

# Just Write Newsletter ~ Volume 4, Issue 3 ~ March 2015

*Just Write: The At-Large Chapter for the League of Utah Writers*



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## **Writing Quotes**

“I’m not a great writer. I’m a great rewriter.” – Paddy Chayefsky

“A writer lives, at least, in a state of astonishment. Beneath any feeling he has of the good or evil of the world lies a deeper one of wonder at it all. To transmit that feeling, he writes.” – William Sansom

“Fiction never exceeds the reach of the writer's courage.” – Dorothy Allison

“Don't start your story with a character alone in a room unless you're Kafka.” – Dennis Haritou

“A professional writer is an amateur who didn't quit.” – Richard Bach

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## **Welcome**

**Welcome to our new members: Craig and Lynn.**

Lynn lives in Clinton, which is west of Ogden. I was born and raised in Ogden and used to keep my horse at a ranch in Clinton, where I did most of my riding. Welcome to the chapter, Lynn.

Craig lives in Syracuse (Davis County). He mostly writes nonfiction, which includes journals, life history stories, and genealogy; he accepts contracts for commercial research and writing. If he can find the time, he'll join us in the critique group. Welcome, Craig.

### **Editorial: Making a Book Wide Enough to have a Spine**

This month I will finish my work on the sixth book for a writer friend. After I edit his manuscripts, I am tasked with the job of getting the files ready to send to a printer. For reasons I'll discuss in another article, I don't recommend Print On Demand printers, but prefer using companies that print a run of the books and then ship them to the writer.

This year I've run across a problem of book size since his manuscripts have grown shorter, so I need to calculate how many pages I need to add to get a book thick enough to have a spine. The novella I sent to the printer in January contained 52,000 words, which gave the book a .70" spine, which worked fine for a spine with the title.

However, the novella I worked on in February only contained 36,000 words. Even though I used extended line spacing for the text and headings, I still couldn't get the book thick enough to have a spine that could sport the book title and author's name. I added a few empty pages at the beginning and end of the book and then added a large graphic at the beginning of each chapter. At last the manuscript was long enough so that a 5.5 x 8.5 book would have a spine .65 inches thick. That would do for a skinny spine to hold the book title.

PrintPapa posts a **Spine Thickness Calculator** on their website. Writers don't need to create an account or contact them in order to use it. If you're interested, to go this webpage:

<http://www.printpapa.com/eshop/pc/Perfect-Bound-Book-5-5x8-5-268p2701.htm>

and halfway down the page, click the **Spine Thickness Calculator** link to open this nifty tool. In the first three fields, enter the information about your manuscript / book and paper preference, then click the Calculate button. I think it's pretty cool – so I thought I'd share.

### **Member Article: Four Drafts by Edward Massey**

Writing Conferences have proven useful to me. In 2012 I attended Unicorn in Connecticut, where I learned a practical approach I've used ever since. In that conference a successful author, Sandra Brown, explained that she writes every book in four drafts.

The first draft is the Story Draft. Nothing gets in the way of the story. Her goal is to get it all down. In his book On Writing, Stephen King mentioned something similar about first getting the story down.

The second draft is the Craft Draft. In this draft you focus on whatever you think your craft involves, including grammar, language, style, mood and verisimilitude (big word, I know)—everything you consider important to your craft as an author.

The third draft is the Pace Draft. Does your story grab the reader, move right along, end with a bang – or however you want the ending to affect the reader? In my third novel (now out to a publisher), I stayed in this draft for a full year plus another year of editing because I felt terrorized by the prospect of ending up with a sagging middle.

The fourth draft is the Polish Draft. Everything it takes to have your manuscript perfect when you send it to the publisher. For me this always includes at least once reading the book aloud.

I probably do twelve or so drafts by the time I finish. I organize and file them as work in progress versions under these four draft headings. I realize this isn't a one size fits all recommendation, but it has certainly helped me. If you found it useful, you can let me know by email or comment on my blog:

[edwardmasseybooks.com](http://edwardmasseybooks.com)

**Member Article: San Fran Writing Conference by Jenny Ballif**

These are my top notes from the San Francisco Writers Conference:

**“Anything you think is good description, cut out 10%. Give some white space after a good line so that it has more weight.”**

If you stop the momentum of the story to describe setting or character in the first or second page of a novel, this is the final ‘red flag’ that will cause many agents to send a form rejection and move to the next query in their inbox. Other flags include clunky writing or sentences that trip the reader (dangling modifiers etc). Conversely, a good crisp opening line can buy you pages. If they see a gem on page one, then they’ll read more pages than they would have otherwise.

**“Success leaves clues.”**

Study other writer’s in your genre. Ignore the “brands” (Authors who are famous — their names are their own brand) and see who else comes up on the first page of a Google search. Success leaves clues and you can learn a lot by observing other writers and taking note of what does and does not work. This is a good principle for improving both business and craft.

**“D to C is a buzzword right now” and “It’s a mobile first world.”**

Direct to Consumer (D to C) or decentralized distribution is starting to happen, and it’s going to be happening more and more. Sitting in “Producing and Distributing Self Published Books,” I felt I was learning about something as big to book publishing and reading as the creation of Amazon.com. People spend more time online via phones than they do computers, and where are they? They’re in social streams, organized around topics. Several new tools (aerbook, gumroads) allow you to put your book right in the social streams, and people can download or order a hard copy without leaving Facebook/Twitter — or whatever the next social stream will be. This is big.

*Editor:* Jenny's blog post: <http://thewriteshelf.com/2015/02/17/conference-comments-from-the-san-francisco-writers-conference/>

**Writing Conferences and Workshops**

- ▶ **LUW Spring Workshop:** March 14<sup>th</sup> at Larry H Miller SL Community College Campus in Sandy (9750 S 300 W). The workshop will be held on Saturday from 1:00 to 6:00 pm. Representatives from Eschler Editing will hold mock pitch sessions (I signed up for one). Information is here: <http://luwriters.org/spring-conference.html> Remember to bring donation books for the annual League Book Drive.
- ▶ **Writing for Charity, 2015:** March 21<sup>st</sup> at the Provo Library at Academy Square in downtown Provo. This is always a great conference, well worth the fee (which is donated to a different charity every year). Besides the workshops, writers get to put their manuscript in front of an agent or editor! Check it out: <http://writingforcharity.blogspot.com/>
- ▶ **Write Here in Ephraim:** April 17-18 at Snow College (250 East 100 North). This is the 5<sup>th</sup> year for this writing conference. You can pre-register now at: <http://writehereinephraim.com/> Friday night is a Writer’s Camp while Saturday offers classes and workshops all day.
- ▶ **LDStorymakers Conference 2015:** May 15-16 at the Utah Valley Convention Center in Provo. Registration closes May 6<sup>th</sup>. For information: <http://storymakersconference.myshopify.com/> See the 2015 workshop schedule: <http://ldstorymakers.com/2015-conference-workshop-schedule/>

- ▶ **Writing and Illustrating for Young Readers:** June 15-19 at The Waterford School (1480 East 9400 South), Sandy. The conference offers detailed workshops where the writers really do work. Get information here: <https://www.wifyr.com/blog/2015-conference/> You might want to check out their blog too: <https://www.wifyr.com/blog/blog/>
- ▶ **IndieAuthorHub:** June 19-20 at the Marriott Hotel, downtown Provo (101 West 100 North). This writing and publishing conference offers various package options for either one or two days of the conference. Information about both the 2014 and 2015 conferences are on the website: <http://www.indieauthorhub.com/> Early bird registration is open.
- ▶ **League of Utah Writers Fall Conference:** August 28-29 in Logan. Please mark your calendars. 2015 conference information isn't on the website yet, but we'll let you know when it's available. Amanda has been working double-time on this conference and has invited plenty of great speakers. This promises to be a great conference, both fun and educational. <http://www.luwriters.org/>

## Writing Contests

- ▶ **Glimmer Train, Submission calendar for 2015:** <http://www.glimmertrain.com/writguid1.html>
- ▶ **The Ghost Story Supernatural Fiction Award:** Deadline: April 30, 2015 - \$20 Entry Fee per story. Length between 1,000 and 10,000 words. They allow multiple submissions, but do not accept stories that have been published previously. <http://www.theghoststory.com/tgs-fiction-award>
- ▶ **Lorian Hemingway Short Story Competition:** Deadline: May 1<sup>st</sup> – Entry fee \$15. Length: 3500 words or less. <http://www.shortstorycompetition.com/Guidelines.php>  
The 2014 competition Winners and the 50 Honorable Mention authors for 2014 are listed here: <http://www.shortstorycompetition.com/>
- ▶ **Dragon Knight Chronicles Semi-Annual Fantasy Writing Competition:** Deadline: May 31, 2015 - \$5 Entry Fee for first story, \$2.50 per additional story. They want Fantasy, Paranormal, or Dark Fantasy. <https://dkchronicles2013.wordpress.com/2015/01/02/semi-annual-fantasy-writing-competition/>
- ▶ **League of Utah Writers Contest:** Deadline: June 1, 2015 – various entry fees. The Creative Writing Contest and the Published Book Contest have the same deadline. For information see the February Quill newsletter. Go here to open the Category Guide: [http://www.luwriters.org/pdf/contest\\_category\\_and\\_guide2015.pdf](http://www.luwriters.org/pdf/contest_category_and_guide2015.pdf)
- ▶ **Tiferet Writing Contest:** Deadline: June 1, 2015 – Entry fee \$15. Sponsored by the Tiferet Journal. Cash prizes. See <http://tiferetjournal.com/2015-writing-contest/>
- ▶ **Colorado Gold Writing Contest, by the Rocky Mountain Fiction Writers:** Deadline: June 1, 2015 - \$30 Entry Fee. If you pay \$55 (instead of \$30) you will receive feedback from one of the first two judges. Enter the first 4000 words of your manuscript and a 750-word synopsis. The contest has a bunch of categories and subcategories. Final judges are all publishers and acquiring agents / editors. All of the information isn't on the website yet as the contest doesn't open until April 1, so start here: <http://rmfw.org/contest/> and <http://rmfw.org/contest/contest-categories-and-subgenres/>
- ▶ **Book of the Year Award, Independent Author Network:** Deadline: June 30, 2015 – Entry fee: \$39 for one, \$69 for two. There are no a publication/copyright date requirements or word count

restrictions; 18 fiction & nonfiction categories. Prizes exceed \$10,000. Winners posted on Facebook, Twitter, and the [Independent Author Network](http://www.IndependentAuthorNetwork.com/book-of-the-year.html) website. For competition parameters, visit: [www.IndependentAuthorNetwork.com/book-of-the-year.html](http://www.IndependentAuthorNetwork.com/book-of-the-year.html)

- ▶ **Royal Nonesuch (Mark Twain) Writing Contest: Deadline** July 10, 2015 – Entry fee \$12 or \$22. This is a Humor writing contest; entries up to 7000 words. <https://twainhouse.submittable.com/submit/38076>
- ▶ **Dragon Knight e-Magazine Writing Competition:** Deadline: January 15, 2016. Dragon Knight is looking for stories for a new e-Magazine. Formatting, submission guidelines, and word count are listed here: <https://dkchronicles2013.wordpress.com/annual-e-magazine-writing-competition/>

### Online Resources for Writers

- ▶ **So You Want to Start a Blog:** <http://www.erindorpress.com/2014/12/want-start-blog/>
- ▶ **50 Ways to Murder Your Fictional Characters**, by Crime Writer Sue Coletta: <http://crimewriterblog.com/2015/01/17/a-one-time-cant-miss-opportunity-for-crime-fanswriters/>
- ▶ **Amanda Hocking – Why You should Write a Series:** Check out this short YouTube video from an eBook millionaire: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fl7ZVJX4phw>

### Some Self Publishing News

- ▶ **Next time, I'm going to try Self-Publishing:** <http://indiereader.com/2013/04/next-time-ill-self-publish/>
- ▶ **Pricing eBooks and Paperbacks When You Self-Publish:** <http://www.savvyselfpublishing.com/podcast/episode-5-pricing-ebooks-and-paperbacks-when-you-self-publish>

Happy writing!  
~ Ann

### An Author Flowchart

