

March's Program Dan Poynter: Finding Book Customers



by Samantha Berley

Dan Poynter is an author (130+ books), publisher (since 1969), and speaker (Certified Speaking Professional). His seminars have been featured on CNN, his books have been pictured in The Wall Street Journal and his story has been told in The New York Times. The media

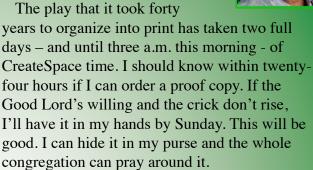
come to Dan because he is the leading authority on book publishing. A professional speaker, he travels worldwide, more than 6,000 miles each week to share his book plan. He lives in Santa Barbara.

The March 7th lecture will be on, "Finding book customers," where Mr. Poynter will describe what is going on in the publishing industry and cover ways to find customers for your book. □



President's Message Nance Crawford

I lost a day. My deadline is twelve and a half hours ago.



Self Publishing is about doing yourself. I do it myself. It's easy, once you get used to it. Well, tolerable.

For me, the problem with being a writer is not so much finding the time to write, it's finding the

time to do something about it when the project is finished. Especially around the holidays. For a while there, it felt as if Santa had let Rudolf eat my book.

It's all about going out to launch. Where to send it? When to send it. How to get the attention every author feels his/her work deserves.

Timing being everything, the launch of *KING'S GAMES*, *A Memoir of Richard III*, may be very effective.

There are about five thousand members of the Richard III Society, and only thirty from the U.S. and Canada are going the Leicester, UK, for the re-interment of The King in the Car Park.

My name was pulled from the hat and I have a reserved seat at one of the memorial services.

Talk about timing.

It's Leprechaun Month. Richard III's father, sent to Ireland as a form of exile, returned beloved of the Irish – the first English Lord Lieutenant who treated them well.

I'm going to strike up a long conversation with St. Patrick. See you soon! \Box

The Valley Scribe March, 2015 2 Vol. 8 No. 8.

February Review — Alana Saltz By Andi Polk

It is inspiring to see a young woman with something to say about writing. Alana's topic, "Road to MFA: Education and Writing" was laced with encouragement for those among us still wondering if we can learn the intricacies of this fine art. It was an ode to teachers and education.

Contrary to the view that writing is "natural" — a gift that cannot be taught, it can and is. A writer, blogger and free-lance editor, Alana recently received her Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing, and has written a memoir about mental illness. She demonstrates you don't have to be a senior citizen to have a worthy personal story.

Her authorship started very young. A second grade project for students to write and illustrate stories to be printed was the initial catalyst for her career choice. She came home with her illustrated story in a book to show her parents. Beaming with pride of accomplishment, she saw herself an author.

Acknowledging the important informal venues for learning, she reviewed the contributions of writing seminars, conferences, workshops and critique groups. Saltz, however, chose a more formal path. After earning her BA in English at Occidental, where she also learned the art of criticism, she selected a low residency masters program through Antioch College. The two-year program allows students to have a more age diverse population to learn from, periods of intense ten-day residency, a close on-line mentoring relationship with the teacher and freedom to write from home.

Although some aspects of writing may be more difficult to learn, they can be learned. Ending with the value of feedback in critique groups, she stressed the importance of developing a writing community for support and criticism. A writer's website, blog and/or social media accounts help build potential readers. She believed blogging was losing to Twitter in popularity.

She was asked to define editing terms.

'Content Editing' (Line or Development) asks the question, "Does the material make sense?", and focuses on plot, scenes, character development and structure.

'Copy Editing' is the basic intensive editing for technical aspects e.g., grammar, punctuation, and clarity.

'Proofreading' is marking the errors after the manuscript has been edited.

It was a rainy day and she shined the light on learning. \Box

CWC WEBMASTER STILL NEEDED

Donna McCrohan Rosenthal, State Publicity Chair

The CWC is looking for our next state webmaster. Duties include: software maintenance of the CWC and CB Forum websites; managing the domain name license(s) and hosting account; changes to site branch links as directed, addition or removal of special notices, and removal of outdated material and links as specified by the PR Director; regular data security, backup, archiving, and recovery; software updates to be completed within six (6) months of availability; and brief quarterly written activity reports submitted to the PR Director. Any needed major redesigns or changes will be separately contracted.

In terms of skills, we need somebody who has the ability to follow directions, to work cooperatively with others as well as independently, the ability to solve technical problems, familiarity and experience with Word Press, general knowledge of 'Dynamic Webpage' architecture, and familiarity with web technology (HTML, FTP). Experience and familiarity with CSS, mySql, and PHP is a plus.

Contracted monthly compensation will be determined based on experience, skills, and the Club's ability to pay. The estimated workload is 2-4 hours per month barring (separately negotiated) major upgrades.

Interested web masters should contact Ray Malus at CWC-SFV@roadrunner.com. We look forward to hearing from you. Deadline March 15. □

What's In A Name?

In some cases, a LOT.

In the case of Ray Malus' new book, *Letters to 'J*', it led to a dispute that resulted in the book's being 'pulled' from the market.

It is being re-issued using the author's pseudonym, 'R. Marlow'.

Unfortunately, the original version remains listed on Amazon (with a different ISBN) but is flagged 'unavailable'.



Malus says he knows this will lead to endless confusion, and is deeply sorry, but, as they say, "That's the way it goes in the World of 'Letters."

(Available on Amazon, Kindle, and in better Bookstores.)



The Semicolon

A semicolon may be used to link two closely related sentences.

She was slightly nervous with him; she was utterly frantic without him.

But hardly any professional writers use the semicolon this way any more. They just end the first sentence with a period and begin another.

She was slightly nervous with him. She was utterly frantic without him.

If the items in a series of word groups contain other commas, a semicolon is used to separate the items. In the following sentence, the semicolon makes it clear that Ivana took three people to lunch, not six.

Ivana took Mrs. Reed, her best friend; Marco, her makeup consultant; and Jose, her hairdresser, to lunch at the Brown Derby.

When there are additional commas in a compound sentence, a semicolon, not a comma, precedes the conjunction.

To their relief, Orville, a graphic artist, said he would be happy to help them out; but Bill, suspicious of Orville's motives, objected to his inclusion, prompted, we suspected, by jealousy.

The Colon

A colon is used to prepare for an answer that comes at the end of the sentence, so to speak. A colon must always have a complete sentence to the left of it. This answer can be one item or a list of items.

The most common element in all Mother's recipes was missing: garlic.

The evidence was found later: a camera, a map, and a pistol.

If you prefer items to come at the beginning of a sentence or in the middle of a sentence, you might use dashes.

The evidence — a camera, a map, and a pistol — was found later.

Capitalization

When a word is used to refer to a member of a class larger than itself, the word is not capitalized. These words are usually preceded by possessive pronouns like a, an, the, my, his, her, their

my mother (class = mothers)

the colonel (class = colonels)

their father (class = fathers)

the club president (class = presidents)

When one of the above is used with a name that is normally capitalized, it is capitalized also.

Mother Teresa

Colonel Whipple

Father Briggs

President Obama

The word president, when referring to the President of the United States, however, is capitalized. We waited for the President's speech.

When the same word is used in direct address in place of the proper name, the word is capitalized. When are you coming outside to join us, Colonel?



As always, please check the websites for more information before submitting. When you see "ms" or "mss" this means manuscript and manuscripts respectively. Best wishes and good luck to all!

THE LISTENING EYE

Kent State University Geauga Campus, 14111 Claridon-Troy Rd., Burton, OH 44021.

Phone: (440) 286-3840. E-mail: grace_butcher@msn.com

Contact: Grace Butcher, editor.

"We look for powerful, unusual imagery, content, and plot in our short stories. In poetry, we look for tight lines that don't sound like prose, unexpected images or juxtapositions, the unusual use of language, noticeable relationships of sounds, a twist in viewpoint, an ordinary idea in extraordinary language, an amazing and complex idea simply stated, play on words and with words, an obvious love of language."

Magazine: 5.5×8.5, 60 pages, photographs. "We publish the occasional very short stories (750 words/3 pages double-spaced) in any subject and any style, but the language must be strong, unusual, free from cliché and vagueness." Reads submissions January 1-April 15 only.

Established: 1970. Acquires first or one-time rights. Circulation: 250. Sample copy: \$3, plus \$1 postage. Writer's guidelines for SASE. Responds in 4 weeks to queries, 4 months to mss. Publish period after acceptance: Time between acceptance and publication is up to 6 months.

Fiction. "Pretty much anything will be considered except porn." Recently published work by Simon Perchik, Lyn Lifshin, and John Hart. Publishes short shorts. Also publishes poetry. Sometimes comments on rejected mss. Literary fiction. Send SASE for return of ms or disposable copy of ms with SASE for reply only.

Poetry. Submit up to 4 poems at a time. Accepts previously published poems "occasionally." No simultaneous submissions. No e-mail submissions, "unless from overseas." Cover letter is required. Poems should be typed, single-spaced, with 1 poem/page—name, address, phone number, and e-mail address in upper left corner of each page with SASE for return of work. Poems are circulated to the editor and 2 assistant editors who read and evaluate work separately, then meet for final decisions. Prefers shorter poems (less than 2 pages), but will consider longer if space allows.

Pays 2 contributor's copies.

Also Offers: Awards \$30 to the best sports poem in each issue.

SENECA REVIEW

Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, NY 14456.

Phone: (315) 781-3392. E-mail: senecareview@hws.edu. Website: www.hws.edu/academics/senecareview/index.aspx.

The editors have special interest in translations of contemporary poetry from around the world. Publisher of numerous laureates and award-winning poets, Seneca Review also publishes emerging writers and is always open to new, innovative work. Poems from SR are regularly honored by inclusion in The Best American Poetry and Pushcart Prize anthologies. Distributed internationally.

Semiannual magazine publishing mss of poetry, translations, essays on contemporary poetry, and lyric essays (creative nonfiction that borders on poetry).

Reading period is September 1-May 1.

Simultaneous Submissions: No. Guidelines available online. E-mail questions to senecareview@hws.edu. No kill fee. Responds in 3 months. Accepts queries by mail or via Submittable.

Essays. Length: up to 20 pages. **Poetry.** Max Poems: 5. **ESSAYS & FICTIONS**

Phone: (914) 572-7351. E-mail: <u>essaysandfictions@gmail.</u> <u>com</u>. Website: <u>essaysandfictions.com</u>.

Contact: David Pollock and Danielle Winterton, co-founding editors.

"Essays & Fictions publishes fictional essay, reflective essay, academic rhetorical essay, literary narrative essay, lyric essay, linear fiction, nonlinear fiction, essayistic fiction, fictionalized memoir, questionable histories, false historical accounts, botched accounts, cultural analysis, criticism or commentary, compositional analysis, criticism or commentary, or any blend thereof. We do not differentiate between essay and fiction in the table of contents because we consciously challenge the validity of genre boundaries and definitions." Semiannual. Established: 2007. Simultaneous Submissions: No. Guidelines available by e-mail or on website.

Acquires first and electronic rights. Publication is copyrighted. Circulation: 900 hits per month online, 100 issues print. Queries accepted by e-mail. Sample copy: \$15. Responds to mss in 1-8 months. Publish period after acceptance: Publishes ms 3-8 months after acceptance.

Nonfiction. Needs: essays, reviews.

Also publishes literary essays and literary criticism. Submissions: Send copy of reviews to David & Danielle.

Contributors get 1 free copy and 15% off additional copies of the issue in which they are published.

Fiction. Receives 10-20 mss/month. Accepts approx. 3/ month, 6/year. Reading periods: February 1-May 31 for October issue, and September 1-December 31 for May issue. Publishes 3-4 new writers each year. Needs: Ethnic, experimental, historical, humorous, short stories. Publishes short shorts. Also publishes literary criticism, and poetry, multicultural, feminist, gay, satire, lesbian, literary, translations.

Does not want "genre writing, American Realism, or straight, formulaic reflective memoir."

Send complete ms with cover letter. Length: up to 10,000 words. Average length: 3,000 words.

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Poetry. Contributors get 1 free copy and 15% off additional copies of the issue in which they are published. \square

Writing to the Right Brain

"Writer"

I think we all grew up with a specific idea of what the word "writer" means.

For most of us, it seems to evoke the image of the solitary novelist (or playwright, or poet) sitting in a garret (or kitchen or office), pounding on an old Underwood (or scratching with a quill pen), producing 'experiences' for the masses.

When we join a Writers Club, we need to broaden our ideas. There are technical writers, journalists, publicists, speech-writers... an endless spectrum of people who put words together to produce 'writing'. These, too, are "writers."

Several years ago, I was invited to be a guest at a critique group meeting. It was a general, and unfocused discussion. Lots of questions were asked. Lots of good ideas were tossed around. Lots of opinions (yes, mostly mine) were expressed. In the end, the group seemed to feel that I had 'helped' in some way.

Mine is a fairly organized mind. In the days that followed, I tried to 'tease out' a common thread — a central idea — from all the free-form conversation. Eventually, what I came up with was this:

I write poetry, plays, essays, vignettes, novels, reviews... But through it all, I am most comfortable when telling a story. (Even here, in this essay, I feel compelled to tell *this* story.) In spite of the fact that I recognize all these other forms of 'writing', I really am stuck with that original stereotype: the person who produces 'experiences'. And because I want to produce *experiences*, my whole focus is on appealing to the *feeling* part of my reader. All the advice and techniques I was espousing were focused on that.

So it was that the title "Writing to The Right Brain" was born.

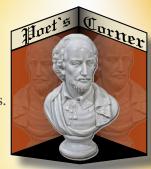
Over the ensuing months (and, indeed, in many preceding columns), I have developed many of these ideas. I'm sure more will occur to me, but for now, it seems like a fairly complete exploration.

I am grateful to those of you who read and validated these ideas. Even more so to a few who

Seeking A Little Fun

Erica Stux

The TV won't turn on.
The printer won't make copies.
There's a strange charge
on my credit card that
I'll have to cancel.



I need a little fun in my life, so I head for a nearby rec center where I know there are card games twice a week.

People in the gym are setting out trays of sandwiches.
Card games canceled today!
Graduation party later.

Seeing my disappointment, they ask "Would you like a sandwich? Turkey or ham?" They wrap a turkey in foil for me. So the trip wasn't a total waste.

I Had So Many Dear Friends

Norman Molesko

These friends I have known, loved and respected for years, continue to pass away as time goes by.

Their passings occur with a funeral and a hearse. At the end of each affair, the attendees disperse.

Memories of my friends stay in my head for awhile. Such memories do eventually fade away in time.

New relationships do not replace the old ones I've had.

They establish new and different connections.

reprinted and distributed some of them.

I will take a little time to organize them into a collection and publish them.

As I say, more may occur to me. If they do, I will write about them. But, for now, I relinquish this space, and invite one of you to fill it.

Thank you all.-=rjm=-

Dad's Foreign Streamer Trunk

Keyle Birnberg

I hear the sound of a whistle in the night... It's not a train, a bell, or a harmonica.

I'm afraid. The house is dark and the night is sliding quietly under my door and darkening my windows. There is a faint movement of old lace touching the square glass panes, and the heavy-lined drapes are whispering an old song between their folds.

I sit up covering my body all the way up to my neck with the heavy feather eiderdown quilt Dad brought over from Europe long ago. It survived even though some of the ship travelers advised him to throw it all into the sea as they were destined to cross part of the Equator where everything burned with sparks of fire.

An ecru-colored embroidered tablecloth held together with faint stitches soaked with siblings tears, came as well.

Dad's streamer trunk made of old wood was held together with rusty, metal nails in different sizes. Colorful oversized paper stamps in foreign color and shapes announce the port of entry and departure for far away places. The trunk almost drowned several times in the furious seas. It traveled with Dad all the way down to Argentina where la 'Punta de Fuego' ends in a point of glacial ice instead of fire. The passengers almost froze.

I dare to open the trunk. I see old albums heavy as if the people inside wake up from a long slumber. Pictures of Dad's parents, brothers and relatives I never met are staring straight ahead like in a trance — obeying someone's snapping fingers ordering them not to move until the count of one, two, three. They seem to be holding their breath waiting for a flash to explode, then exhaling, letting loose their muscles to fill in the extra-large material of their garb. Mid-calf dark dresses with faint dots cover the young bodies — girls wearing old short boots with tiny buttons on the side.

Boys with extra blousy shirts held in the middle with wide belts stare at the camera like a dare. One of the boys is Dad dressed in black like an old man. His father is wearing a big hat with fur around the rim like a rabbi.

Dad left the ship and went on his own to discover that Argentina was a beautiful country but riddled with old Nazis. He left to discover other small countries in between.

For many years Dad's steamer trunk lived with us, like a focal point of all else. We schlepped it from house to house as a precious heirloom.

When I was a child my hands gently played with empty match-boxes, hats, and scarves, rescued from the dust that holds Dad's memories inside the old trunk.

Time spills out in a blur. A glowing mist of summer days echo softly in my thoughts. My eyes brim with tears of delight. I hear voices as clear as a bell.

Mom saying, "Do not climb trees, nor roll on the grass, your white dress will stain green."

A clear breeze comes through my open window, and I hear church bells in the distance. I reach out to touch the glass. It turns to water inviting me to plunge through to discover hidden mysteries of yesterday.

What I see is a vision of a time when I lived in the very middle of the world where Dad landed in the very center part of the Equator. It was not an inferno of hot. Instead he planted himself in Quito, the city of eternal spring; curling smoke from chimneys over red-clay roofs, the oldest church sweating liquid gold down its walls, and heavy carved doors covered with enormous rusty-metal-nails.

I open a small crack to peek inside — the church's heavy door screeching of years of neglect. I inch my head in to see ebony saints with blank eyes staring at flickering candles, dancing shadows in the night. Each saint wearing silk studded with genuine rubies, sapphires and necklaces of gold.

Walls surrounding the cold space showing lines of Hebrew writings just like in the old books that came inside Dad's old European trunk.

I stand on the rim of time, staring at the ruins of ancient pieces still connected with relics of then and now. For a moment I hang suspended in air, floating into forever like dreams do. Dreams that bring Dad's old trunk back and forth, spilling aunts and uncles, cousins I never met, assorted friends, Mom, Dad, brothers, sisters, grandparents and hairy pets.

Tropical Storm

By Ray Malus

Sixty feet below, the dark wharf of Papeete, Tahiti sulked in the gloom.

Rising to meet him was the wedding cake of the ship: white, tiered, glowing with life and promise.

From where he stood on the officers' deck, he could see the bridge and the funnel and masts reaching above him, imploring the night.

Even at ten o'clock, the air was heavy with humidity. His shirt clung. A soft breeze carried the scent of the island, sweet and floral — with an overtone of musky decay. Not unpleasant. Warm. Animal. Like a familiar bed, too-long slept in. It mingled with the bite of salt and diesel from the water below.

Behind him, the officers' deck was hung with dim-lit paper lanterns. A redolence of burgers and 'dogs mingled with the sting of charcoal smoke.

A portable cassette player thumped 'Stayin' Alive', and his foot tapped with it. He felt a touch on his shoulder. "New in town, Sailor?" — a soft sultry voice with an English Shire lilt.

Her name was Anne. A purser's assistant. Tonight, she was in 'civies': a white nylon blouse buttoned to the throat, and a long black maxi-skirt cinched, like a corset, at the waist. The severity of the outfit did nothing to hide the frank ripeness of her body. On the contrary, its austerity called attention to her loose, full breasts and lush hips. She had the pink-gold complexion that only generations in the pale, dewy climate of the British Isles could produce. Her black hair, usually done in a formal Gibson, hung straight down her back to her waist.

"Dance?" He said.

Wordless, she began to move with the music. She slowly backed on to the improvised dance floor in the middle of the deck. He followed, and they joined the small crowd of uniformed officers and women there.

A disco-strobe seemed to take snapshots of the dancers. The officers strutted like awkward roosters in that strange butt-jutting posture adopted by Englishmen-in-uniform on dance floors, as they circled their far less inhibited partners.

Anne moved suggestively, her breasts swaying heavy beneath the nylon, her hips thrust forward, circling — a feral native girl in a nun's habit. They danced, gazes locked. The strobe froze mute messages of seduction:

[flash] "Are you?" [flash] "Will you?" [flash] "Do you?" [flash] "Will we?" [flash] "Yes." [flash] "Yes!"

[flash] "YESSSS!"

The music segued into 'How Deep Is Your Love'. The strobe died, leaving the deck in warm half-light. He moved forward. Anne molded against him, arms around his neck. He put his hands flat and strong against the small of her back, and drew her in. His fingertips kneaded her muscles as they swayed to the Bee Gees.

There was a gust of wind, and like a mountain cataract, the sky unleashed a torrent of rain. The other couples dashed in panic for the shelter of the Wardroom, abandoning the cassette player.

Oblivious, they continued dancing, alone in the deluge. The water cascaded over them, drenching them. The wind chilled them, tugging at their clothes.

He could feel the cold fabric of her blouse, and the soft heat of her body beneath — warm butterscotch under ice cream. Heedless, they continued, swaying, their hips locked together. Then her motion changed, now moving counter to him, her breasts and belly rubbing across him with an excruciating friction. The downpour raged, pounding them, cascading off her hair and across his arms, as they writhed, hard, against one another, the storm's passion feeding their own. A sudden gust whipped at them, slashing huge horizontal raindrops, pelting them with a fury that matched the force of their embrace. Thunder boomed. He clutched her savagely.

The song faded, and she pulled herself against him once again, holding him fiercely. They stood, Adam and Eve alone on the deserted deck. Her grip tightened as the music died into the roar of the rain. She stepped back. The nylon blouse molded to her, pink and brown where it clung to her loose breasts, transparently wet.

They looked at each other for a long moment, then she laughed and curtseyed. "Thank you, kind sir." She hurried off into the anonymity of the Wardroom, leaving him shivering in the rain. \square



Submissions:

 $M_{a_{r}22}$

 M_{ar30}

The Fine Print

San Fernando Valley Branch of California Writers Club meets at:

Motion Picture & Television Fund Katzenberg Pavillion 23388 Mulholland Drive Woodland Hills, CA 91364

Directions:

From the 101 Freeway exit on Mulholland Drive South. Proceed to Steven Spielberg Drive and turn right into the campus. (If questioned at the gate, tell the official that you are attending a CWC meeting.) At the 'T', turn left and follow the road to the large parking lot on the left for Villa Katzenberg.

Parking is free in any of the lots. (Please do NOT park on any of the streets.

You will be ticketed!)

Interactive maps at:

http://cwc-sfv.org/Meetings/Location.php

The Valley Scribe

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is published monthly. We solicit submissions from members. (See Bulletin Board: "SUBMISSIONS")

> Editor Ray Malus

> > Staff

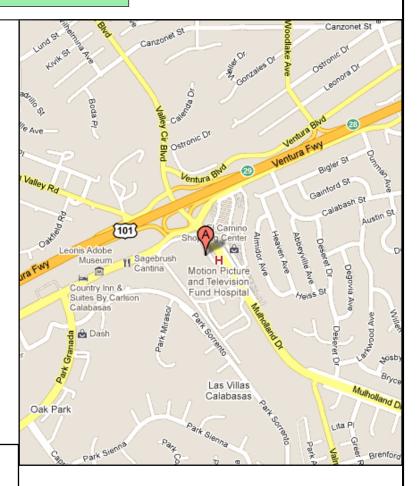
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Columnists

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