

# The Writer's Life

*Memoir isn't the summary of a life; it's a window into a life . . . William Zinsser, 2006*

[www.sdwritersguild.org](http://www.sdwritersguild.org)

June 2013



## The Evolution of a Memoir . . . by Jill Williams

From the first idea to the finished manuscript, writing a memoir requires creative flexibility. Jill Williams, author of *Confessions of a Love Addict*, will take you step-by-step through the various changes her book underwent before it was published i.e. finding an agent, a publisher, and even the right idea. She will include ideas on how to find the right publisher online, the value of writers' workshops, and whether publicists are really necessary. Jill's six-week memoir-writing course "Writing Memoirs That Sell" has been well received at the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute in Tucson, her hometown. Jill has authored six books on a variety of topics including formal poetry, pet

photography, and celebrity health secrets as well as the book, music, and lyrics for the Broadway musical *Rainbow Jones*. Join us on June 24<sup>th</sup> to hear this lively speaker.

## Setting the Price of Your Book

Factors that influence the pricing of your book include preparation and production costs you want to recoup, competition of similar books, your goals for your book, and your philosophy.

You might want to set a lower price if: 1) you are a first time author and still establishing your brand, expertise, and audience, 2) if you anticipate your book will stay current and sell for several years, 3) similar books are priced low, 4) you had low production costs, and 5) you want to give the impression of empathy instead of greed.

A higher price might be related to: 1) having high production costs, 2) being established as an expert in your field and having a following, 3) putting you in line with competing authors, 4) a higher price indicating higher quality, and 5) whether your book will have a short run, then be out of date.

Source: Sansevieri, Penny C. "The Book Marketing Expert Newsletter", 5/9/13.

### Coming Soon to SDW/EG

**July 24, 2013** - Caitlin Rother, a San Diego author of true crime novels.

**August 22, 2013** - Elise Capron, of the Sandra Dijkstra Literary Agency, will discuss criteria for Memoir Manuscripts.

**The next meeting is June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

*Networking 6:30–Business meeting 6:45–Program 7–8:30 PM*

## The Prez Says . . .

Looking for an outlet for your creativity? During the next several weeks the nominating committee will develop the ballot for the election of the 2014 Board of Directors in October. It is anticipated that several positions will become vacant. A director may serve on a committee or work on a new or continuing Guild project.

If you would like to be involved behind the scenes, please call Gered Beeby, Rick Peterson or Ellen Tufts.

A term of office is for two years. Board members meet once a month from 5:30 to 7:00 PM, as well as attend the general meeting.

*Ruth Leyse-Wallace*

## A Tip of the Hat To . . .

**Gary Winters**, who was invited to read his poetry for the San Diego Art & Poetry Series at the Museum of the Living Artist in Balboa Park.

**Gered Beeby**, whose screenplay "Dark Option," based on his novel of industrial espionage, was entered into the Fade-In screenplay contest in the Thriller genre. It has placed as a Quarter-Finalist (so far).

**Ruth Leyse-Wallace**, who self-published her pamphlet, *Support Your Mental Health With Good Nutrition*. Her pamphlet is available at our meetings.

**Ralph Cates**, who was nominated by the San Diego Book Awards for his book, *The Phoenix Agenda* under Published-Action, Suspense & Thriller. Good luck, Ralph!

## What You Missed: Curried Crickets, Twitter and Bartlett by Ellen S. Tufts

"It's a great job in a tough industry---if things get crazy at deadline, I take a walk, think about my cat, Bartlett, or read Nora Ephron (books)," said U-T San Diego critic-at-large and columnist Karla Peterson, our distinguished speaker at the April 20 membership meeting.

An editorial staffer since 1985, Peterson came aboard as a clerk/typist after her Harcourt Brace & Co. publishing stint and, before that, as a *Daily Aztec* columnist at (her alma mater) San Diego State University (SDSU).

"I'm an English major who's always loved poetry and theater—and now I'm paid to write," she noted, explaining how she soon became the U-T pop culture critic. During the lively evening, she commented on newspaper life, the lowdown on Pulitzer Prize nominations—it's an inside selection—also the merits of Twitter and her lifelong fascination with the *Los Angeles Times*, which she believes will survive despite the ominous status of American dailies.

"Reporting is solitary," she noted, admitting moments of journalistic self-doubt and fear of critical editors.

"But you always pull it off," her editors assured her and as a U-T survivor, Peterson has witnessed the newspaper's merger with the *San Diego Evening Tribune* in 1992, also the Platinum Equity purge and job cuts in 2009 and the 2011 takeover by current U-T publisher Doug Manchester. Her beat has included covering a wide range of features including mayoral campaigns, conventions, and even funky food fairs (she once sampled stir-fried curried crickets) and celebrity interviews with actor George Hamilton and other luminaries such as Michelle Pfeiffer, Oprah Winfrey and Harrison Ford.

"I still have deadline jitters and grammatical angst," said this brilliantly funny and often self-deprecating speaker who brought us a big slice of U-T San Diego life on a warm April evening.

---

## Five W's of Having Your Book Translated

WHY should you consider translation?

WHERE do you find a translator?

WHO should translate your book?

WHICH books are good candidates for translation and which languages should you consider? >>

## Types of Publishing

The difference between vanity publishing and self-publishing has been described as follows:

### Self Publishing

- Author is the publisher
- Author owns the ISBN
- Author owns the printing files
- Author pays all the production costs
- Author earns a royalty
- Author earns the publisher profit

### Vanity Publishing

- Vanity Press is the publisher
- Vanity Press owns the ISBN
- Vanity Press owns the printing files
- Author pays all the production costs
- Author earns a royalty
- Vanity Press earns the publisher profit <sup>1</sup>

Alternate terms include "fee-based" publishing, "joint venture", or "co-op," or "partner," or "equity" publishers. Whatever you pay, it covers 100% of the cost and then some. Some may only print submitted work, and may not be selective in what they print, some offer services for a fee. This may include "Print-on-Demand" and electronic self-publishing.

**Self-publishing Services** fall somewhere between vanity/subsidy publishing and true self-publishing. Service companies may make non-exclusive claim on author's rights.

**True self-publishing**, requires the author to bear the entire cost of publication, and also leaves marketing and promotion to the author. Every aspect of the process can be out to bid, so can be more cost effective than vanity publishing. All rights, and all profits, remain with the author.

**Commercial or trade publishers** purchase the right to publish a manuscript (usually together with other rights, known as subsidiary rights). They handle every aspect of editing, publication, distribution, and marketing. There are no costs to the author.

### Sources:

1) Ron Pramschuer [[ron@selfpublishing.com](mailto:ron@selfpublishing.com)]

2) <http://www.sfga.org/other-resources/for-authors/writer-beware/vanity/> ]

---

>> **Having Your Book Translated** continued  
WHEN is a good time to have your book translated?

For more information see:

<http://marciebrockbookmarketingmaven.wordpress.com/2012/06/27/the-5-ws-of-having-your-book-translated/books-globe-and-glasses/>

## American Trivia . . .

by **Richard Lederer and  
Caroline McCullagh**

SDW/EG members Richard Lederer and Caroline McCullagh are the proud co-authors of *American Trivia: What We All Should Know About U.S. History, Culture & Geography* (Gibbs Smith Publisher, 2012). Over a span of three years, Rich and Caroline will share with you their journey through American history.

### **The Home of the Brave (Part III)**

America seems to be good at making heroes when they're needed. We see them in our daily lives: the police officer, the firefighter, the soldier, and the crusader for a just cause. Sometimes they rise to astonishing heights when circumstances require it. We certainly witnessed extraordinary bravery and sacrifice on 9/11.

**Clara Barton (1821-1912)** started her career as a teacher and clerk, but became interested in the health field. During the Civil War, she cared for wounded soldiers on the battlefield. When the war ended, she created a bureau to look for missing men. On a trip to Switzerland, she learned about the Red Cross, based in Zurich. She worked with the organization during the Franco-Prussian War. In 1873, she returned to the United States to facilitate the creation of the American Red Cross. She was president of the organization from 1882 to 1904, when she retired.

**Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919)** had to leave school after only three years. His family moved from Scotland to Allegheny, Pennsylvania, when he was fourteen. He started work as a messenger boy for a telegraph company; and, through good luck, he was introduced to Colonel James Anderson, who opened his personal library to young workers on Saturdays. Carnegie educated himself and rose to become one of the richest men in America as the founder of Carnegie Steel Company. In 1901, he sold his company for \$480 million. Carnegie believed in philanthropy. Over his remaining years, he gave away more than 90 percent of his fortune. As part of his charitable effort, he founded three thousand libraries and educated the people to staff them. He also funded the construction of seven thousand church organs.

**Helen Keller (1880-1968)** became blind and deaf at the age of nineteen months because of illness. Wild and unruly, she didn't learn to talk and had no way of communicating. Shortly before Helen's seventh birthday, Anne Sullivan (1866-1936), >>

## Revising Tips. . . by Laurie Richards

**Dull Beginnings.** It's the action that interests the reader; not the beginning of the action. "John banged the drum" is more lively than "John began to bang the drum". If the start of an action is worth discussing, show the beginning (see examples below). If not, drop the useless phrase and strengthen the verb.

**Example:** *After several days in bed, Helen began to heal.*

**Cure:** For days, Helen lay in bed feverish, aware only of the pain throbbing in her legs. But on Monday, she awoke to crows squawking on the clothesline outside, and floral scents wafting through her window with a breeze that soothed her skin.

**Example:** *He began to open the door.*

**Cure:** He opened the door a few inches, then listened for any sound of stealth, feet shuffling down the hall, a scraping against the walls, the click of a revolver.

**Example:** *I began to wonder what kept me in the relationship.*

**Cure:** What perverse need locked me to Evelyn? She gave her scurvy mutt more attention than me.

**Tip:** Analyze whether a beginning is significant to the story. If it is, substitute interesting action for the lifeless phrasing. If not, drop it and emphasize the verb.

**The San Diego Book Awards** will be held June 22<sup>nd</sup>, from 6:00 -9:00 PM. RSVP at [www.sandiegobookawards.org](http://www.sandiegobookawards.org) by June 19<sup>th</sup> if you would like to join the celebration. The evening includes a reception, dessert and door prizes.

>>**The Home of the Brave (Part III)** continued a remarkable teacher, came into her life and remained with her until her (Anne's) death. Anne taught Helen to sign and to read and write in Braille. By the time she was sixteen, she learned to speak. Helen graduated from Radcliffe College cum laude and became an author, speaker, political activist, recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters. She traveled and lectured throughout the world, working to improve the lives of the blind and the deaf-blind.

**San Diego Writers/Editors Guild**  
**Post Office Box 881931**  
**San Diego, CA 92168**

<p><b>The Writer's Life</b> is published by  The San Diego Writers/Editors Guild  P. O. Box 881931  San Diego, CA 92168  Telephone: (619) 445-6656  General Meetings:      The Fourth Monday of the month      6:30 P.M. - Sign-in and Networking      6:45 P.M. - Business Meeting      7:00 - 8:30 P.M. - Speaker/Program  Location: 3851 Rosecrans, SD,CA 92110      San Diego County      Health Services Complex  Visit our web site for a map      <a href="http://www.SDWritersGuild.org">www.SDWritersGuild.org</a>  Membership: \$36.00 per year  Guests: \$5.00 per meeting</p>	Board Of Directors		Term Expires December 31st
	President	Ruth Leyse-Wallace	2013
	Vice President	Bob Doublebower	2014
	Secretary	Barbara Crothers	2013
	Treasurer	Marcia Buompensiero	2014
	Membership Chairman	Rick Peterson	2014
	Directors-At- Large	Gered Beeby Linda Loegel Ellen Shaw Tufts	2014 2013 2013
	Past President	Sam Warren	
	<p><b>Mission Statement</b>  The San Diego Writers/Editors Guild shall  promote, support, and encourage  the writing arts for adults and youth.</p>		