



Writing Right Newsletter

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ANNOUNCING THE WINNERS!

At the next meeting on Friday May 18th 6.30 pm (above Cafe Buongiorno – take the lift to the 2nd floor) the winners of the Poetry and Short Story Competition for the Anthology will be announced before the critique sessions.

While this newsletter goes to press the judges are still working long hours assessing the work of members. However we will know the results at the Friday night meeting.

This means the 2007 Anthology UNCENSORED will soon go to print and orders are being taken - \$20.00 each or \$25.00 including postage. Only a limited number will be printed because Writing Right can't afford to be left with a box full of unsold books.

We will also be celebrating our new project to get all our published authors' books up on our website and available for sale to anyone that clicks onto the site. We are now part of the Paypal International banking system and we simply have to get details from the authors. We need a picture of the book cover, the first chapter and details about cost of the book and details about the author. Simple!

**Critique Session on
SATURDAY
MAY 5th
at 12 Sandford St,
Kensington Gdns
(in cottage at rear)
Ph: 8332 6085
at 2.00pm**

**Next Meeting on
FRIDAY
MAY 18th at the
SA Writers' Centre
Rundle St,
2nd floor above
Cafe Buongiorno
at 6.30pm**

**ORDERS NOW BEING TAKEN FOR THE NEW WRITING RIGHT
ANTHOLOGY FOR 2007 "UNCENSORED"
ONLY \$20.00 EACH OR \$25.00 INCLUDING POSTAGE
FOR MORE INFORMATION EMAIL kerrina23@bigpond.com**

13 QUESTIONS EVERY WRITER SHOULD ASK THEMSELVES...

1. Who am I writing for...what is my audience...why will people read the book?
2. Why am I really writing this book and can I be brutally honest in answering this question?
3. How committed am I to finishing the book and marketing the work?
4. How much time am I going to give to writing the work...?
5. Where would my book fit on the shelves of a library/bookstore/genre category...?
6. What publishing method would I use....Publisher/ ebooks/ POD/ self publish...?
7. Am I willing to study the skills of writing to give the book a chance?
8. Is this a hobby....or am I serious about the work...?
9. Am I willing to spend the time and money to make the book publishable...?
10. Have I really, really studied the publishing industry...?
11. Have I really worked out how long does it take to write a book...?
12. Do I really understand the editing process...?
13. Do I know the rules of writing and publishing...?

Set yourself some goals, research your markets and write, write, write!

VILLAINS BY VICKI HINZE

Villains are tricky rascals. As an author your job requires you walk a fine line. You must make your villains credible, logical, believable and understandable, but not likeable. You want your villains to be real, three-dimensional people. You want the reader to understand what they're doing, why they're doing it, why they believe their actions are just and rational (well they might well not be either) but you don't want the reader to become so empathetic with the villain that s/he loses empathy with the hero/heroine and starts cheering for the villain.

As I said, this requires the author to walk a fine line, and all too often we fall to using stereotype, cardboard "bad" guys who have no redeeming qualities. This makes them one-dimensional, lowers their emotional impact, and it also lowers the reader's esteem for the hero and or heroine who will eventually best this villain.

The reason is that a totally evil villain is less a threat, less evil, less frightening than one who is strong. Totally evil equates to totally weak, because there are only surface motivators driving the villain. But if you build the villain's character by giving him logical (if only to him), well-motivated (if only because he perceives it so), reasons for doing the evil he does, in the way he does it, then you've elevated the villain to a worthy evil—one that respects the villain's character, the hero and heroine's characters, and you've played fair with the reader, thus earned his or her respect.

To be most effective, a villain does the wrong things, but in his mind, he's doing the right things for the right reasons. Remember, no one sees him- or herself as a bad person, nor as a foolish one-not even a villain. To him, his actions are just. His reasons are valid (even if he's psychotic!). You, the author must play fair and depict the villain honestly. If you're in his Point of View (POV), then you must see him as he sees himself.

In his eyes, he is intelligent. He is a worthy adversary to the hero and heroine, capable of inflicting the evil he chooses, capable of winning the battle against the hero and heroine. Now, if you, the author, depict him this way to the readers—both from his own POV and from others'—because the villain is intelligent, a worthy adversary, capable of inflicting this evil, and capable of winning the battle, the outcome of who will win is uncertain. That uncertainty creates suspense. And when a character who is not fighting twisted logic and faulty perception, recognizes how twisted the villain is, how dangerous those qualities make him, that doubles suspense.

You can read the rest of this article here:
<http://www.fictionfactor.com/guests/villains.html>

MY, HOW WE'VE GROWN!

Writing Right has grown from a small membership base four years ago to almost 200 members on our data base.

Last year our members published more than 30 books and contracted many more.

The aim to share information and provide assistance for each other to get published is obviously working for the benefit of members.

Meetings on the third Friday of each month at the SA Writer's Centre at 6.30 pm are aimed at providing a support network for writers that both encourages and motivates writers to achieve results.

The results speak for themselves with regular book launches and increasing workshops, critique groups and activities.

Yearly membership is only \$25 and this covers our yearly dues to the SA Writer's Centre and postage. With the increased membership and increasing number of activities we are looking for volunteers who wish to be involved in the planning and running of these events.

Our aim is to build a stronger organizational structure to provide bigger and better events – we invite writers to be part of our growing group to share the joys of writing and to improve their marketing and writing skills.

Writing Right conferences, workshops and special events are announced through our newsletter

The Writing Right group is planning workshops throughout the year and will keep members updated. Anyone who would like to help organize our weekend live-in workshop in Spring contact dyoz@ozemail.com.au

Monthly meetings at the SA Writer's Centre in Adelaide include workshops on professional development and regular sessions to improve writing and marketing skills for members.

The group also runs a Critique link-line where members can exchange work for critiquing and sharing information about writing. The line is particularly helpful for members who are unable to attend the city meetings.

<http://www.dream-craft.com/writingright/home.htm>

Critique sessions are also held on the First Saturday of every month in Kensington. The group is friendly and supportive and has achieved great results for those who attend. For further details contact 8332 6085

VOICE

There is no 'voice' if the reader feels 'uninvolved' with the story.

There is no 'voice' if author is hiding behind a rote response...with no emotional involvement with the story.

There is no 'voice' if the writing is technical, mechanical, boring and indifferent.

There is no 'voice' if there is a barrier between the reader and the writer.

There is no 'voice' if the writer is just rushing through the work to get it done with no thought of involvement

The voice is emerging and developing if the writing grabs the reader occasionally.

The voice is strong if:

If the writer is confident in their writing

If the topics spring to life

If the reader can't put the book down

If the writing is courageous

If the reader recognizes that a thoughtful person has written the work.

If the work evokes laughter and tears.

If the reader wants others to share the work

If the reader can't get the story out of their head

If the writing is convincing

If the writing is engaging

If the writing is individual

If the reader can recognize the 'voice'

Example of no voice.....Her long fair hair.

Kirsty shook her fox-gold hair from...

Mink brown hair...a curtain of hair...swinging, sun-streaked..

Champagne gold. Sleek. Blue black.

Curls...soft, spiral, crisp, sculptured, poodle, riot of ringlets

Lank, limp, bouncing, baby soft

Describe a characteristic...using your own voice.

By Diane Beer

WORKSHOP - GET PLOTTED BY DIANE BEER

* *Inspiration is free*

* *Perspiration is better than exasperation*

This workshop teaches how to find stories, where to find stories, how to build a plot and how to layer the plot.

Most people dream their stories and gradually build their characters into the tale.

Some start with a character and create a story around the imagined character.

Some take their stories from real life experiences, or their own experience, and those around them.

The easiest way to start is with newspaper cuttings.

Whenever you see a potential story line, past it in a notebook..

Crime writers go to the courts and Crime Watcher programs and Judge Judy on television provide great meaty stories for authors.

Everyone sits in cafes, coffee lounges, pubs and restaurants and imagines the lives of those around them.

Airports are ideal places to dream up stories about all the characters saying their farewells.

A dramatic moment in a person's life is the starting point for a great story.

There is a story in every human being.

Some stories would only fill a chapter some stories about great lives are written over and over and fill bookshelves of their exploits.

A newspaper example from this week-

The wife and daughter plot to kill the husband.

That is the base line....but what if something else happened????

What if.....the daughter falls in love with the investigating policeman?

What if..... the husband learns of the plan and kidnaps the young daughter?

What ifthe husband on learning of the plot...kills the wife?

What if....????? Stories start in an author's mind with... What If?

Keep a notebook. You will find you can plot a basic story line every day.

A card system is a good way to keep a record of your plot.

A card for each character, listing all features and history of each person.

A card for the time frame.

Research cards.

Chapter cards.

This ensures your story stays on track.

Plot your story as you would a three act play.

First Act

Set the scene.

Choose the characters.

Set the problem

Reveal the conflict.

Second Act

Battle through the conflicts

Make your reader wonder how it can be solved?

Third Act

Solve their problem

Wrap up the story.

CREATING THE SKELETON OF THE STORY.

Some people do it in chapters...some do it like a graph with the high points and lows to ensure they have balance and tension in the tale.

Start with a hook. Start with the very best opening you can craft to catch the reader and editor and draw them into your story. Then keep them hooked. Each chapter should end with a hook to make them start reading the next.

Know your characters. Draw up a character chart if it will help with all the main features of each major person in your book.

Apart from color of eyes and hair, write down what they love, what they hate, how they eat, sleep think. All the things that have moulded them, past hurts, past triumphs, past tragedies and include their hopes and dreams. This helps you create a rounded personality.

Create a unique setting.

They can stay within a jail cell or be in the tropics, but wherever it is you have to know that setting intimately in your mind's eye.

Even if you don't write every details of the setting into your book, your imagination will plot and reveal the story better if you know where exactly your characters are at any given time.

If the story is set in the tropics, where in the tropics, how did they get there, are they deep in the rainforest, or near the coast, or both.

Know, in your mind, the sounds, smells, temperature and total setting of your scene.

If there is music playing...know the piece...know if it is jazz, swing, classical and the tempo and mood it sets for the scene.

Know the perfumes: the smell of disease in a hospital room, the

WORKSHOP - GET PLOTTED BY DIANE BEER

smell of a nursing home, the smell of a classroom.

Know how your characters would react to the sensual mood of the setting. How their ears, eyes, nose and skin would sense the atmosphere.

Research if necessary. Ensure your book is accurate for the time period and setting and historically correct.

Time Frame

If the story starts in the morning, make sure the readers knows the time frame as the events occur. Even if the characters are only talking, the reader needs to know the time elapsed. If the story spans years, the time frame must be evident in the writing to enable the reader to travel with the characters.

Don't knock the reader around the head with the timing, let the characters show what is happening. Melancholy evening, romantic moon, start to the day with breakfast, dawn, showering are a few examples.

Clothing, food, transport attitudes all set the times historically.

Make your story dramatic, different, and memorable.

Your book stands or falls on the plotting.

Think of the great films you have seen and assess what made them memorable.

The story starts at a dramatic, life-changing or life-threatening point of the hero or heroine's life.

Will they die, will they live, will they lose their child, their business, will they be saved, will they be crippled for life, will they be imprisoned, will

people believe their story against their enemies.

The book starts with tension and a problem or crisis to overcome.

The span of the event can take years or hours. Hemmingway wrote a totally memorable book about an old man and the sea, which took place in a small boat on one fishing excursion.

The author must know the time span to know the pacing and tensions of the story.

Where to find plots

Fantasise. Really let yourself go. Imagination is free. You can go wherever you want.

Read everything, poetry, newspapers, magazines, unusual books all give new plots.

Television Ads Television stories. Study images...look at the latest types of stories and what the market is showing. Remember most television is planned a year before and written even earlier.

Eavesdrop in cafes, restaurants, pubs, race tracks. Phone calls, elevators...where ever people gather, listen to what they are saying. Listen to dialogue and hear how people speak in verbal shorthand...make your dialogue natural. Listen to kids talking, Keep your notebook handy.

Talk to strangers...talk to anyone, talk to people you wouldn't usually meet and listen to their tone, to different social attitudes, language structures. Tune your ears to hear.

Check out, astrology charts, read Tarot, go down the East End of Rundle Street and watch from a sidewalk café, go down Hindley Street and go into a shop you normally wouldn't frequent. Go to a different type of pub. Sit on a bench at Glenelg foreshore.

Dream and record your dreams. Train yourself to recall your dreams and hold them in the front of your mind on waking. This is your unconscious mind at work, work with it.

Train your subconscious mind to speak to you...Treat your mind like a computer and know how it works and how it records information. Your mind is a treasure trove of great dramas. That is why you are writers. You know that.

Talk Back Radio A great place for stories because you hear the tone, sense the passion and get a great insight into the personalities as they interact with the announcer.

This is also a great place to hear dialogue.

You really need a notebook beside you when listening.

While we "Show not tell" the story, dialogue on talk-back radio shows how some words are anger words and how they can be used to lift tension and reveal passion.

Race tracks, whether horses, dogs or cars are great places for stories. People reveal a great deal about themselves when they are betting, and if you are writing a story involving people in racing you have to hear the call of the bookie, feel the tension as the horses race. The Casino is also fabulous for drama and seeing meaty stories evolving.

If you plan your writing around a theme, frequent the type of places your characters would visit.

Learn to structure your plot. And put texture into the story. Layer the characters and the tension. You do this by knowing your setting, your atmosphere and your plot because it is alive in your mind.

OPEN YOUR BOOK WITH A HOOK

This is such an important subject it is worth emphasizing. YOU MUST UNDERSTAND 'HOOKS'

Think of your opening scene as the catalyst that triggers the chain of events in your story. Your first page starts the ball rolling. The best books grab the reader from the very first sentence and never let go.

Begin your novel by showing a character with a problem doing something interesting. On page one, your main character should be acting in a way that both characterizes him/her and sets the plot in motion. Your opening can be anything from a cowboy in a gunfight or a girl being followed up a dark London street. It can be a character cooking dinner or committing murder.

Your main objective is to entice the reader into buying the book.

A poetic description of a sunrise won't work. It's boring because no character is involved. Novels are about people, not lovely scenery! This is often written, but rarely by first time writers.

Generally the book opens with a dramatic conflict in the life of the character. The character is on the verge of change in an existing situation.

Your first reader will be a busy agent or editor or perhaps the editorial assistant who may only scan the first few pages of your book. If you haven't grabbed the attention by then, you're sunk. You've lost a sale—even if you think the scene on page thirty is better. You are not there, standing behind her saying, 'Ah but it gets better – wait 'till you get to chapter four.' You won't be able to tell her about the end...too late. The editor/agent has read your synopsis and the opening hook has failed to live up to the promise.

Page one must be compelling. Use emotion to tug at the heart-

strings. Use action to take the reader's breath away. Introduce a character who leaps off the page. Stir questions in the mind of the reader and make her turn the pages to discover what will happen next. Write something different. Offer something new, amusing, intriguing or more dramatic than any hook you have ever read. Because the first hook is the most important you will ever write. You have to grab the agent/editor's attention from thousands of other already published authors who are reliable and will produce good books. The first is tough to write and tough to sell, so sharpen that hook until it shines and reflects your ability as a writer.

Bait those hooks.

Exercise:

Write an opening hook in less than 30 words that sets the scene, introduces the characters and shows the conflict.

Then write the paragraph in at least two other ways.

Example:

Jasmine could hardly see his face in the dimly lit alley but she saw he was wearing his favourite white jacket. As blood oozed through the soft silk Jasmine had a momentary urge to go towards him. But she dropped the gun and ran. (44 words)

Jasmine saw the blood staining his white silk jacket, but she dropped the gun and ran back through the dark alley. (21 words)

When Jasmine saw blood on his white silk jacket, she dropped the gun and ran back through the dark alley. (20 words)

TAKE NOTICE!

A new fiction magazine will debut January 1, 2008.

Noctem Aeternus will be a FREE quarterly PDF magazine where the reader will find science fiction, fantasy, western, or even mystery stories...but all tales will have an element of horror.

"The horror genre sometimes gets a bad reputation for being the shock jocks of the literary field," Editor Michael Knost said.

"You can find plenty of blood and guts, but sometimes there is no story among the gore. Noctem Aeternus will be a quality fiction magazine, focusing on the story and its characters."

The first issue will include a short story (and interview) from master storyteller Ramsey Campbell.

Ramsey Campbell is perhaps the world's most honored author of horror fiction. He has won four World Fantasy Awards, ten British Fantasy Awards, three Bram Stoker Awards, and the Horror Writer's Association's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Sign up for the FREE subscription or read the submission guidelines, at:

<http://www.michaelknost.com>

20 DIFFERENT PLOTS BY DIANE BEER

20 Different Plots

1. The Quest
2. Adventure
3. Pursuit
4. Escape
5. Revenge
6. The Riddle
7. Rivalry
8. Underdog
9. Temptation
10. Metamorphosis (physical)
11. Transformation
12. Maturation
13. Love
14. Forbidden Love
15. Sacrifice
16. Discovery
17. Wretched Excess
18. Ascension
19. Descention
20. Power

Plotting Checklist

1. Is the plot different?
2. Is the plot strong enough?
3. Are the characters strong enough?
4. Is the conflict believable?
5. Is the conflict strong enough?
6. Is the work aimed at the right market or written for the right market?
7. Does the plot flow from scene to scene?
8. Does the story start at the right place (not a boring lead-up)?
9. Is the pace holding strong interest throughout?

10. Does the pace keep the reader turning pages?
11. Is the premise right?
12. Does the conflict point to the climax?
13. Does the story have a satisfying end?

Exercise.....

Write a plot from newspaper cuttings.

Using the basic line of the headline or the story itself ask yourself "What if?" – and change the story, create a different plot and develop the characters slightly.

If the story is too long don't bother reading it through, the cutting is merely a diving board to get you into the plotting.

Or, if you prefer, write down a plot you are already working on.

DO'S AND DON'TS OF WRITING

1. Don't Procrastinate
2. Don't Forget Your Theme
3. Don't Forget the Beginning, Middle and End
4. Don't Expect a weak plot to be Successful
5. Don't Tell – Show
6. Don't expect to write the best in the world first try
7. Don't Overdo Punctuation
8. Don't Tell everyone your story – Write It!
9. Don't Think you can edit as you write
10. Don't generalize – Use Specific Images
11. Don't Use Cliches, Platitudes and Qualifiers
12. Don't Depend on Ajectives. Use stronger verbs
13. Don't Forget to Compare and use

Contrasts

14. Don't Forget to View the World AS A Writer
15. Don't Digress
16. Don't Forget the Pacing
17. Don't Forget the Senses
18. Don't write personally – write Universally
19. Don't Preach
20. Don't Neglect Research
21. Don't Think of Fiction as False
22. Don't Write "I" and "Me" too often
23. Don't Overwrite
24. Don't make all your friends and relations read it!
25. Don't expect to become wealthy overnight
26. Don't be Obsessed with Trivia
27. Don't Listen to relatives and friends on what you should write
28. Don't expect an Agent will Solve everything
29. Don't send your work to the wrong market
30. Don't give Editors an Excuse to Reject Your Book
31. Don't Ever Give Up
32. Do Write the Book YOU Want To Write
33. Do Create a space Where you can Write Your Book
34. Do Learn the Basic Skills of Writing
35. Do Write about Subjects that you know and love
36. Do Plot the Book Thoroughly
37. Do Give Yourself Deadlines
38. Do Establish Your Own Support Group
39. Do Make Sure you Have the Right Tools
40. Do Learn About Publishing
41. Do Read Widely
42. Do Start Mixing With Writers and Publishers
43. Do Believe In Yourself
44. Do Study Human Behaviour
45. Do Listen to Language and dialogue
46. Do explore your own Senses

A GUIDE TO STORY WRITING

THE VISION

Decide what kind of story you will tell.

Definition: All stories create some kind of vision of life being lived.

1. Individual: the individual's internal battle and how he overcomes his weaknesses and succeeds in life.
2. Environment: the individual's struggle to master a hostile environment
3. Social: people in community struggling and overcoming in their relations with other people.
4. Nature: the hunter versus the prey
5. Composite: story contains some or all of these elements.

THE THEME

Decide on the theme.

Definition: the idea that sparks the story

1. Implicit : in a short story, the reader extracts the theme from the story.
2. Its purpose: defines the genre, scope, realm and reach of the story.
3. The fable: a story that is intended to deceive by positing an alternate and fictitious view of reality.
4. The parable: a story that teaches eternal truths that are valid for all eras, all cultures and all nations.
5. Expressing the theme: it is expressed in repeated patterns and symbols
6. Interweaving: the author weaves theme, plot and structure together skillfully and carefully.

THE PLOT

Outline the plot.

Definition: the series of interlinked events that the story consists of. Not always chronologically told (see THE IRONY).

In longer stories, each chapter has

a plot with these four elements, - and the story as a whole has these four elements.

1. Opening hook: catch the reader's interest, draw them into the story and ensure that they will read it through to the end.
2. Complication: build tension by describing the rising conflicts in your story.
3. Climax: all the conflicts come to a point of crisis: the high point of the story.
4. Resolution: ease off the tension and tie all the loose ends together satisfactorily, resolving the main problem that the story described, and ending it happily.

THE NARRATOR

Decide who will tell the story.

Definition: the character who describes the action in the story

1. First person: usually the protagonist.
2. Second person: usually the antagonist (a participant in the story).
3. Third person: objective observer, describes participant's emotions:
 - limited omniscient: knows something about the situation and the characters.
 - omniscient: narrator knows everything about plot and characters, describes their thought processes.

THE CHARACTERS

Outline the characters and their roles.

1. major/minor: a minor character plays only a small role in the story and does not have much influence on its outcome.
 - a major character is one of the main players who significantly impacts upon the outcome of the story.
2. static(unchanging)/dynamic

(changing):

- a static character does not change during the story, and is not effected by its outcome (therefore usually a minor character).
- a dynamic character displays significant effort, dialogue and thought during the story, influences the direction of the story and the actions of its participants and is changed by its outcome, either for the better or for the worse (usually a major character).
- 3. dominant/ submissive: a dominant character is a leader who controls and directs the actions of the other characters in the story (often but not always the protagonist).
 - a submissive character is a follower who allows the dominant character/s to control their actions (sometimes the antagonist, usually a minor character).

THE SETTING

Write the story.

1. Who is involved? - don't have too many characters
2. What is happening? - make every word count - Focus on the theme
3. Where is it happening? - describe the location. Lots of research or lots of imagination makes your location come alive.
4. Why is it happening? - describe the causes.
5. How is it happening? - describe the story as it unfolds.
6. Senses: - sight, touch, taste, hearing, smell sights, sounds, odours, colors, textures (like a painter creating images on canvas).
7. Narrative style:
 - open: leave it up to the readers to use their imagination and experience in "connecting and identifying" with the story.
 - closed: describe most or all of these elements.

A GUIDE TO STORY WRITING - CONT'D

8. Time frame: - the story should span a short time period, the shorter the story,

- the shorter the time period, and vice versa.

9. Reader participation: - the reader is invited to participate in the story by considering its theme and its meaning, and how it applies to their own life.

- the narrator can question the reader directly, or one of the characters can question the other, who does not answer the question immediately, or at all (forcing the alert reader to answer the question for themselves).

THE CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Give them life.

1. Physical traits: - describe the character's face, body and unique mannerisms.

2. Dialogue: - describe the character's manner of speech or reveal aspects of their character through their speech.

3. Actions: - describe what the character does.

4. Attire: - describe the character's clothing.

5. Opinions: - articulate the character's viewpoints through their speech and their thought processes (implies omniscient narrator).

6. Full range of emotions: - major characters must show happiness, sorrow, disappointment, anger, pain, joy, love, hate, indifference, numbness, elation in speech, thought and actions.

7. Motivations: - your characters openly discuss their motives

- your omniscient narrator reveals the thought processes of your characters

- your reader interprets the character's behavioural pattern and attributes motives to them:

- love, hate, revenge, greed, lust,

duty, obedience, loyalty, faithfulness, patriotism, religious zeal.

- Usually your protagonist has good motives, and your antagonist evil motives

THE IRONY

Show how absurd life can be at times, but allow your protagonist to make sense of the situation eventually and win.

Definition: Irony occurs when the reality of the story is at odds with your character's perception of it.

1. Depth - gives depth to your story by revealing your character's initial immaturity, ignorance, naivety, illusions, or worse.

2. Dynamic - allows your characters to learn, grow, change, mature and develop during the course of your story.

3. Deception - reveal to your readers the deception before the character/s become/s aware of it, or vice versa (the mature character is aware of the deception before the reader discovers it).

4. Dualism - allows the narrator/s to present more than one view of reality

5. Disparate - irony is enhanced when the story is not told chronologically

- the riddle or puzzle is pieced together eventually from the disparate elements

ASSESS YOUR WORK

- ♦ LAYOUT
- ♦ CONFLICT
- ♦ CHARACTERISATION
- ♦ MECHANICS
- ♦ TRANSITIONS
- ♦ BEGINNING AND ENDING HOOKS
- ♦ DIALOGUE
- ♦ TONE/MOOD
- ♦ PLOT
- ♦ NARRATIVE
- ♦ PACING
- ♦ POINT OF VIEW
- ♦ SCENE STRUCTURE
- ♦ WORD CHOICE
- ♦ SUITABILITY FOR INTENDED AUDIENCE
- ♦ SETTINGS
- ♦ SHOW DON'T TELL
- ♦ STYLE
- ♦ GRAMMAR PUNCTUATION SPELLING
- ♦ MARKET POSSIBILITIES



REMINDER

THE NEXT CRITIQUE SESSION IN THE COTTAGE, 12 Sandford St., Kensington Gdns, WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY MAY 5th at 2pm

THE NEXT MEETING AT CAFÉ BUONGIORNO, Rundle St., Adelaide in the SA Writers' Centre 2nd Floor - WILL BE HELD ON FRIDAY, MAY 18th AT 6.30 pm



CONGRATULATIONS TO CHRIS OSTERMANN (AKA CHRISTINA CARLISLE) FOR HITTING THE TOP LIST YET AGAIN – EPIC BEST SELLING ROMANCE 20TH APRIL 2007

Based on data gathered within the last 20 days.

1. [Tempted](#) by Rita Thedford [Romance/Historical Fiction]

2. [Reza \[The Rea Chevevo Chronicles Book 3\]](#) by Rayne Forrest [Romance/Science Fiction]

3. [Radar Deceptions \[Immortal Ops Novel\]](#) by Mandy M. Roth [Romance/Fantasy]

4. [Outback Affair](#) by **Christina Carlisle** [Romance]

5. [Brianna's Navy SEAL](#) by Natalie Damschroder [Romance]



Writing Right

12 Sandford Street, Kensington Gardens S. Aust. 5068
08 8332 6085 dyoz@ozemail.com.au

Meetings: Third Friday of each month at 6.30pm
in the SA Writers' Centre. 187 Rundle Street, Adelaide 5000
(Upstairs above Buongiorno café lift to 2nd floor)

Critique groups: First Saturday of each month from 2 pm at 12 Sandford
Street, Kensington Gardens.

On Line Critiquing: Link through our webpage
<http://www.dream-craft.com/writingright/home.htm>

MEMBERSHIP application FORM

Writing Right, 12 Sandford St, Kensington Gardens SA 5068 8332 6085 dyoz@ozemail.com.au

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PACING BY DIANE BEER

Pacing is what makes the reader stay up all night reading your book.

Pacing is what makes the editor/publisher buy your book.

Pacing is the rhythm that makes your book come alive.

Pacing comes from good plotting, so that the story never sags.

Pacing keeps the story move fast from scene to scene without overwriting, without intrusive descriptions interrupting the action, dialogue to slow down the reading.

Good hooks at the start of a chapter increase the pace.

Good fast dialogue leaves a lot of white space on a page which gives the reader the impression that the story is moving forward.

Breaking up long, turgid paragraphs increases the pace.

Strong hooks at the end of chapters ensure the reader hurries forward to the next page.

Pacing is a difficult skill to teach because it is a skill that is achieved by learning to 'feel' the rhythm and feel of your book.

Even if the plot is good, and even if there is plenty of action - if the pace is slow, the book becomes boring. Poor pacing is the most common fault for new writers, because they want to 'tell' everything instead of letting the characters 'show' their feelings, 'show' the settings and 'show' the action through their own movements, speech and actions.

Popular fiction tends to be fast-paced, however suspense stories appear to be reasonably slow-paced. The main point, when writing suspense, is to keep the tension high and this makes the pace appear to be faster.

Events that don't move the story forward – slow the pace.

Some character-driven books are designed to be a solid, slow-paced read while the writer digs deeply into the psyche of their characters.

Pace generally relates to change, movement, forward impetus and the aspects that make the reader want to turn pages.

If the reading is interrupted by the reader thinking 'what the hell does that mean' the pace has been killed. Plotting well enables the writer to let the reader know the why, where, when, how and what happens without the reader being distracted by the writer intervening to 'explain' about the story.

Poor transitions can slow down a story, and give the story a staccato effect instead of a smoothly paced story.

Strong pacing ensures that the reader never feels they are merely marking time .

Telling the story through moving scenes, rather than introspection and narrative ensures a good pace.

Even a slow-paced story has something happening on every page to move the story forward, towards the eagerly awaited conclusion to solve the conflict/crime/romantic barriers or towards a satisfactory ending.

Pacing needs to be varied. A relentlessly fast pace with no respite is exhausting. Think of pacing as a horse ride. A gentle walk up the hills, a fast trot towards the destination and a gallop when the stables are ahead.

Surprises increase pacing.

Clues keep the level of pacing strong.

Flashbacks slow the pace by interrupting the flow if they are interjected without arousing a reader's curiosity first. Prepare the plot groundwork with hints, teasers and clues. When editing your work, check for unnecessary paragraphs, clichés, scenes that don't work, overused words and too much back-fill at the wrong times.

Pruning improves pacing. Cutting out the dead wood makes the story come alive.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR WRITERS

** [Vignette Press](#) is offering \$500 and publication to one lucky writer in their annual short story competition. Entries close 30 May 2007.**

Short stories are being sought in the [Slippery When Wet](#) writing competition, with various categories including Best Road theme and student work. Entries close 12 May.

**The Grampians Writers Group Literary Awards are now open from now until 22 May 2007, with prizes in short story (to 2500 words) and poetry (20-60 lines) section. Contact [ja-malloy2@bigpond.com](mailto:jamalloy2@bigpond.com) or Rhonda at 5352 1100 for an entry form. **

Some great prizes are up for grabs in the prestigious [Shoalhaven Literary Award](#) for short stories. Entries close 25 May.

Flash fiction and short stories dripping with horror and fright are sought in the [AHWA Writing Competition](#). Entries close 31 May.

**Bush verse with an Australian theme will be awarded in the [Bush Lantern Award for Written Verse](#). Entries close 1 June.

aduki independent press is seeking submissions for a themed essay collection. Essays should be 5000 words in length and those published will receive \$200. See aduki.net.au for more details. Submissions close 1 June.

The Booranga Writers' Centre is currently accepting submissions for [four-Weighteen](#), their fantastic annual anthology. Closing date 30 June 2007.

Over \$12,000 is up for grabs in the annual [Newcastle Poetry Prize](#), including a local prize and new media section. Entries close 30 June 2007.

** The NSW Writers' Centre is presenting the [Coves Historical Writing Competition 2007](#), an award for unpublished pieces of historical fiction and non-fiction. Entries close 17th August.**

Vignette Press News

[Mini Shots](#) issue #003: Dragon Dust by Sarah Jansen is now available. If you like a bit of fantasy then you will love the heartbreakingly beautiful prose of Brisbane-based Sarah Jansen.

WRITING TIPS BY SHIRLEY MARTIN

No matter what genre you like to write, the world is full of ideas, and not only this world, but any imaginary world you want to create. Do you like to write contemporary romance? Just think of all the human interest stories you come across in the daily newspaper.

Look all around you; notice your friends, neighbors, and co-workers. Here are stories waiting to be told. (As long as you don't make them too true to life.)

Think of some of your favorite novels and movies. Suppose a TV weatherman is covering a local event, and it seems he is living a double life, or maybe living in a parallel universe. And there you have Groundhog Day, one of the funniest movies ever made.

Here's an idea: A young girl hiking with her family along the Appalachian Trail gets lost from the others and finds herself alone in the woods, facing known and unknown dangers. She derives comfort from listening to the Red Sox games on her transistor radio.

This was the idea behind *The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon*, one of Stephen King's many best sellers. And who would have thought a writer could create a best seller with the story about a rabid dog? Stephen King did it—again!—with *Cujo*.

You can find any number of ideas from the usual and unusual. You have only to use your imagination to write romantic suspense, mainstream romance, or any of the many popular genres, such as paranormal or fantasy. If you like to write historicals, pick a time period that's popular with most readers.

Better still, choose a historical incident and build your novel around it. It would be wonderful to write of any period that appeals to you, such as ancient Rome or Egypt, but these periods aren't

presently well-liked with the majority of readers, a circumstance many historical writers hope will change. Eighteenth-century England and Scotland appear to be in demand, ditto colonial America and the broad category referred to as "westerns."

If you like to write fantasy, you can let your imagination run wild.

Same for science fiction. Here, you can create your own world, your own environment. But do give some background for your imaginary world, such as plants and animals, government, religion, clothing and houses. Especially with fantasy, you can base your world on another culture, such as ancient Rome or the Celts. One necessary ingredient for fantasies is magic, and you may also find creatures such as goblins, dwarves, witches, and elves.

What if your goal is to write paranormals? As with any other genre, you have a limitless source of raw material. Here are just a few: angels, vampires, ghosts, and people with extrasensory powers, such as ESP. These novels can be contemporary or set in historical times.

With all these novels, don't forget Goal, Motivation, and Conflict. Readers love conflict; don't make things easy for your characters. As soon as they solve one problem, serve up another.

No matter what genre you're interested in, you can't consider yourself a writer unless you write, even if it's only a few paragraphs a day. If you write only a page a day, at the end of a year, you've written a novel. Remember the words of the renowned German poet, Goethe, (very roughly pronounced Gurta): "Whatever you can do or think you can, begin it."

By Shirley Martin

BOOK LAUNCH: RAVENS OF RAVENSGATE

BY SIR ANTHONY BRAN

Members of the SA Writers' Centre are invited to attend the launch of Sir Anthony Brans' new book 'Ravens of Ravensgate'.

The book is a tale of fiction, based on fact, set in the turbulent years of the Tudors and beyond.

Murder, Mayhem, Mysticism, Kidnap and Erotica combine with touches of humour, when two young brothers strive to protect their beloved Queen Elizabeth 1st and her country from enemies at home and abroad.

Sir Nicholas Raven and his younger brother, Captain Jack Raven, are recruited by their Government, to investigate treasonous activities and bring perpetrators to justice. They meet and romance their future wives, in highly adventurous and sometimes bawdy situations.

Ah yes, Merrie England, where men were men and women were glad of it.

Please come and help celebrate the launch of 'Ravens of Ravensgate', at 2pm on Sunday 3rd of June at the SAWC.

YOU THINK ENGLISH IS EASY...

Sent from Karen Peatt on our Writing Right Critique line

- 1) The bandage was wound around the wound.
- 2) The farm was used to produce produce.
- 3) The dump was so full that it had to refuse more refuse.
- 4) We must polish the Polish furniture.
- 5) He could lead if he would get the lead out.
- 6) The soldier decided to desert his dessert in the desert.
- 7) Since there is no time like the present, he thought it was time to present the present .
- 8) A bass was painted on the head of the bass drum.
- 9) When shot at, the dove dove into the bushes.
- 10) I did not object to the object.
- 11) The insurance was invalid for the invalid.
- 12) There was a row among the oarsmen about how to row .
- 13) They were too close to the door to close it.
- 14) The buck does funny things when the does are present.
- 15) A seamstress and a sewer fell down into a sewer line.
- 16) To help with planting, the farmer taught his sow to sow.
- 17) The wind was too strong to

wind the sail.

18) Upon seeing the tear in the painting I shed a tear.

19) I had to subject the subject to a series of tests.

20) How can I intimate this to my most intimate friend?

Let's face it - English is a crazy language. There is no egg in eggplant, nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England or French fries in France. Sweetmeats are candies while sweetbreads, which aren't sweet, are meat. We take English for granted. But if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig.

And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham? If the plural of tooth is teeth, why isn't the plural of booth, beeth? One goose, 2 geese. So one moose, 2 meese? One index, 2 indices? Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend? If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat? Sometimes I think all the English speakers should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane. In what language do people recite at a play and play at a recital? Ship by truck and send cargo by ship? Have noses that run and feet that smell?

How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites? You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out and in which, an alarm goes off by going on.

English was invented by people, not

computers, and it reflects the creativity of the human race, which, of course, is not a race at all. That is why, when the stars are out, they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are invisible.

There is a two-letter word that perhaps has more meanings than any other two-letter word, and that is "UP."

It's easy to understand UP, meaning toward the sky or at the top of the list, but when we awaken in the morning, why do we wake UP? At a meeting, why does a topic come UP? Why do we speak UP and why are the officers UP for election and why is it UP to the secretary to write UP a report?

We call UP our friends. And we use it to brighten UP a room, polish UP the silver, we warm UP the leftovers and clean UP the kitchen. We lock UP the house and some guys fix UP the old car. At other times the little word has real special meaning. People stir UP trouble, line UP for tickets, work UP an appetite, and think UP excuses. To be dressed is one thing, but to be dressed UP is special.

And this UP is confusing: A drain must be opened UP because it is stopped UP. We open UP a store in the morning but we close it UP at night.

We seem to be pretty mixed UP about UP! To be knowledgeable about the proper uses of UP, look the word UP in the dictionary. In a desk-sized dictionary, it takes UP almost 1/4th of the page and can add UP to about thirty definitions. If you are UP to it, you might try building UP a list of the many ways UP is used. It will take UP a lot of your time, but if you don't give UP, you may wind UP with a hundred or more. When it threatens to rain, we say it is clouding UP. When the sun comes out we say it is clearing UP.

When it rains, it wets the earth and often messes things UP. When it doesn't rain for awhile, things dry UP.

One could go on and on, but I'll wrap it UP, for now my time is UP, so..... it is time to shut UP.!

Karen Peatt

CRITIQUE SESSIONS BY DIANE BEER

We can't waste a moment. Every writer needs their work checked before sending it to an editor. Critiquing is an important element of helping members in the group.

When a writer has their work assessed at a critique session they are trusting us to give them strong feedback.

We can inhibit a writer so easily by assuming they know their work is good, and that they need no further encouragement. Or by ignoring their need for guidance to simply strengthen their resolve to continue writing.

We can't just assume that the best writers within the group do not need just as much feedback as the beginners.

Every session is important every writer – and just as important to ourselves.

Because if we learn to critique well-while reading or listening – we improve our own writing skills.

The best critiquers make the best writers.

If writers come along to critique sessions without work – their involvement is sometimes more important than those who bring work to be assessed. Everyone in the group is coming to exchange information and learn further skills – and we should learn to strengthen everyone within every group.

We need to keep a few points in mind when evaluating work.

We should be honest, but kind and intuitive about the needs of each writer.

We should be aware of how our critique will advance skills and to that end we need to know what we are looking for in each piece of work.

The first step is to help every to obtain their goal – whatever that goal may be.

Is the HOOK strong enough to make an editor or reader want to continue reading.

Will the CONFLICT be strong enough to sustain the book?

Is the work PROFESSIONALLY presented?

Are the transitions in place?

Does every scene/sentence move the story forward or is the writing too descriptive and not succinct enough to keep the reader turning the pages.

Are the CHARACTERS unique – memorable?

Is the PACING right?

Does the DIALOGUE sound realistic?

What is the book's projected market?

Has the book got a realistic premise...even if its science fiction everything must appear CREDIBLE within the context of the story

Check the GRAMMAR

Are the TENSES are right?

Check that you are not being biased because you don't like the genre.

Does the work rave on without communicating with the reader?

If the piece of work were entered in a contest and you were the judge – how would you mentally score the work.

Can you honestly assess the best and worst in a piece of writing in a fair and unbiased manner while still advancing the skills of the writer?

MORE GOOD NEWS!

Following the successful launch of his book 'Hollywood, Amaroo' by the Federal MP and Member for Adelaide Kate Ellis, Nicholas Fourikis has now submitted copies of his book for the Colin Roderick Award and for the Queensland / Victorian Premier's Literary Awards.

With Diane's help he has also submitted his book for the Age Book of the Year Awards.

Federal MP and Member for Adelaide Kate Ellis read sections of Nick's book at the book launch held in the SA Writers' Centre and was glowing in her praise for the sensitively written work which addresses serious social problems in Australia within this dynamic novel.

Congratulations Nick!



Federal MP and Member for Adelaide Kate Ellis at the launch.

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HELP US TO HELP YOU IN 2007

TELL US WHAT YOU NEED?

WHAT INFORMATION WOULD HELP YOU TO GET PUBLISHED?

DO YOU WANT MORE WORKSHOPS?

DO YOU WANT MORE SPEAKERS? – WHAT SUBJECTS?

SEND YOUR EMAILS TO dyo@ozemail.com.au



**** Reminder - May Meetings ****

**** Saturday 5th May at 2.00 pm**

Critique Sessions

12 Sandford Street, Kensington Gardens, 8332 6085

The sessions are run by Barbara Brockhoff.

**** Friday 18th May at 6.30 pm**

Announcing winners of the Short Story and Poetry Competition.

Critique sessions will follow.

**** REMINDER ****

**MEMBERSHIP FEES
DUE JANUARY 2007**

\$25 per annum

Send cheque or money order to:

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