

# The Authority

Connecticut Authors & Publishers Association—Since 1994

Connecticut's Source for  
Writing, Publishing &  
Marketing Information

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## August 19 Meeting Topic: Mastering the Art of Instagram: A Writer's Workshop on Gaining 10,000 Followers

By Dennis Schleicher

Welcome to our exclusive writer's workshop, "Mastering the Art of Instagram: A Writer's Workshop on Gaining 10,000 Followers"! If you're an aspiring writer looking to expand your online presence and build a dedicated audience on Instagram, this workshop is tailor-made for you.

Dennis Schleicher, a literary agent with over 30,000 followers on Instagram and 100,000 subscribers

on YouTube, this interactive workshop will provide you with invaluable strategies, tips, and tricks to attract and engage

10,000 followers on Instagram. Dennis Schleicher will share his



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## Meet Elissa Blanchard — the August Member of the Month

By Elissa Blanchard

**Editor's Note: Thank you to Elissa for her last-minute contribution to this segment.**

Elissa Blanchard is a Connecticut native who started her writing career when her youngest left for college and the empty nest syndrome was too much to bear. Elissa's her first manuscript, Sutton's Home, was inspired by the untimely death of a good friend whose life included more twists than a slinky. She is currently querying agents and also planning her second novel, The Penny Ride. Elissa is the author of The Picky Eater Reviews - a tongue in cheek blog about a girl with a ton of allergies who can only eat hamburgers at a restaurant because



that's the safest option, but she hates hamburgers. You can check it out at [the-picky-eater.com](http://the-picky-eater.com).

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### Contributors

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## August SWCAPA Speaker

By Joseph Keeney

August 14 at 6:30 pm via Zoom. Author Lisa Franco's topic is: *Emmy Award Winning ABC Producer & Journalist Writes Her First Book.*



Lisa Franco's first book, *My Dearest Darling: Letters of Love in Wartime*, is not only a romance but a first-hand glimpse into one of the most tumultuous times in history. The author also shares how she gets inspired to write in any genre, in this case, historical non-fiction.

The link to attend is: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6762224705>

## Dennis Schleicher Continued from Page One

wealth of knowledge and expertise, offering real-life insights and practical guidance on navigating the ever-evolving landscape of social media and growing your online following.

During the workshop, you'll develop compelling content that resonates with your target audience,

create an authentic and consistent brand identity, and use effective hashtags and engagement techniques to boost your visibility. Dennis Schleicher's personal success stories will inspire and guide you toward achieving your social media milestones as a writer.

Throughout the sessions, you'll have the opportunity to participate in hands-on exercises, receive personalized feedback, and learn from the experiences of writers who have successfully grown their Instagram following. Whether you're a novelist, poet, blogger, or content creator, this workshop will equip you with the necessary skills to leverage Instagram as a powerful tool to amplify your writing and connect with a larger community.

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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](mailto:brianjudcomcast.net).

Send submissions for the **Meet-A-Member** column to Joe Keeney at [jkeeney9267spamarrest.com](mailto:jkeeney9267spamarrest.com) or Patti Brooks at [patti@pattibrooksbooks.com](mailto:patti@pattibrooksbooks.com)

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

## CAPA Board of Directors

### CAPA Officers' & Board Members' Contact Information

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Website Director	Robyn-Jay Bage	<a href="mailto:rjbage@comcast.net">rjbage@comcast.net</a>
Publicity Director	Liz Delton	<a href="mailto:liz@lizdelton.com">liz@lizdelton.com</a>
Networking Director	Position Open	
Special Events Director	Position Open	
Past-President, Advisor	Roberta J. Buland	<a href="mailto:rjbuland@comcast.net">rjbuland@comcast.net</a>
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## The Art of Being Liked: How Researching Individuals Can Improve Interactions

By Mitchell Levy

In a world dominated by Google searches and an era of big



data, the question of whether to research someone before meeting them is a subject of debate. As an advocate for credibility, I lean towards using Google to gain insights into a person before interacting with them. However, this idea raises intriguing questions about the impact of preconceived notions, language anchors, and shared experiences.

David Hammond's networking group posed a compelling question: Where does our value structure come from? Is it derived from our belief system or shaped by shared experiences? While some might argue for one or the other, it could be a combination of both. Understanding a person's belief system and experiences can lead to a deeper connection during interactions.

The notion of researching potential employees, colleagues, or even friends may evoke concerns about making erroneous assumptions. Dan Ariely's research on language anchors reminds us that subtle suggestions can influence our thoughts and actions. The Joshua Bell experiment, where a world-renowned violinist busked in a metro station and went unnoticed, illustrates the potential dangers of relying solely on preconceptions.

However, I take a different stance. I believe that researching someone ahead of time allows for more meaningful conversations, particularly when time is limited. In today's fast-paced world, with numerous interactions daily, gaining insights into a person's beliefs and accomplishments beforehand can lead to more informed questions and a deeper understanding.

The pillar of being liked, a component of credibility, revolves around showing respect and understanding for others. Researching individuals before meeting them allows you to comprehend their preconceived ideas and belief systems, which leads to more fruitful shared experiences.

### Tips for Effective Pre-Meeting Research

**1. Utilize Search Engines:** Conduct a thorough Google search to find publicly available information about the person you are meeting. Look for their professional background, accomplishments, and any relevant news articles.

**2. Check Social Media Profiles:** Explore the individual's social media accounts to gain insights into their personality, interests, and values. However, remember to approach this with sensitivity and respect for their privacy.

**3. Review Professional Profiles:** Visit platforms like LinkedIn to learn about their work history, skills, and endorsements from colleagues or clients.

**4. Consider Mutual Connections:** See if you have any mutual connections who can provide additional context about the person you are meeting. Their input may help you approach the conversation

more effectively.

**5. Look for Past Achievements:** Find out if the person has any notable achievements or projects that align with your shared interests or goals.

**6. Acknowledge Their Expertise:** If the person has authored articles, given talks, or been featured in interviews, familiarize yourself with their work to demonstrate your genuine interest.

**7. Respect Boundaries:** While research is beneficial, avoid digging too deep into personal aspects that are not relevant to the meeting's purpose. Respect their privacy and focus on professional insights.

**8. Prepare Targeted Questions:** Based on your research, come up with specific questions that address their expertise, experiences, and potential challenges they've overcome.

**9. Consider Their Perspective:** Reflect on how their beliefs and values may influence their decision-making process and interactions. This understanding can lead to more meaningful conversations.

**10. Stay Open-Minded:** While pre-meeting research is valuable, remain open to new discoveries and don't let preconceived notions cloud your judgment during the actual interaction.

The benefits of pre-meeting research extend beyond mere ego validation; they enhance the quality of interactions, leading to more robust conversations and a better chance of accomplishing shared goals. Transparency and vulnerability also play key roles in this process.

I've had an individual who volun-

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## How To Make Most of The CAPA Book Festival — or any local event (Part Two of Three)

Brian Jud

In Part One I described what to do before the Book Festival or any local event, planning what you want to accomplish and how to promote yourself. Part Two will continue to build on the topic of pre-show preparation.

### Pre-show Preparation.

While you are promoting your appearance at the Festival, prepare for a successful event. One of the most important is to have an answer to the question, "What is your book about?" Or, "Tell me about your book." Authors love to talk about their books and can go on and on describing the plot, characters, or content. Listeners just want to know the gist of what you have and how it might interest them. The more you talk the less likely you will maintain their interest. Give people your elevator pitch and let them ask for more. Here is how to do that in one sentence: (Title) helps (target) who want (problem they want to solve) get (solution). For example, *How to Make Real Money Selling Books* helps authors who want more revenue get large-quantity, non-returnable sales to non-bookstore buyers.

Be prepared with conversation starters. One of the least effective things you could say is, "How are you today?" If you are centrally located, people passing by will have heard that many times. They will smile and reply, "I'm good, thank you," as they move on.

Instead, ask questions that will get them to stop and talk with you. Ask open-ended questions beginning

with *who, what, where, when, why or how*. For instance, you could say "What type of books are you looking for?" One I have used successfully when people slow down when looking at my display is, "What is it that caught your eye?" Other examples are:

"How did you hear about the event?"

"Where are you from?" Follow up with, "Are you familiar with the ABC Bookstore there (or restaurant, tourist attraction, etc.)" or some other way start a conversation with the potential customer.

"What type of books do you like to read?" "Oh, why?"

"Who are your favorite authors?"

Respond with "My book is similar in style because..."

Offer a sincere compliment.

Create an attention-getting table display. It is not necessary to have the biggest or flashiest display at the event to attract attendees. Your main concern is to have a theme, one that is consistent with your topic and image. What is it you want to accomplish? What do you want to say? To whom? What one impression do you want visitors to have about your books? Everything you do should support your objective so there is no confusion among people passing by as to what you are selling.

Think of it as a billboard, vying for the attention of people walking down the aisle who are not necessarily looking for what you are selling. Your table should have a focal point, one element that will attract attention. Use graphics and copy to encourage eye movement to your books.

Your exhibit should be distinctive and creative. It should also be appropriate, tasteful, clean, neat and attractive, always projecting a first-

class image. Photographs, signs or other elements used in the display should look professionally prepared. Hand-printed banners or homemade posters will make you look unprofessional and will not impress people passing by. Do not use sound effects to get attention in consideration of nearby exhibitors.

What else do you need to prepare? Here's a quick checklist of items to bring with you:

Prepare literature specifically for the show (Remember the AIDA formula), such as a flyer, postcard, or bookmark. Some of the people who visit your table will ask for your flyer so they can "think about it." If you run out of printed brochures, get peoples' names and addresses to send a pdf. This will also build your database.

Purchase book stands so each title is vertical with the cover clearly visible to people walking by. It is difficult to make out the books' covers from a distance if they are stacked.

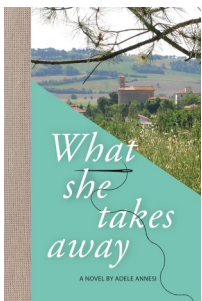
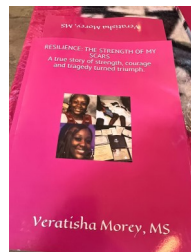
Produce promotional items to giveaway, as your budget allows. Just like at trade shows, attendees are always looking for free items. Your item will be most effective if it is inexpensive, of interest and value to those in your target market and related to your theme. Have a supply of bookmarks, stickers, pens, pads, refrigerator magnets, etc. on hand to serve as a reminder for those who do not buy on the spot. For examples of items contact Guy Achtzehn at [guy@msgpromo.com](mailto:guy@msgpromo.com) (Disclaimer, Guy is my busi-

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## CAPA Members Celebrating Success

William J. McGee drew upon his experience as both a traditionally published author (*Attention All Passengers*, HarperCollins) and a self-published author (*Half The Child*, CreateSpace/Amazon) to write about assisting authors with the publishing process. He is one of the contributors to a new book entitled *Launchpad: The Countdown To Publishing Your Book*, just released by Red Penguin. McGee's chapter focuses on the lessons he learned from HarperCollins staff who assisted with his nonfiction airline industry exposé and how he then applied those lessons when he was publishing his novel *Half The Child*. There's more about *Launchpad* here: <https://launchpadcountdown.com/launchpad-the-countdown-to-publishing-your-book/> And here is the link to his website: [www.HalfTheChild.com](http://www.HalfTheChild.com)

Veratisha Morey said, "My book: *Resilience: The Strength of My Scars*, a true story of strength, courage and tragedy turned triumph" is a success story within itself. I would like to share it please.



Adele Annesi's new novel *What She Takes Away* has garnered all five-star reviews on Amazon.

Elaine M. Kuzmeskus just had an astrology article published in *Today's Astrologer*, May 19, 2023, "Marcia Moore: A Cautionary Tale": On a Seattle night in January 1979, American astrologer and author Marcia Moore vanished without a trace. Her pocketbook, winter coat, and jewelry were still in her bedroom. Two years later a stranger found her skull in the back of an abandoned barn less than three miles from her home.

Marcia Moore's disappearance is still capturing the public's attention. In November 2021, *Dematerialized: The Mysterious Disappearance of Marcie Moore* came out.

No, Moore did not dematerialize—but she certainly did not perish from natural causes. An examination of Marcia Moore's horoscope as well as the horoscope of her husband, Dr. Howard Alltourain may provide some clues to this unsolved mystery.

P.S. The article will be posted on this link: <http://www.theartofmediumship.com/media-links.html>

Tammy Banks' book *Abys Among Us & Other Stories for the Feline-Inclined* is not her most recent book, but it is her most recent award-winner. Here is the write-up:

*Cats walk between worlds, bringing the magical and the commonplace together. They are the heart- and soul-menders, our kindred spirits, poetry on four paws, and we humans would be lost without them. At least, that's what I believe. The stories and poems in *Abys Among Us & Stories for the Feline-Inclined* is a celebration of the cats I have known and what they have taught me.*

### A Success Story by author Melvin Douglas Wilson

What makes me a success story is that during my high school years, I graduated probably last in my class and had to take some summer school classes to get my formal high school diploma, and college was not an option. After high school, I was on many types of drugs, prided myself on having sex with multiple partners, entrenched in the local bar scene, and this would become my same routine for the next thirty-plus years of my life. So the clean-cut Melvin Douglas Wilson you see today is not who I have always been.

In 1996 when my mother died, who was a Christian woman, I was devastated with no one to lean on. Now, for the first time in my life, no one was available to give me a sense of direction or wise Christian counsel for my life, which was now spinning out of control. I remember locking myself in a room, drinking very heavily, and demanding change immediately. This terrifying experience put me on the road to sobriety. Two weeks after my mother died, I took my first step into a Church near where I lived, which finally put me on the right path. The saying that sometimes something has to die for other things to live has some truth to it.

It has been 20-plus years that I have been a Christian, and I have overcome alcohol addiction, drugs, sex addiction, and many other harmful problems. I am now married to a wonderful wife and will celebrate

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## CAPA Success Stories

### Continued from Page Four

our twentieth anniversary next year. I now have six college degrees from many local institutions of higher learning and have published five Christian-based books.

Today I have become a proud member of the Connecticut Authors and Publishers Association for little less than a year, and I have been watching many of the very professional people who choose to take this tremendous achievement of becoming a published author. I have learned from the CAPA classes that being an author takes tremendous determination and that everyone in America wants to be an author, but very few people reach this dream in their lives. I have also learned that writing a book is a tremendous first step, but there are many more steps to follow down the road. I am very thankful to be a Connecticut Authors and Publishers Association member.

## CAPA's Summer Picnic

### By Robyn Jay Bage

Robyn Bage, posted about our summer picnic, held last month: "The CAPA picnic was wonderful. Blue skies and sunshine, good food, good company, and new friends/connections. What more could a group of dedicated writers (and their guests!) want? Ok, sales, but besides that? I took a few pictures to share--I would have taken more but it was hard to interrupt your conversations! Thanks and virtual hugs to all who attended today. And a special shout out to the other Board members who made it happen: Brian Jud, Steven M. Reilly and Jonnie Owens."



## Book Festival Part Two

### Continued from Page 3

ness partner). Have mints or other small items for people to take, too.

There is no access to electricity near your table, so if you bring a tablet or laptop (to play your book trailer if you have one) and bring a mobile power source. Stay off your tablet and phone, which also causes you to look distracted. But don't forget to take photos of your setup, or you at the table to post on social media right then to let your followers know you are at the event.

Have business cards with your contact information and details about how to order additional copies. Use both sides of the card.

Buy a permanent name tag with an alligator clip or magnetic attachment. Prove that you are a pro at this.

Purchase tote bags - with your covers imprinted -- for people who buy multiple copies.

Be ready to accept cash and credit cards. Price your books in even amounts such as "\$20 including tax" instead of \$24.95. When showing your prices on your literature, \$20.00 looms more expensive than \$20.

- For cash, have change available. Determine what you will need based on your book prices (How

many 1's, 5's, and 10's will you need?)

- For credit, there are several options for card readers, such as Square, or PayPal. Have these on hand and everything set up in advance. Make sure you know how to process a sale before the day of the event.

Make up a guest book for people to sign their name and e-mail address. By doing this at every event, you can create a large mailing list for e-blasts about your books and future events.

How many books to bring? It will vary by author as to how many you will sell. Some authors will bring anywhere between 10-20 of each title. Keep five or ten pleasantly displayed, with additional copies under the table and more in your car. Replenish those on the table as one is sold. Anticipate a few complimentary copies for literary agents, publishers, and centers of influence who request a copy.

This is the second of a three-part series. Next month in Part Three I will discuss what to do during the show and post-show evaluation

### Artisanal Prose

## "I Can See Clearly Now: Patterns in Long-Form Fiction"

By Adele Annesi

Sometimes writers don't think much about the form a story will take because stories often seem to take on a shape of their own. But writers of long-form fiction should be aware that all

stories have a shape, or pattern, and that they can craft and mold that pattern to suit their vision for the work. First, what do we mean by "pattern"?

In the classic reference work *Aspects of the Novel*, E. M. Forster refers to pattern as the shape a longer work takes because of the choices the characters make. Here's an easily recognizable pattern.

Our characters meet, their lives converge, then their lives ebb and recede, with each going their own way. Whether or not we or our readers stop to note the pattern, it draws us in because it's recognizable, and familiar patterns enable us to feel comfortable with the story and the characters, as if we're traveling a familiar road but with a new group of friends (or enemies).

Then there's the story pattern Forster calls the "grand chain," where characters appear in short bursts then return for short bursts. Having our characters strut and fret their brief moments on the stage then repeat the action works well in humorous pieces, where tone and timing are key.

No matter which pattern we writers create, we need to be aware of the following:

Whether or not a story's pattern is familiar, every story has one. Many stories have more than one.

One way to know what our story's pattern is and how we can discern it is to read the work and mark each major decision the main character (s) make, then track the results or effects of these decisions, asking these questions:

Do the choices draw the characters closer to each other or disperse them?

Do the choices strengthen reader engagement or distance it? Which of these effects do we want? Which work best for the story?

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## Meet A Member

Continued from Page One

Elissa has no educational background in writing other than she loves to read. She has a B.S. in Elementary Education and English Literature from Keene State College. A study abroad program at St. John's, York, England, allowed Elissa a unique opportunity to travel throughout Europe engaging with locals and practicing different languages. After graduation, she pursued a M.S. at Central Connecticut State University in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), but with one course remaining life got in the way of completing it. Several years later, when her children were young, Elissa restarted her degree program at the University of Connecticut graduating with a M.S. in Linguistics with a concentration in TESOL and additional credits toward a Special Education certification.

For twenty years, Elissa has worked part time in the evenings which allowed her to be home for her children during the day. With education as her focus, she started as a substitute teacher, then switched to Program Facilitator at a local tutoring center. Just before the center closed, she moved back into the public education system, but instead of working with children, she began teaching English as a Second Language and Citizenship to adult immigrants along with taking on several administrative roles.

After the pandemic, Elissa pared down her adult education roles to just two courses so she could focus on writing. She spends most of her days researching agents, plotting her next manuscript idea, and building her social media platform. When she's not writing, Elissa spends her time crafting, reading, and traveling.

## The Art of Being Liked

Continued from Page Three

tarily disclosed an arrest record during an interaction. This act of honesty reinforced trust and humanized the person, leading to a more comfortable and open exchange. By understanding each other's backgrounds and beliefs, individuals can forge stronger connections and create a more engaging shared experience.

By respecting and understanding others, we can create a positive and engaging environment for everyone involved.

### Mitchell Levy's contact info:

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Address: 20660 Stevens Creek Blvd., Suite 210 Cupertino, CA 95014

Email: mitchell.levy@gmail.com

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

### CAPA CENTRAL (Avon)

(These in-person meetings will begin at 10:30 am ET)

To be a speaker or for more info contact [BrianJud@comcast.net](mailto:BrianJud@comcast.net))

August 19: Dennis Schleicher: *Mastering the Art of Instagram*

September 16: Dan Blanchard: *Using speaking events to sell more books*

October 21: Bill Corbett: *What is a podcast and why every author needs one*



### CAPA SOUTHEAST (Groton)

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

August 21: Speaker and topic to be announced

September 18: 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](mailto:jkeeney9267spamarrest.com))

August 14: Lisa Franco: *Emmy Award Winning Producer & Journalist Writes Her First Book.*

September 11 Speaker and topic to be announced





## CAPA's Co-op Connection

Some of these recur weekly. 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 [BrianJud@comcast.net](mailto:BrianJud@comcast.net)

8/5	STONINGTON	Stonington Village Fair 71st
9/7/	HEBRON	Artisan & Craft Show @ Hebron Harvest Fair
9/8	BETHLEHEM	Bethlehem Fair
10/7	WETHERSFIELD	Old Wethersfield Arts & Crafts Fair
10/29	HARTFORD	Connecticut Bridal & Wedding Expo

### Artisanal Prose

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Patterns can be shaped. For instance, maybe our characters make a lot of choices early in the story but few later on. In a case like this, readers may engage with the work early on and lose interest.

One way to avoid this is to recalibrate our characters' choices and where they make them. Think of your car or cell's GPS. Choosing a route that differs from the GPS's instructions can alter your entire journey.

Patterns make a difference—to the characters, the story, the reader, everything. To get a sense of this, we need to give our stories time and distance then come back and read them through, asking:

Where does my story sag (low interest), lag (lose pacing), pick up speed (move faster, maybe too fast)?

To correct these common problems, consider what different choice(s) your character(s) could make at these crucial junctures and how the choices impact the rest of the story.

Patterns appeal to our aesthetic sense because they provide symmetry and enable us to discern the story as a

whole. While we writers continually make decisions about what our characters do, the place to rethink our choices and theirs is in revision. Here, we can do what Nathalie Goldberg referred to *Writing Down the Bones* as “re-seeing” the work and making organic adjustments that enhance the story, maybe even raise the stakes.

So in the classic pattern noted above, what if instead of having the characters meet, converge and go their separate ways the writer decides that the characters never meet. Instead, the main character spends their life seeking the object of their desire. If the story is about someone with selfish motives, thwarting their efforts and showing how the character responds can reveal (show versus tell) just how self-centered they were in the first place. A classic film with this theme is *All About Eve*.

So how do writers work with pattern in long-form fiction? Consider these questions:

Have you planned your story's pattern or simply plotted the story?

At which points in the story do your characters make life-altering decisions?

What happens to the characters and the story as a result of these choices?

How can you tighten the story to strengthen the pattern, for example, by eliminating an unnecessary character or plot thread?

Whether or not we writers plan our story patterns, we certainly have a plan for our stories. The key is knowing that patterns exist and how to shape those patterns for what we want to achieve. Like us, our characters make decisions, then their decisions make them—and more.

Happy writing!

Adele Annesi is an award-winning writer, editor and teacher. Her new novel is *What She Takes Away* (Bordighera Press, 2023). Adele was managing editor of *Southern Literary Review* and received her MFA from Fairfield University. She teaches for Westport Writers' Workshop. Her long-running blog for writers is [Word for Words](#). Her website is [Adele Annesi](#).

### Dennis Schleicher

Continued from Page Two

Take this unique chance to learn from a literary agent and social media expert like Dennis Schleicher and take your writing career to new heights in the digital age. Secure your spot now and embark on a transformative journey toward Instagram success. Join us and discover how to turn your passion for writing into a thriving online platform!