several ways to go about finding an editor.

You can Google "freelance editor." I don't recommend that route, just because it's like buying a lottery ticket. Could be great. Probably not, though.

You can ask other writers who they use, which is a better option! RWA and other writers' groups have discussion groups on this topic. In addition, ask indie authors whose books you admire who they use. You'll know when you hit on a likely prospect, because authors happy with their editors won't shut up about how great they are.

Or, you can tap into a professional network—it doesn't have to be a fiction writers network! I happen to know plenty of people who work on publishing games and tie-in material (including novels). So most editors I've worked with started out editing in the RPG world, for both indie games and "big" game companies. One benefit: everyone knew everyone else's reputation—I had a good sense going in which editors were reliable. Depending on the type of writing you do, one editorial style might be better for you, but remember that lots of editors cross over and work in multiple fields.

So, once you do that research, you should have a few names. What's next?

Professional editors know that you need to shop around. A quality editor will be willing to do a sample pass on a small piece of writing—usually a few pages—at no charge or a very small fee. This is good for them because they can see the quality of your writing, and it's good for you because you'll see what sort of things the editor reads for. Study these samples carefully. The feedback should be critical, yet honest, and above all helpful.

And keep in mind: send the same (or a very similar) sample to all your potential editors. Not only is this the most scientific way to evaluate their work, it's fairest to the editors.

A few years ago, I was a newbie, and I auditioned editors. Here's how it went down:

- Editor A gave me a fantastic bird's eye view of the sample's arc and how to improve it, but had virtually zero comments on things like word choice, characterization, or plot consistency issues. She also used phrases like *falling action*, which I barely remembered from college English. So I knew that she was not a good fit for me. She remains a smart, careful reader who clearly knows her stuff, but our working styles were too different. Red flag.
- Editor B would have been an amazing proofreader. Every typo was caught—even one I must have overlooked 20 times. Yet he didn't seem to care very much about the grander plan. He



didn't ask questions about what I was going for in terms of mood or tone, and he didn't appear too interested in my writing in general. That's a red flag.

- Editor C returned the sample to me with a "this looks OK." Red flag.

I knew that it wouldn't be easy to find someone who I could work with, but this was harder than I thought.

Going to my circle of gamer contacts, I got the name of another editor. She returned my sample with amazing feedback and notes. She was interested in my future writing as well as the current project, asked smart questions about my new publishing company, and understood that this would (ideally) be a long-term gig.

So I hired her. I was lucky. She was a freelance RPG editor just transitioning into editing fiction as well. I was one of her first fiction clients. And that's another lesson. Experience is great, but skills are skills. If you find a great editor, don't worry if they don't necessarily have the credentials you might expect.

Now, some crass money talk.

Professional means paid. The rates that different editors charge will vary a lot. It's based on their location, their experience, and their workload. In general, expect to pay more for more complex editing. A proofreader may cost as little as 1 cent/word. A developmental editor may start at 3 or 5 cents/word or go much higher, depending on who they are and what the project is.

The good news is that many editors are flexible. They may negotiate a flat fee that works for both of you, many will let you pay in installments, and some may even work for a percentage of the sales. No matter what, remember that you get what you pay for.

Now, I leave you with these thoughts:

- Be patient in your search and don't settle for a mediocre job.
- An editor can be great while not being a great fit for you.
- Editors are professionals. Be prepared to pay professional rates.

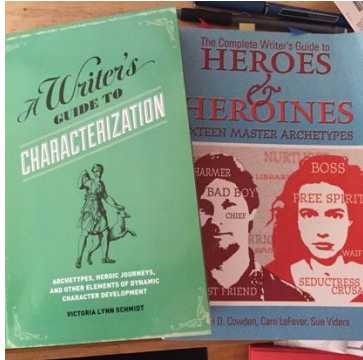


An editor is neither a slave nor a genie. They're part of your team, ready to make your work the best it can be!♥

*Elizabeth Cole is a romance author with a penchant for history, which is why she lives in an old house in an old city. She can be found hanging around libraries and archives, or curled in a corner reading, cat on lap. She believes in love at first sight. Then again, she also believes that mac 'n' cheese is a healthy breakfast, so don't trust her judgment on everything. Find about her new medieval romance, *Honor & Roses*, and more at elizabethcole.co.*

FOUR FUNCTIONS OF PERSONALITY: CHARACTER OUTLINES MADE EASY

BRIANA MACPERRY



How many times have you heard someone say, “I hate my job, but it pays the bills?” You can research as much as you want about the character’s job, or what he does, but those are merely byproducts of the character’s external trappings, often revealing little of who the character actually is. How a character *feels* about what he does, reflects the nature of his relationship *to himself*; his internal conflicts. That is the kind of conflict that inspires “heart,” and heart is what hooks an audience.

When researching how I want to approach a character’s inner conflicts, there are two books I immediately consult. The first is *A COMPLETE WRITERS GUIDE TO HEROES AND HEROINES, 16 MASTER ARCHETYPES*, by Tami D. Cowden, Caro LeFever, and Sue Vidars. Altogether, they review 16 male and female archetypes and their interactions along three dimensions: how they mesh, how they clash, and how they change. Unfortunately, this book is a print on demand, but usually available at the annual national conference bookstore.

Secondly, I recently discovered *A WRITER’S GUIDE TO CHARACTERIZATION* by Victoria Lynn Schmidt. This book is very similar to the former (in that it outlines common archetypes and their interactions) but it includes a questionnaire pertaining to Carl Jung’s four functions of personality assessment, and has the added bonus of comparing character archetypes to animal totems. This just tickles my mystic, paranormal inklings like nothing else! And you can buy it anywhere.

To give you a taste: Carl Jung believed all individuals fall somewhere along the spectrum of introversion versus extroversion. Within that, lie four functions: sensing, intuiting, thinking, and feeling. Each of these describes an individual’s way of “dealing” with the world.



Sensing: Jung called this one of the irrational functions, because it involves perceiving rather than judging information. Tangible immediate experience is valued over discussing or analyzing experience. This is kind of character well take what he sees and hears at face value. This character will think a person who cannot look him in the eye is lying.

Thinking: Jung called this a rational function because it involves decision-making and judging rather than simple intake of information. This character relies on objective truth and impersonal analysis. Think Spock from Star Trek. This kind of character will think someone is lying if they got the facts wrong or are not making logical sense.

Intuiting: Jung felt this was an irrational function because it involves a kind perception similar to sensing, but comes from the complex integration of large amounts of information, rather than simply seeing or hearing. It’s all about possibilities and asking “what could happen?” This means a character

will make decisions based on gut instinct rather than logic. His ideas and creative solutions will typically go against the norm. He will know if someone is lying because he “just knows it.”

Feeling: Jung calls this a rational function, but not in the usual sense of the word. It is all about what value something has over logical examination of it; recognizing when the whole is more than the sum of its parts. Feeling, like thinking, is a matter of evaluating information. A character who relies on feeling will take into consideration his own emotional response. He will know if someone is lying because he will *feel* the person’s nervousness.

If this has piqued your interest, there are websites that offer free questionnaires to help you determine personality structure, based on these four functions and Isabel Briggs Myers’ typological approach to personality.

For example, I took a quiz at humanmetrics.com, and discovered my personality is described as “INFJ,” which means I am a moderate introvert with a preference for intuiting over sensing, feeling over thinking, and judging over perceiving.

Then I went to www.Personalitypage.com, and was given lengthy description of exactly what that means, and an analysis of how this would play itself out in other areas of life, such as in relationships, career, and learning environments. For free.


There it is folks,
your character outline,
done. Just be mindful of
how far you fall down that
rabbit hole, because you
can get lost for hours
investigating this stuff!
Best. Research. Ever.♥


The PersonalityPage Type Portraits


There are sixteen distinct personality types in the currently most widely-accepted Personality Type model. Each type has its own characteristics which can be identified in individual personalities. We have created a profile of each personality type, which provides a guideline for understanding the similarities and differences amongst the types.


To read the profile for a particular personality type, click on the name of the type you're interested in learning about.


- [ISTJ](#) - The Duty Fulfillers
- [ESTJ](#) - The Guardians
- [ISEJ](#) - The Nurturers
- [ESFJ](#) - The Caregivers
- [ISTP](#) - The Mechanics
- [ESTP](#) - The Doers
- [ESEP](#) - The Performers
- [ISFP](#) - The Artists
- [ENTJ](#) - The Executives
- [INTJ](#) - The Scientists
- [ENTP](#) - The Visionaries
- [INTP](#) - The Thinkers
- [ENFJ](#) - The Givers
- [INEJ](#) - The Protectors
- [ENFP](#) - The Inspirers



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careers


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kids test

Briana MacPerry is a creative arts therapist with ten years clinical experience working predominantly with traumatized women and children. Currently, she teaches personality development and thesis writing at Pratt Institute. When she isn't corralling her five-year old son, she's blogging, painting, drawing, or otherwise plugging away at passion's pursuit. To learn more please visit her blog at www.yellowbrickscommunity.wordpress.com, or follow her on Twitter @macperrytweets.

CRAFT CORNER: CAN YOU FEEL ME? USING YOUR CHARACTER'S FIVE SENSES BY ISABO KELLY



It's an often repeated piece of writerly advice that including all five senses in your fiction is vital to bringing the story to life. Visual details tend to be the default for most writers, while the other senses are frequently ignored. But without that added depth of detail, your story will be lackluster at best. In all this advice about using the senses, the primary focus is usually just making sure a writer remembers to add more than the visuals.

A worthy reminder because we all need it regularly.

However, those details are worthless to a reader *unless* they're filtered through a character's eyes and perception. Without this, your efforts will feel forced and distance the reader as much as leaving these details out.

Not all characters are the same—obviously—so they won't all have the same reactions to their senses. Like any other part of your story, it's important to ensure all sensory impressions come from the character: what *they* would see, feel, smell, taste, and hear. The

feel of silk against one person's fingers might be exquisite, while another is reminded of something slick and slimy. The taste of savory fish could make your heroine shudder with delight or disgust. The sound of big band music might make your hero want to dance or make his ears hurt.

And it's not just the mere fact of the character perceiving these details that's important. You need to ensure the *interpretation* of those details reflects your character's life and experiences. Seeing blond hair and blue eyes might draw your hero's eye, or it could remind him of a crazy ex and send him scurrying across the street with a shudder of loathing. The smell of pine trees and sugar cookies might evoke a lovely memory of Christmas Eve for one protagonist. Those same scents might remind another of a terrible holiday in a mountain cabin with her self-destructing mother trying desperately to act like everything was normal by baking cookies every day.

A character's current mood or changed circumstances can also alter how they experience sense details. If your heroine is kicking back, reading a book in her favorite chair, without a care in the world, she might only be vaguely aware of the traffic outside her apartment, considering it a kind of comforting white noise. But if she's feeling intensely stressed and overwhelmed, every time someone's breaks screech or a horn blares, your heroine might feel like jumping out of her skin.

As a personal example, I love the song "In My Room" by the Beach Boys. It was an anthem for me as a teenager and always brought to mind happy memories. But in recent years, it was used in a very touching commercial for a kids' cancer center. Now that I'm a mother and overly sensitive to anything to do with kids being sick, I get teary-eyed and choked up every time I hear the song. This reaction isn't even from something that has to do with a personal experience, just the *fear* of that experience (fear of one of my boys getting cancer). This complicates my feelings for a song I really

do love and informs my reaction to that song when I hear it. You can see from this example, perception of various sensory input can be complicated.

You'll also have to consider what your character would and wouldn't even notice. They might be limited by some deficit or their senses might be unusually acute for some reason. Writing about a shapeshifter, for instance, might mean focusing on scents and smells throughout your story, but the humans in that world will have a much more muted sense of smell and so won't even notice the details your shifter might. As a real-world example, a pregnant woman's sense of smell often increases amazingly, and things that smelled good before will send her running to the bathroom during her pregnancy. Once the baby is born, her hearing tends to get more acute, too, allowing her to hear things a friend sitting right next to her might not notice right away.

Someone who wears glasses will have blurry areas in their peripheral vision that a person with perfect eyesight won't have to contend with. Certain drugs and illnesses can alter a person's sense of taste, rendering once pleasant flavors unappetizing. Aging can have a huge effect on a person's various senses—I hated corn as a kid but love the taste of it now.

Cultural associations (like my example with the commercial above) or societal backgrounds can also affect a character's interpretation of sensory details. A societal example might be the use of deodorants, scented soaps, and perfumes in many cultures to cover the "unpleasant" scent of body odor—as often as not in these cultures, people barely notice those "clean" smells, or if they do notice, they consider them pleasing. But in aboriginal cultures, those manufactured scents can be overwhelming and very unpleasant all mixed together in an assaulting hodge-podge of unnatural smells.

Your characters will all have these kinds of filters through which they interpret their senses, which means your descriptions of those details will always be as unique as your characters, even if you're describing something common. Using all five senses in your fiction isn't just a matter of conveying more than visual details, it's a way to reveal your characters to the reader, in depth and in ways that would be hard to simply describe. The reaction of a character to their senses shows more about them and their world than the detail itself ever could. That's where readers will truly connect with your characters and get carried away by your prose.♥

Isabo Kelly is the award-winning author of numerous fantasy, science fiction, and paranormal romances. The third book in her Fire and Tears fantasy romance series, WARRIOR'S DAWN, is now out in paperback. She's also in the process of re-releasing some of her out-of-print stories. For more on Isabo and her books, visit her at www.isabokelly.com, follow her on Twitter @IsaboKelly, or friend her on Facebook www.facebook.com/IsaboKelly.



**EMBRACING MY PARTICULAR BRAND OF CRAZY
BY LAQUETTE**



Hey, Mr. DJ...

It's the start of your writing day. You've rolled out of bed, hopefully brushed your teeth and you have your first cup of coffee in hand. You've found that perfect spot in your favorite chair—be it behind a desk or in the middle of your living room. You've powered up your laptop and your hands are poised over the keys. You're ready to write, you're motivated to write, but for some strange reason, you can't put anything down on the page. Is it writer's block? No, you actually know what you're going to write. However, for some strange reason, you just can't feel the writing. What's wrong, what are you missing? There's a simple answer to this, you forgot to set the mood with a little music.

Creating a playlist for my WIP is an essential part of my writing process. It doesn't matter how many ideas I have, nor does it matter how organized I am, those words won't come out as powerfully and vividly as I need them to if there is no music fueling them.

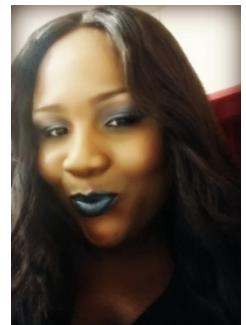
Music helps me emote. It helps me feel the emotions I intend to fill my story with. You know, those moments when you want your reader to be consumed by all the feels, well, that's how I create them, by first calling on the sense memory of those emotions inspired by the music I'm listening to. If I can't feel it when I'm writing, my readers won't feel it when they read it.

The emotion of the music helps generate the necessary emotion in me. It gets my head and heart in the proper mindset to create a particular scene. For instance, if I need to write something passionate and powerful, strong bass lines flowing through my earbuds, and a cup of coffee will pull out all of the hard-hitting words and descriptions I need to create a vivid depiction of the fire I need to be represented on the page.

Music also keeps me focused. It keeps my mind from drifting and keeps me set at my task. If I have a good playlist and an hour or two, music keeps my mind moving quickly and efficiently for hours. Honestly, with the right tunes, bopping my head and beating out soulful rhythms on my computer keyboard can yield me at least two thousand words in a day.

Thanks for spending a little time with me. This is LaQuette, your friendly erotic romance author, embracing my crazy...one character at a time.♥

2015 Georgia Romance Writers Maggie Award Finalist in Erotic Romance, 2015 Swirl Awards Finalist in Romantic Suspense, bestselling erotic romance author, LaQuette, is a native of Brooklyn, New York. She spends her time catering to her three distinct personalities: Wife, Mother, and Educator. LaQuette loves hearing from readers and discussing the crazy characters that are running around in her head causing so much trouble. Contact her on Facebook, Twitter, @LaQuetteLikes, her website, www.NovelsbyLaQuette.com, Amazon, her Facebook group, LaQuette's Lounge, and via email at NovelsbyLaQuette@gmail.com.



THE GIDDY GRAMMARIAN: "WHO OR WHOM?"

BY LISBETH ENG



In a previous column, I discussed the differences between subject and object. Now, I'd like to examine a subset of this issue, the oft-confused pair: "who" and "whom."

"Who" is used as a subject, the person performing the action of the verb:

"Who left all these dirty dishes in the sink?"

"Whom," on the other hand, functions as an object, the one receiving the action of the verb:

"Do you have any idea to whom you are speaking?"

"You" are doing the speaking, so "you" is the subject. A clue that "whom" is the object is the preposition "to."

You may also say, "Do you have any idea whom you are speaking to?" Though some persnickety grammarians swear by the rule that you should never end a sentence with a preposition, I'll go along with Winston Churchill, who purportedly ridiculed that theory by stating, "This is the sort of bloody nonsense up with which I will not put."

You may even say, "Do you have any idea who you are speaking to?" since "who" is now almost universally accepted as a replacement for "whom," and used as an object, as well as a subject.

So why would you ever use "whom" if "who" can be used instead? You will have to use your internal ear to tell you what sounds right. If "whom" sounds too formal or stuffy use "who." Both are acceptable as objects, though "whom" is NEVER acceptable as subject. For objects, however, is a matter of style and setting.

Formal: Whom did you meet this morning?

Informal: Who did you meet this morning?

Formal: He is someone to whom I owe a great deal.

Informal: He is someone who I owe a great deal to.

If the preposition is right next to the object, I would opt for "whom," such as in the common salutation:

"To (preposition) Whom (object) It May Concern."

Be conscious of whom you are addressing and in what context (formal or informal; written or oral) to help determine whether the object should be "who" or "whom." But beware the pitfall of using "whom" as a subject, just because it sounds more erudite. "You'll be shocked when I tell you whom called me last night," is always wrong.

I'm always open to suggestions for my column. Should you have any grammatical topics you'd like to see covered, please email me at lisbeth@lisbetheng.com.♥

Lisbeth Eng works as a Compliance Officer in the financial industry by day and writes historical romance by night. She holds a bachelor's degree in English, and speaks a smattering of German, Italian and French. Please visit her at www.lisbetheng.com.

HELLO AND WELCOME TO MY WRITING DEN!© BY MARIA COX

Book reviews vs. book ratings?

It was after my pledge to read twenty-four books (in 2016) that I realize I needed to restructure my reading and writing routine and that included book reviews.

Writers can only wish and hope that when a reader likes a particular book of ours that he/she will take the time to write a review. The issue with writing reviews is that it takes time. In fact, writing a well-written review can take an hour or two, hence the reason for this blog post.

A few years back when I began a career in fiction writing a fellow author gave me great advice, join writing clubs, critique groups, and most importantly read and a lot. To date, I have read sixty books accompanied by sixty reviews (authormariacox on Goodreads). In addition to reading more, I became involved in writing clubs serving as social media coordinator, newsletter editor, and ultimately President. Ambitions goals are good, but in my case my enthusiasm led me down a path where there was little time to read and write; a big no-no for any writer.

When I decided to draft an article on the subject of book reviews I did a bit of research. I wanted to know the stance of the writing community on *book reviews* versus *book ratings*. The opinion from one paranormal romance author is that ratings aren't helpful because typically ratings don't provide feedback. This is true.

Now on to the main reason for this post: I want to inform my followers and writer friends that I won't do book reviews in 2016, only book ratings. The decision is not an easy one, but the best option given my new writing goals. Happy New Year!♥

Maria Cox is a PRO member of Romance Writers of America, she is also is the past President of the Phoenix Writers Club. Maria has been writing stories since she was a young girl. She picked up her first romance novel when she was just eleven years old and has loved the genre ever since. Maria writes sensual romance, stories that showcase strong, sassy, and sexy characters. When not writing fiction, Maria works as a technical writer. She lives in Queens, New York. Please visit her site www.mariacox.net and/or follow her on Twitter.





TUTORIAL ON HOW TO DEAL WITH PIRATED BOOKS BY KIM BLACK

Tired of having your work stolen? Wondering how you could get ahead of those awful pirating websites?

I have found a way to get rid of 99% of the books I found.

1. First step is to determine whether or not you have a pirating issue.

What I have done is set up a GOOGLE ALERT <<https://www.google.com/alerts>>; for all of my releases.

Examples:

Discovered Kim Black
Discovered Cover Series Kim Black
Discovered Kim Black epub
Discovered Kim Black mobi

I do this for every release, so that I get an email each time one is put up on those awful websites. If you do this and get alerts that you are being pirated, you should try the next step.

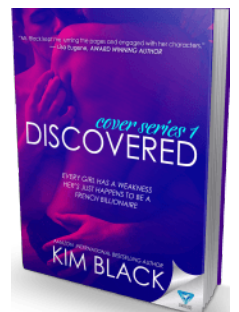
2. I found a website that actually tracks pirated site: MUSO <<https://www.muso.com/>>. I created an account, listed all my books and within a day or two and found pirated sites that even Google Alert missed.

I selected them all and with one click a takedown request is sent. You can also take down the links on Google once the sites are down. As you know, they leave the page up on those sites even after they make your book unavailable. With MUSO you can request that Google remove these links. I have so far taken down 97 links to my books.

3. Set up MUSO so that it sends you daily reports of any new sites so that you can immediately go on and request they be taken down.

Good luck♥. –KB

International Amazon Bestselling Author Kim Black is a born and raised New Yorker. While Kim Black may be known for her angst and suspenseful, sexy romances, she is working on branching out into other romance genres. Kim holds a Degree in Graphic Design and Animation and is the CEO of a new publishing services company, TOJ Publishing Services, where she provides authors with custom graphics, marketing and promotional services. She is also a proud member of Romance Writers of America and is a part of two of their chapters: RWA/NYC and KOD-RWA.



**INTERVIEW: SYLVAIN REYNARD ON GABRIEL'S INFERNO AND E.L. JAMES
BY A.C. ROSE**

NOTE: This is an excerpt from an interview with author Sylvain Reynard for A.C. Rose's The Three Tomatoes blog. Enjoy.



Q: Your books were among the very first to gain popularity right after the huge surge of interest in FIFTY SHADES OF GREY. I remember *everyone* was reading them and talking about them. But interestingly, INFERNO is like a long, slow, kiss. It's sensual foreplay, not wild sex.

Sylvain Reynard: In keeping with the story of Dante and Beatrice, in “Gabriel’s Inferno,” I focused on the building of the relationship between Julia and Gabriel. Desire, attraction, and slow seduction were part of that.

Q: How do you think readers came to associate it with the more graphic and penetrative sex in FIFTY SHADES?

SR: Part of it has to do with my friendship with E.L. James. We’ve been friends for several years and have always shared readers, although her readership is much larger. Part of it has to do with the strong nature of the male leads in both our series.

Q: Women were uttering the name Professor Emerson in the same sentence as Christian Grey. Do you see any similarities?

SR: Both characters are strong, damaged, and in need of redemption. And I’d argue both characters search for that redemption partially through their romantic relationships.

Q: Why do you think that approach was so gratifying to readers who were hungry for hot love stories? Was it because Gabriel's delicate treatment of Julia's virginity showed us how deeply he loved her?

SR: That’s what readers have said to me, yes. They enjoyed the way Gabriel both admired and loved Julia and how she and he balanced one another out.

Q: And how was it writing that book, without rushing them into sex, and then finally consummating and building the sexual love, along with the relationship, in the series?

SR: My goal in writing the novel was to tell a story of redemption, love, and sex. Since it was modeled on the relationship between Dante and Beatrice sex wasn't the main focus. Eventually it becomes part of the narrative but by that point the characters have already built a strong connection.

Q: We heard you have created a fun project with E.L. James. Can you reveal what it is, where to find it, and how it came about?

SR: E.L. James and I have been friends for some time. She's smart, she's witty, and she's very creative. We've bantered online before and so she and I decided to co-author a short work simply for fun. You can read our story on her website. Here's the link: <http://blog.eljamesauthor.com/?p=1088>

Q: Since the release of GABRIEL'S INFERNO and GABRIEL'S RAPTURE, the series has grown. For new readers, can you give us the order, including upcoming books and any novellas?

SR: The Gabriel Trilogy has three novels: GABRIEL'S INFERNO, GABRIEL'S RAPTURE, and GABRIEL'S REDEMPTION. While it's possible I'll add to this at the moment the series is closed. However, readers will find some of the characters (including the Professor and Julia) in my newest series, The Florentine Trilogy.

Q: And the question we ask all authors: Why do you think erotic romances are good for readers?

SR: For me, the eroticism of a tale is diminished if there isn't a connection between the characters. That connection, perhaps, is what all human beings are looking for – desire, attraction, love, respect, and transcendence. So perhaps it's the case that erotic love stories expose what humanity wants and desperately needs, but rarely finds.♥

Sylvain Reynard is the author of Gabriel's Inferno Series and The Florentine Series. Her latest book is THE SHADOW about Raven Wood's vampire prince. For more information on Sylvain Reynard, visit her website at <http://sylvainreynard.com>.

A.C. Rose is a sex, love, and romance columnist and an author of steamy erotic fiction for women. Visit her at <http://acroseauthor.com/>. For the complete transcript of this interview, please visit The Three Tomatoes at <http://thethreetomatoes.com/sylvain-reynard-on-gabriels-inferno-the-raven-and-e-l-james>

**“Either write
something
worth reading
or do something
worth writing.”**

Benjamin Franklin



RWA/NYC Membership & Renewal Application

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*CHECK ONE: ___NEW MEMBER ___RENEWAL

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*NOTE: All RWA/NYC Members must be members of RWA National. For national membership form, visit www.rwanational.org.

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I want to help out with (check all that apply): ___contest ___awards reception ___newsletter ___website ___retreat ___ALL!

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT US? ___RWA ___Facebook/Twitter ___Website ___Other: _____

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There will be a \$10 late fee for all renewals after March 1st; and, \$20 fee on all returned checks. Return completed form with your dues to RWA/NYC, POB 3722 Grand Central Station NY NY10163, or you can pay via PayPal at www.rwanyc.com.

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OPTIONAL: Check here if you are making an additional contribution to the chapter in the amount of \$_____.

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If PUBLISHED, in what format? i.e., book-length romantic fiction, short fiction, electronic, confessions, etc.

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