

The Authority

Connecticut Authors & Publishers Association—Since 1994

Connecticut's Source for
Writing, Publishing &
Marketing Information

Volume 31 Issue 2 <https://ctauthorsandpublishers.com> February 2024

February Meeting Topic: "My writing Journey"

By Peter Marzano

CAPAMember, Peter Marzano, will be sharing his journey into writing his first two novels, "Litany of Sorrows" and, its sequel, "Search and Deception."

His presentation includes several useful techniques to help authors organize their thoughts, manage relationships among multiple characters, and keep track of a story's time lines that extend over long periods.

His next book, *Taken from Carinhall* is a sequel to *Search and Deception* and is being re-released June 18th.



Continued on page 2

Meet Richard Flanders The February Member of the Month

By Patti Brooks

Richard Flanders didn't put pen to paper until he established notable careers as both an author and singer. And look at the welcome *Under the Great Elm, a Life of Luck and Wonder* (his first book) received!

- ⇒ Finalist in 2021 American Writing Awards
- ⇒ 5 stars on Readers' Favorites
- ⇒ Top 100 inspiring books for all ages on Goodreads

Rich wrote this memoir as he wanted to record his life experiences for his family. He is pleased he chose Book Baby as the publisher, feeling they did a quality job and did it in just four months which, as you probably know, is a short time frame



in the book publishing business.

However, he didn't choose a publisher until after spending six months of editing with Kendra

Continued on page 3

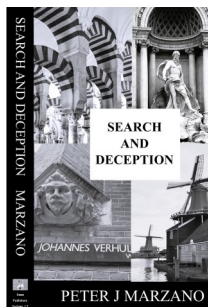
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 Melissa B. Lombardo
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 Karen Strauss
 Claudine Wolk

February Speaker Continued from Page One



Peter was formerly employed by divisions of General Dynamics, United Technologies, AT&T, and was transferred to Connecticut in 1983. He and

his wife, Kathy, are married 51 years. They have four children and eleven grandchildren.

Marketing Tip

“Not all marketing people are writers, but all writers must learn to be marketers.”

Joanne Kraft

What is Hybrid Publishing? Is it right for me?

By Karen Strauss

Karen is the speaker at the March 16 CAPA meeting. It will be held on Zoom, beginning at 10:30 am



In this meeting Karen demystifies what Hybrid Publishing is and what it is not. She talks about the three options of publishing and the differences between the three. She will go over the criteria for what makes a legitimate hybrid publisher so you can distinguish between an actual hybrid publisher and that of a service provider who says they are a hybrid publisher. Bring your questions! You will receive the link prior to the presentation.

Marketing Tip

By Roger Parker

Become a Guest Blogger! Expand your social media visibility by submitting occasional posts to blogs created by other experts serving your market.

Your guest postings will introduce you to the attention of new prospects interested in your topic, many of whom may have never been to your site. At the same time, your host benefits by the new ideas and perspectives you bring to their blog, plus they'll like the day off from blogging. It's a win-win situation for both guest and host.

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Article Submission

The Authority welcomes articles written by members. Here are our guidelines.

Topics may cover any aspect of writing, publishing and marketing. Your personal slant on this is of interest to all of us and welcome.

Articles should be no longer than 400 words. If the article is longer, the editors reserve the right to reduce the size or divide it into sections that would be run in successive issues.

All articles will be edited. Submit single spaced with no built-in formatting. Submit articles to Brian Jud at brianjudcomcast.net.

Send submissions for the **Meet-A-Member** column to Joe Keeney at jkeeney9267spamarrest.com or Patti Brooks at patti@pattibrooksbooks.com

**ARTICLES ARE DUE BY THE
28TH OF THE MONTH**

CAPA Board of Directors

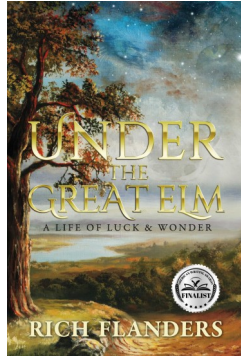
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Meet A Member

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Langeteigh. I suspect that editing paid off in a novice writer's first book getting such positive recognition.



Perhaps the highlights of his acting career was appearing Broadway in *Shenandoah* as well as the; First National Company of *Annie*. But wait ... there's more on Rich.

Remember Rich is also a singer. His firsts album, "Yondering," was nominated Album of the Year by The Academy of Western Artists. From that album, Rich also received the Will Rogers Cowboy Award for Best Song.

Rich's second album "Ride Away" won the best Traditional Western Album and Best Original Song by The Western Music Association.

No piece on Rich Flanders would be complete without his "Lost & Found" story. As a young man in New York City, Rich met Anne, a young actress and singer. Although they fell in love, life took the couple in different directions. A full 45 years past until they met again under new circumstances. Today they live in Madison, near the water, and sing and act and love the days away.

Not sure there's another book to write, Rich does still keeps in the writing life by writing reviews for Goodreads on the books he reads.

Start Small. Think Big. Turning Your Short Story Into A Novel

A Course by Eileen Albrizio

The thought of writing a novel can be intriguing. However, the actual process of writing can be so daunting and overwhelming, we often don't even start. That's because we are thinking too big before we even begin. In this 8-week, in-person class, we'll start small with the basic structure of the short story, concentrating on character, conflict, and plot. We'll follow the simple arch of the story, creating a beginning, rising action, climax, and conclusion. Once we've completed our short story draft, we will then have the outline for our novel!

Now, we will be able to do the fun work of expanding our story, creating subplots, adding secondary characters, layers, and back story. Bring writing materials, as this will be an exciting hands-on experience in a nonjudgmental environment. **Limited to 10 students.**

Wednesdays 6:00-8:00 PM

8 weeks: 2/28 - 4/24

Note: Class will NOT meet on 4/10

Wethersfield High School, Rm 221

Instructor: Eileen Albrizio,
Author of *The Windsome Tree* and
The Box Under The Bed

Course Fee: \$ 88

Call 860-571-8250

or visit wps.wethersfield.me/adult-education to register online



Side-Dooring: The Best Way to Publicize Fiction

By Jodee Blanco

I can't tell you how many times I've heard colleagues say, "You can't publicize fiction." Let me state here and now: fiction can be just as newsworthy as nonfiction. The only limits are the boundaries of the imagination conceiving the campaign.



I teach courses on book publicity at New York University and the University of Chicago. I often tell my students there are two kinds of publicity pitches—front door and side door. The front-door technique is presenting the straightforward, obvious media angle, and it's effective only when the premise of the book itself can be positioned as news and the author's credibility is explicit.

Otherwise, and often with fiction, the side-door method is a useful creative solution. "Side-dooring" is providing alternative angles to the press that frame the book and author from a perspective not easily apparent. For example, you're publicizing an espionage thriller set in modern-day China. The author lived and worked in China for three months while researching the book.

If you take the front-door route and pitch the feature writer at a newspaper to do a conventional author interview, it's likely the editor won't bite, because the book is fiction and the author isn't an academic expert on China. However, if you seek a side door, you open up a whole new spectrum of possibilities. For instance, you could pitch the newspa-

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Book Marketing Hustler Lessons

Brian Feinblum

I caught part of a very good movie on TV the other day, *The Wolf of Wall Street*. I have already viewed it a few times. It dramatizes the true story of a Wall Street con man. Margot Robbie plays his wife. He is as genius at manipulating people as she is at being gorgeous. That is how good he was. I got to thinking: How can authors employ his methods — legally — to persuade others to buy their book?



He had charisma, looks, money, and confidence. Those are big plusses. Whereas he sold nothing of substance (pump and dump stocks), he was wildly successful. He got staff people riled up to commit crimes and swindle money out of others. He became wealthy, but greed — and a drug addiction — did him in.

Still, can we admire the power and abilities of the criminal mind — rogues, con men, swindlers, hustlers, pimps, and playas? Or, are they so toxic, morally bankrupt, and even violent, to the point we fail to appreciate how they seem to get what they want?

We can learn from anyone, from Mother Theresa and The Pope, to Adolph Hitler and Bernie Madoff, about how one influences another. CEOs of a Fortune 500 corporation sometimes act like gangster godfathers. We each need to discover what style of persuasion can work for ourselves — and whether we feel morally up to the task.

Hoaxers simply lie. Anyone can do that. But do you want to? I hope not.

Bullies simply use force and threats of it. Anyone with a fist or weapon can do that. But do you want to use violence to succeed? I should think not.

Psychos and cult leaders like to manipulate people through fear, insecurity, and skewed interpretations of reality. Do you want to succeed through psychological warfare? Unlikely.

But there is plenty that one can say or do that is purely legal, ethical, and risky to make money, get what they want, and even sell more books. What are you willing to do? Authors can win people over by:

- * Employing pressure tactics. Make claims of there being a scarce opportunity that is about to be lost unless acted upon.
- * Utilizing humor. Keep ‘em laughing and you come off as likable.
- * Smiling and being friendly. It never hurts to look happy and come off as someone who could be their friend.
- * Faking sincerity and authenticity. Flattery or sounding like you give a crap goes a long way to winning others over.
- * Becoming their drug or point of escape. Turn your book into an opportunity to get high on a story that takes them away from their troubles.
- * Banking on your good looks. Most women and men like to associate with good-looking, well-dressed, sexualized individuals. Either someone wants to be you — or be with you.
- * Playing into their big-dream pursuits. Help them see how your book pushes them closer to them getting what they want.
- * Asking questions. You just need to have them keep talking about themselves or their opinions.
- * Calling upon third-party validation to support your book. Get testimonials, paid book reviews, or book awards to legitimize your book.

Conclusion: The reason Jordan Belfort, aka *The Wolf of Wall Street*, made tons of money was simple: He was driven and did not stop when warning signs went up. He just talked people into what they wanted to hear and fed them what they wanted to believe. He played with people’s ego, greed, and fear.

No author should commit a crime to sell a book, nor behave on a morally bankrupt manner, but there is plenty one can do that will push others to buy your book. You just need to find the right buttons to press.

CAPA Members Celebrating Success

I often feel I am not keeping up the latest trends confuse me never more than yesterday tea time when I offered "gender free" cookies the latest thing? made from non-pollinated self regenerating sources bee lava before the queen stage? and worms? amoeba? in the chameleon world of non gender allegiance such foods are difficult to source so a non gender cookie with my earl grey will have to be a rare treat

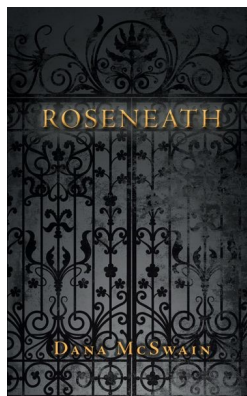
Frances Gilbert

Dana McSwain said, "I'd self-published four books prior to the winter of 2020. Working as a local



marketing model was based on building relationships with local booksellers. I'd been trying to sell one of my books, a Gothic horror novel called *Roseneath*, for years. Lots of full manuscript requests but no bites from agents or publishers. In the fall of 2019, I decided to start my own imprint, Webb House Publishing, in order to maximize distribution and release *Roseneath* myself. I put the wheels in motion re: reviews, blurbs, cover design, formatting. I threw every resource I had at staging a successful release in late 2020. We all know what happened- a global pandemic shut down life as we knew it. Book

stores were closed. Even traditionally published authors scrambled to find ways to release books under impossible situations. Indie booksellers were struggling to stay in



business. Just the worst scenario for an indie to release a book, right? Instead of hitting the brakes, I hit the gas, and used the situation to my advantage. I used the relationships I'd built not only sell my book, but designed Covid-friendly events to drive sales into local bookshops.

Local indie booksellers immediately jumped on board, and *Roseneath* was released with strong sales, and went on to win four indie awards for fiction and design. I was over the moon. But what I didn't realize was that all of this set the stage for an opportunity I'd never imagined. One year after the release of *Roseneath*, a bookseller I worked with was asked to be the editor for Akashic Books new title, *Cleveland Noir*. She remembered how hard I worked to release my book, while at the same time supporting indie booksellers. She asked me to write a short story for *Cleveland Noir*. I had never written noir before, but I agreed. In 2023 my short story, "Bus Stop", was released in an anthology with Paula McClain, Thrity Umrigar, D.M. Pulley, and Michael Ruhlman. Not only did this transition me from an indie author to a hybrid author, it enabled me to work with some incredible bestselling authors and stretch myself as a writer. Bottom line: trust your instincts, say yes to things that seem impossible. Nothing new happens in a vacuum, random events led to every stride we've made on this planet. Factor that into your work as an author. You might be surprised where it takes you."

SW CAPA Speaker
6:30 pm, February 22

Book
Marketing Fundamentals

By Claudine Wolk

Authors, your book deserves to be seen! To succeed you need a strong book marketing foundation - a solid place to start.



In this session, we introduce the three book marketing essentials: what they are, how to decide on them for YOUR book, and how you will use them in your book marketing strategy to find your audience, share your message and sell more books.

For beginner aspiring authors and established authors who could use an energizing boost to spark promotion efforts, this session introduces downloadable worksheet pages and practical examples for every author to identify their book's message, audience and hook.

Writing Tip

"Contrast opposites by containing them within a single sentence. 'He motored to Las Vegas in a Coupe de Ville, and he walked back home in a barrel.' "

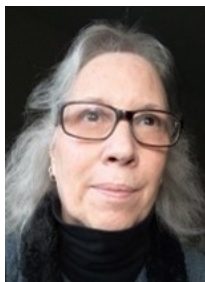
John Long

Our Writing Life

"The Highest Stakes: Unless It Moves the Human Heart"

By Adele Annesi

One of my dad's favorite stories was Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*. Dad left school in sixth grade to earn a living, opened a business during the Depression and became a custom men's tailor. Not surprisingly, he applauded the underdog, and stories about the downtrodden moved him.



Jean Valjean, *Les Misérables*' escaped thief turned respectable citizen, is a hunted man. Inspector Javert, the relentless lawman constrained to apprehend Valjean, represents the letter of the law but none of its spirit. Why are readers still moved by such characters and others like them?

French literary historian Paul Bénicou described Hugo's technique as "the development of an idea by means of a story". Yet, a story propelled solely by an idea is like a beautifully wrapped gift box empty inside. Roger Rosenblatt, author of the craft book *Unless It Moves the Human Heart*, expressed the importance of a resonant theme this way: "Nothing you write will matter unless it moves the human heart."

Skilled writers know they can't, or shouldn't, try and force readers' emotions. We can't compel people to care. What we can do is depict stories and characters that matter. *Les Misérables* appeals precisely because the story reveals what

compelled the author to pen the work—the need for social change, concern for dysfunction in families, the need for real freedom and the inability of humankind to find that freedom without help.

So how can writers craft fully realized stories with characters that do more than parrot the problems of the age? Here are three questions writers can ask their characters to get at the emotional truth of the story beneath:

- What are you not telling me and why?
- What secrets are you keeping, and why are you keeping them?
- What in your hidden past is affecting your life now, and what do you fear will happen if you reveal yourself?

One key to the questions' effectiveness is to ask them directly of the characters. The other is that, unlike the profile approach, these are emotion-based questions. They get at the heart of the characters, and only by getting at the heart of the matter can we get at the heart of the story.

The last questions are ones writers must ask themselves, based on a statement by John Updyke about where the real story lies: "What are we afraid to tell others, and what are we afraid to tell ourselves? That's the real story."

To be clear, this isn't the same as a confessional. What Updyke meant is, where must writers risk being vulnerable? As a further counterweight to oversharing, we can bear in mind what novelist, essayist and playwright Dorothy Sayers advised, that all we do as writers "serves the work".

There are a lot of reasons why *Les Misérables*' is a story told in many

ways over many years. The themes of grace and the lack thereof are classic and constant. There is also the paradox that a thief turned respectable man can have a new life and that a relentless lawman constrained only by the law has no grace, no mercy and, ultimately, no future. Then as now, the stakes don't get higher than these.

Resources:

The Emotional Craft of Fiction, by Donald Maass: How to write the story beneath the surface.

Unless It Moves the Human Heart, by Roger Rosenblatt: A validation of honest prose.

Happy writing!

Adele Annesi's Small Press Distribution bestselling novel is *What She Takes Away* (Bordighera Press, 2023). Adele also co-authored *Now What? The Creative Writer's Guide to Success After the MFA*. She was managing editor of *Southern Literary Review* and received her MFA in creative writing from Fairfield University. Her long-running blog for writers is [Word for Words](#). Her website is [Adele Annesi](#).

Side-Dooring

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per's travel writer on doing an article about China as seen through the eyes of a celebrated novelist. Or you could pitch the reporter who covers the Far East for the paper's international section on interviewing your author for an article about the experiences of American writers who've lived in China. Opportunities abound!

Make no mistake about it, side-dooring is a powerful weapon in a publicist's arsenal of persuasive techniques.

The Cover Story

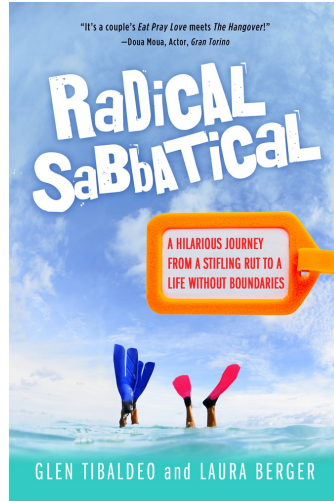
By Kathi Dunn

Your Book Cover Design Says a Thousand Words

The choice of imagery, whether illustration or photography, is paramount when creating a compelling design for your book cover.

In this real-life comedic memoir, its authors expose the blessings and ironic struggles of ditching their cut-throat corporate jobs for life in a tranquil jungle paradise. Working as a team with the authors, cover designer Kathi Dunn explored options for the perfect visual impact.

After researching hundreds of images, she recommended this cover's rights-managed stock photo which says it all. Not only does it put the prospective buyer in the emotional state of relaxation and



adventure in tropical serenity, but its expansive sky also provides the perfect backdrop for an eye-grabbing title. And why not use a fun luggage tag to house the subtitle vs just slapping text on the page?

Surveys indicate that we are over 70% visual so it is the front cover's job to grab attention visually

- first whether on a bookstore

shelf, on the Internet, or in a printed catalog

- then the title and other text can do its magic. Without a striking design, your book will likely go unnoticed.

A sizzling cover opens doors, and rumor has it that this book is opening doors to a potential TV sitcom.

Marketing Tip

Continued from Page Two

Start by identifying, studying, and-then- - contacting other blogs in your area and describing the types of topics you would like to blog about. Ask about their preferences, i.e., suggested length and find out whether or not the posts have to be originally written or can be based on posts that have previously appeared elsewhere.

Schedule of Upcoming Meetings for the Three CAPA Chapters (Members may attend all three meetings per month)

CAPA CENTRAL (Avon)

(These meetings begin at 9:30 ET with networking. The speakers start at 10:30 am)
To be a speaker or for more info contact BrianJud@comcast.net)

February 17: Perter Marzano: A Writer's Journey

March 16: **Virtual meeting**: Karen Strauss: What is Hybrid Publishing? Is it right for you?

April 20: Bryna Haynes: Topic To Be Announced



CAPA SOUTHEAST (Groton)

(These meetings begin at 6:30 pm. For more info: Patti Brooks, pattipattibrooksbooks.com)

February 19: Speaker and topic to be announced

March 18: Speaker and topic to be announced

April 15: Speaker and topic to be announced



CAPA SOUTHWEST (Shelton)

(These virtual meetings begin at 6:30 pm. Watch them and ask questions of the speakers. For more info contact Joe Keeney, jkeeney9267spamarrest.com)

February 22: The Book Marketing Fundamentals, by Claudine Wolk

March 14: Kyle McCord, topic to be announced

April 11: Speaker and topic to be announced



CAPA's Co-op Connection

Check their websites for dates and more information. If you would like to join the CAPA Board to help coordinate these events with other CAPA members please contact James Williams at jimmywriter@icloud.com

Connecticut Wedding & Bridal Expo	2/16-18/2024	UNCASVILLE
SE CT Home & Garden Show 43 rd	3/14/2024	SOUTHINGTON
Southington Arts & Crafts Show 25th	3/23-24/2024	DANBURY
Western NE Home Show 29th	4/6-7/2024	HARTFORD
Spring Home Show 30 th	4/14/2024	HARTFORD

Author Reflection's Corner

A Three-Part Series

By Melissa B. Lombardo

Article One: "Natural Author Inclinations"

Takeaway:

How reading and writing as a child supported my author journey.



Do you remember what you enjoyed doing as a child? Did you have natural inclinations? I sure did! I have loved reading and listening to stories ever since I was young. My mother instilled the value of a good bedtime story before I understood what reading was. As I got older, I would usually have a book or journal in my hand and listen to adult conversations.

I looked forward to visiting the library, attending a book fair, and climbing small diorama mountains with a flag that had my name written on it stuck in molding clay for a chance of free ice cream from the yearly library summer reading program. I have always been inquisitive, and books and stories transported me to other worlds.

By the time I was ten years old, I took the next step from reading to writing. I "published" two titles for school homework assignments under my invented publishing imprint name. The "imprint" included a hand-drawn bar code on the back with my publishing company name. I knew I wanted to publish a "real" book by the second homework assignment. It was around this time my best friend gifted me my first journal. I loved my new purple journal with a lock, a tiny metallic key, and a glittery fountain pen. From that moment onward I never went anywhere without a book or journal. Many years later I finally joined the

CAPA's 30th Anniversary Party

On July 20 join us to celebrate CAPA's 30th Anniversary. We are planning a dinner party from 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm in a location to be determined (Avon or Middletown)

SAVE THE DATE! More details to come soon.

ranks of authors who inspired me to continue reading, writing, and finally creating a publishing imprint. Publishing my first book. *Hurt, Healing, and Hope: Thriving beyond Sexual Assault* may not have been what I had in mind at the age of ten, however, I am thankful my love of reading and writing supported healing from past trauma and helping others do the same.

Melissa Lombardo is an inquisitive author, business founder of Write, Heal, Thrive LLC, CAPA member, and State Certified Sexual Assault Crisis Advocate. She is a Connecticut native who lived in Nicaragua for almost two decades. Melissa currently resides in West Hartford and is available for talks, presentations, and workshops. Visit her website to learn more www.melissablombardo.com, and follow her on social media @melissablombardoauthor.