

# The Writer's Life

Just one idea, one person, one book, and everything can change.  
Life's Little Instruction Calendar

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

August, 2013

San Diego  
Writers Editors  
Guild  
Since 1979

## The Author-Agent Relationship: Making it a Reality - Making it Work

Are you ready to start your hunt for an agent? How do you know when your work is ready, and how do you find the right agent for you? What can you do to make your work (and yourself!) attractive to an agency? When an agent expresses interest, what should you look for? What does an author-agent contract look like?



**Literary Agent Elise Capron** will lead you through the inner workings of finding an agent, working with an agent, and getting the most out of the relationship. She will explain what a day in an agent's life looks like, turn-ons and turn-offs when it comes to submissions, how agents make judgment calls, and give tips on how to find your perfect agent-match and create a successful partnership.

Elise Capron is an agent at the Sandra Dijkstra Literary Agency, established over 30 years ago, and is known for guiding the careers of many best-selling fiction and non-fiction authors. She joined the Dijkstra Agency in late 2003. Elise is most interested in serious character-driven literary fiction with unforgettable writing, a terrific narrative voice/toner, and memorable characters. She loves novels with an unusual or eccentric edge, and is drawn to stories she has never heard before. On the non-fiction front, she is looking primarily for well-written narrative nonfiction, particularly history. **Join us on August 26<sup>th</sup> to hear Elise!**

## Thinking of Translating Your Book?

A first step toward translation is to research how popular your genre is in the target culture. Crime fiction, for example, is extremely popular in Scandinavia, while fantasy is more popular in China. Note that ebooks are not yet as pervasive in all countries as they are in the U.S.

Translations are much more widely accepted internationally than they are in North America. In countries like the Czech Republic, eighty percent of all new works of literature published each year are translations. In the U.S. market, only three percent of all new books published each year are translations.

Translators work *from* their second language, translating *into* their mother tongue and not vice-versa. Translators have areas of expertise: try to find someone who has experience in your field. Translators can be certified by a professional association, such as The American Translators Association (ATA) and the American Literary Translators Association (ALTA).

Good translators are also good writers. In today's world, it can also be important to hire a translator who is computer literate

Translators, like freelance writers, are generally paid by the word. One study indicates translation rates range between 10¢ and 15¢ (U.S.) per word. That average includes high-end specialty work, such as corporate, scientific, and technical translation. Literary translators make less, unless they are the best and working for the top writers in the world.

Good communication between author and publisher.

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## The Prez Says . . .

It is time to buckle down and get your submission finished and turned in to editor Linda Loegel for *The Gilded Pen*, 2013.

Attention authors of non-fiction! Let Bob Doublebower or me know if you are interested in helping with the process of completing a non-fiction Manuscript Evaluation Form for our manuscript Review Program. Close to fifty percent of SDW/EG members write non-fiction. An additional genre for the Manuscript Review Program could be a benefit to many.

Did you lose a hat? Found in a chair after the June meeting: a tan, narrow brim, cloth hat with a red & blue band. Contact me if it's yours.

*Ruth Leyse-Wallace*

**The next meeting is August 26th, 2013**

Networking 6:30 PM–Business meeting 6:45PM

Program 7-8:30 PM

>> can affect the quality of the translation immensely. It helps to view your translator as a co-author of your work in the target language. Giving credit in the form of an additional byline is good practice.

Sources: Jim Pierce at <http://www.writing-world.com/international/translation.shtml> and <http://marciebrockbookmarketingmaven.wordpress.com/2012/06/27/the-5-ways-of-having-your-book-translated/>

## A Tip of the Hat To . . . by Linda Loegel

**Larry Edwards**, whose memoir, *Dare I Call it Murder?*, was published by Wigeon Publishing in July, 2013 and was soon ranked second in Amazon's "Hot New Releases."

**Margaret Harmon**, whose book, *The Genie Who Had Wishes of His Own*, was published by Plowshare Media in July 2013.

**Gary Winters**, whose flash short story, *Leather Jacket* appeared in the 2013 winter edition of *Whisperings*.

*If you, or someone you know, has published a book, scheduled a book signing, or some other accomplishment to share, please contact Linda Loegel at [nlroirons@cox.net](mailto:nlroirons@cox.net) to be included in our next newsletter. Let your light shine!*

## What You Missed

### "Keep Your Cool" advised Caitlin Rother

Audience members have many different perspectives and agendas, which may or may not coincide with yours as a writer, speaker, or radio guest. Caitlin Rother described her methods of maintaining composure and keeping on target during public speaking.

She suggested writing down talking points in preparation for meeting the public. Keep them well in mind during a presentation. Being very clear with yourself about what points you want to make helps prevent getting distracted if you are interrupted. She also suggested spending time clearing your mind of fears or negative thoughts about the topic or persons involved. Caitlin described some events that tested her resolve and how she was able to turn around potentially negative reactions by returning to her talking points and being clear about her motivations and actions.

In writing about true crime, writers become involved with people and situations other writers don't often address. Caitlin comments that it is important to be compassionate, non-judgmental, objective and fair. Her desire in writing *Lost Girls* and other true crime novels is to shed light on circumstances that could lead to prevention of similar events.

Next fall Caitlin will be teaching courses in narrative fiction at UCSD Extension and in classes at San Diego Writers, Ink.

Her ninth true-crime book, "I'll Take Care of You," is scheduled to be published January, 2014.

## Online Services to Help You Publish and Sell . . . . . by Carla King

**Scrivener** is a writing and organization tool that lets you export to ebook and print formats. Distribute and sell the ebook files as you wish.

**PressBooks** is a free, browser-based publishing system based on WordPress blog software. Publish in both ebook and print formats. They promote BookBaby's ebook distribution service, but you keep the files to distribute as you wish.

**Leanpub** is both a publishing tool and an online store that specializes in selling in-progress ebooks. Upload your digital files to their online store, set minimum and suggested prices for your book, and readers can pay what they want. When you update the book, readers are automatically notified. Leanpub charges 10% minus 50 cents per sale.

**Gumroad** is an online store that sells your digital files (that you create with Scrivener, Pressbooks, Word, Folium Book Studio... it's up to you!). Automatically share your item with your Twitter and Facebook networks. Set a price or let the customer choose with pay-what-you-want pricing. You get customer data, 95% royalty and a 25¢ transaction fee.

Carla King is an author, a publishing consultant, and founder of the Self-Publishing Boot Camp program providing books, lectures and workshops for prospective self-publishers. Find out more on [SelfPubBootCamp.com](http://SelfPubBootCamp.com) and [CarlaKing.com](http://CarlaKing.com) . . . . .

Welcome to San Diego, Carla.

## Definitions For Non-Fiction Writers

Three important legal considerations that nonfiction writers should be familiar with are libel, and the rights of privacy, and publicity.

**Libel:** Libel is the written form of defamation.

**Defamation** has been defined as any written or oral statement that injures a third party's reputation.

**Slander** is the oral form of defamation.

Source: Professor Tonya Evans,  
*Book Marketing Matters*, Nov 2012

## Coming Soon to SDW/EG

**September 23, 2013** – **Larry Edwards** will present "Taking the Mystery Out of e-book Publishing"

**October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2013** – **Field trip** -Tour of new downtown San Diego library; Meet at library: [330 Park Blvd](#), SD, 92101. Tour is from 7:00-8:00 PM.

A "Word Diet": Sit in that chair until you have written 1000 words every day.

Tom Lucas. Sept, 2013 *Writers Digest* p. 41.

## 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 Land of the Free

Some of our ancestors came to the New World to find freedom: freedom of thought, freedom of religion, freedom from the old shackles of caste and class. Others were transported as slaves. Once here, they didn't wait for freedom; they strove to achieve it:

**Sojourner Truth** (1797-1883) was born Isabella Baumfree, a slave in Ulster County, New York, and was freed in 1827, when New York outlawed slavery. Taking the name Sojourner Truth, she became an evangelist and social reformer preaching for abolition and women's rights. She helped many escaped slaves. In 1864, she visited President Abraham Lincoln in the White House. She also received many posthumous honors. A stamp honoring her was issued in 1986; a Mars probe was named after her in 1997; and she was honored with a bust in the U.S. Capitol in 2008.

**Levi** (1798-1877) and **Catherine Coffin** (1803-1881), Quakers in what is now Fountain City, Indiana, welcomed and helped more than three thousand slaves on their way to freedom in northern states and Canada via the Underground Railroad.

**Elizabeth Cady Stanton** (1815-1902) led the early battle for women's suffrage and for the abolition of slavery. She and Lucretia Mott (1793-1880) organized the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, the nation's first public women's rights meeting. In 1865, she broke with the abolitionists, who favored allowing voting for African Americans but not for women. In 1869, Stanton and Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906) founded the National Woman Suffrage Association. Stanton served as president of the association and its successor organization, the National American Women Suffrage Association, for more than 30 years. None of the three women lived to see the 1919 adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution granting women the right to vote.

**Frederick Douglass** (1818?-1895) escaped from his slave master in 1838. Three years later, he spoke eloquently about freedom at a meeting of the Massachusetts Antislavery Society, which immediately hired him to travel and lecture about being a slave. He protested segregation on trains and in churches. In 1845, Douglass published his first autobiography, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*. Fearing >>

## Revising Tips . . . by Laurie Richards

### Hibernation: Trick Your Internal Critic

Whenever you're working on the kernel of an idea, ignore all the revision tips I've presented in this newsletter. Trick your internal critic into taking a rest so you can awaken your creativity. Creating and editing are two separate processes that use different sides of your brain. If you try doing both at once, you'll dilute your best ideas. The first, even second time around, don't go for that perfect sentence; go for originality.

How do you trick your internal critic? Practice freewriting. With a pen or pencil, start writing and keep the words, phrases and sentences coming. Fast. Don't cross out; don't stop; don't even punctuate. Don't read what you've done until you're done. Write whatever comes for as long as you want. Just play. If you can't tear yourself away from the computer to use a pen or pencil, switch off your monitor when you're typing. You can't edit what you can't see.

You'll be surprised at the results. You'll discover unknown things about your characters and even unknown characters. They'll be barreling through forests and leaping over fences to breathe free and tell you more about themselves.

**Tip:** Your internal critic can be a bear. Let it hibernate when your story needs to roar like a lion.

#### Good Words

**Hamartia:** the fatal flaw of an honorable man, resulting in disproportionate misfortune.

**Hubris:** the thrill of living by a different set of rules than normal mortals.

(used by Michael Gershon in the Washington Post when writing about General David Petraeus.)

### New Location for Writers' Ink

Writers' Ink has moved to NTC Liberty Station off Rosecrans. Their new location is 2730 Historic Decatur Road, Barracks 16, Suite 22, San Diego, 92106. Classes and other activities will be held at the new address.

#### >>The Land of the Free, continued

capture when the book was released, he fled to England and Ireland, where he earned enough money to return to the United States in 1847 in order to buy his freedom. He founded several antislavery newspapers, including the *North Star*, in Rochester, New York, and continued to speak and work against slavery and discrimination. During the Civil War, Douglass helped recruit African Americans for the Union Army and consulted several times with President Lincoln. After the war, he worked to gain civil rights for former slaves. He also supported the cause of women's suffrage.

**San Diego Writers/Editors Guild**  
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	<p>Mission Statement</p> <p>The San Diego Writers/Editors Guild shall  promote, support, and encourage  the writing arts for adults and youth.</p>		