

THE WRITE PLACE

A newspaper dedicated to the Greater Montreal area writing community



Ten Steps to Self-Publishing

by Christina Manolescu, Founder of Invisible Cities Network

Everyone needs a road map to achieving a cherished goal. Here are 10 (not necessarily swift or simple) steps to getting your book into print.

1. Perfect your manuscript

Even if you forget everything that follows, remember this: the manuscript you are planning to publish cannot be a first draft experiment. It's the final product itself, the polished, edited work. Of course, it's not uncommon, even once a book is published, to detect errors overlooked during the editing process. But for the first-time author, this is the LAST chance to create a FIRST impression on the reader. *The Litmus Test*: If someone else submitted the same manuscript to you, would you be willing to put in the time, effort and expense to publish it? If the answer is yes, you are probably 'good to go'.

The next step is to create a descriptive blurb, perhaps 100-125 words, summing up the essence and contents of your book for the reader. This blurb should be printed on the back cover of your book; even better if you can insert positive critiques or reviews by advance readers of your manuscript, as well.

2. Hire a service publisher or go it alone?

Your next decision is whether you'll publish your book with the help of a service publisher, or else handle every aspect of

book production alone. Publishing is costly, whichever way you decide to go. Service publishers, such as Lulu.com and others, offer help with the technical aspects of publishing. They can promote your book on their website and manage potential sales. These companies offer a range of book publishing services for a fee. Read their promo literature carefully and, as in anything, *Buyer Beware*. Alternatively, if you prefer to retain complete control over your project, you can go it alone.

3. Page layout and cover design

It's time to think about your page layout; in other words, how will you design your book pages? Will you include illustrations or diagrams? What about a Table of Contents or a Bibliography? Should you insert a running-head book title at the top of every page? Will you use headings and subheadings within the chapters? Have you thought about page size and the width of your lines? What typescript font should you use? And what about the point size of your type? You've no idea? Then take a look at some published books you admire (and others that you don't ad-

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My Vision

by Rosalie Avigdor, Founder and Publisher

Dear Reader / Writer,

Welcome to The Write Place, a newspaper dedicated to the writing community of Montreal and the greater Montreal area.

The journey to The Write Place has taken seven years, starting with the founding of The Canadian Writers Society (CWS) in 2004. Meetings are held at the Westmount Y Centre and at the Chalet in Cote St Luc's Trudeau Park. We are proud members of the Cote St Luc Recreation Department and have a long-standing relationship with the Westmount Y Centre as well. Both have been more than helpful in our endeavours over the years. We boast an email list of over one hundred members of the writing community.

A number of months ago, I got together with a few fellow CWS members and proposed the idea to launch a paper to benefit fledgling writers, by publishing their work and giving them tips on how to improve their writing. We also hoped to entertain the reading public.

We are the publishers and editors of the paper but, as fellow writing enthusiasts, it belongs to you as well. We depend on you, the writer, and you, the reader, to contribute to the paper. Let us know what you would like to see here and how we can better serve our readership. Articles from authors, unpublished stories and poetry, letters to the editor, etc..., all are welcome. Readers and writers are in a relationship of mutual need. Without one, the other has no purpose.

We look forward to working together, sharing our creativity with one another, and building a stronger community for all of us, in The Write Place!

Letters to the Editor

I am very pleased to congratulate the Canadian Writers Society on its initiative to create a newspaper for writers. We have many talented writers in the City of Cote Saint-Luc and the city is proud to play a small role in assisting the group with its activities. I very much look forward to reading the first edition of The Write Place.



Sincerely yours,

Anthony Housefather, Mayor



The Westmount Y Centre is pleased to have had the opportunity to host meetings and presentations by the Canadian Writers Society, and we are especially glad to be a part of the launch of their newspaper, The Write Place. We at the YMCA feel that it is important to support local organizations and are a proud supporter of the art of creative writing. In the past four years, the Canadian Writers Society has helped raise over \$140 for the YMCA Strong Kids Campaign. This generous donation has helped the YMCA give special needs children, as well as children from financially disadvantaged families, the opportunity to attend our day camp as well as other children's programs that the Y offers throughout the school year.

Our hope is that the Westmount Y Centre and the Canadian Writers Society may continue to work in partnership for many years to come.



The Westmount Y Centre

Submission Guidelines

An eight- to twelve-page B&W news magazine, dedicated to the English-language community of the Greater Montreal Area, will be published every three months. Submissions for entry into the paper will be accepted from any writer, with preference given to those resident in the Greater Montreal Area.

There will be no compensation to the writer for any work that we might publish. All submissions will be reviewed by our team of editors. There is no guarantee that any submission will be accepted for publication, nor that any accepted submission will be published. Submissions can be made a number of ways:

- by e-mail : the.write.place@hotmail.com (Subject line: Submission)
- by fax : (514) 383-6683 (with a cover page)
- by snail mail : The Write Place, C/O 9770, boulevard Saint-Laurent, Montreal, Quebec H3L 2N3

Please include, with your submission, your name, an e-mail address where we can contact you, and a short bio that we might include with your story, if it is accepted. If you have a picture, please feel free to include it. If you want your snail mail submission returned, please enclose a SASE with sufficient postage. Any submission you provide should try to stay within a reasonable limit of these word count guidelines:

- Short story : 500-2000 words
- Postcard story : 250-500 words
- Poetry : 3-50 lines
- Book reviews : 500-525 words
- Articles (by experts in the field) : 500-1000 words
- Letters to the Editor : 50-250 words
- Advertisements: increments of 1/8 page (contact us for rates)

THE WRITE PLACE

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Send submissions to our e-mail with "Submission" in the subject line. Snail mail will be accepted as well. Please include your name and address in all correspondence. There is no compensation to the writer for any work that may be published. All submissions will be reviewed by our team of editors and we reserve the right to edit all material received. There is no guarantee that any submission will be accepted, nor that any accepted submission will be published in the next issue.

Before publishing an Author's Work, a publishing agreement will be signed by both parties, specifying that the Author grants to the Publisher, and the Publisher accepts from the Author, Primary first serial, one-time rights and license to print and publish the Work in the English language in Canada. In no event shall the Publisher be obligated to publish or cause publication of the Work if, in the Publisher's opinion, the Work violates the common law or statutory copyright, or the rights of privacy, publicity, or any other right of any third party or contains libelous or obscene matter.

The Art and Business of Mentoring

by Steven Manners

A number of years ago I plunked down a great deal of money (even in 2011 dollars) to be mentored by a Famous Novelist. I sent off my stories and awaited a reply. Every few weeks I received a very brief note of encouragement from my mentor. There were no comments of substance. All of the notes taken together may have added up to 100 words.

That program, which shall remain nameless, now charges \$2900 (plus a \$95 non-refundable fee to process your application).

There are several mentoring programs now on offer in Montreal. All mercifully charge more modest fees. Are they worth it? Can they help the aspiring writer?

To a large degree that will depend on you. Mentoring programs typically run for a few weeks or months, during which time you must submit your work for review and comment. You can then revise and resubmit, or send off a new piece to be pilloried.

This process requires some iron in the soul. Your mentor is likely to think that your writing exercises are flabby, and your deathless prose merely mortal. That is the best-case scenario: honest feedback more or less tactfully given. It will toughen you up for the rejections to come. Some mentors are less confrontational and opt to tell you what you want to hear, but that will only defeat the purpose. A useful gauge before signing up to a session is: do you want criticism or praise? A mentor will provide the former, your spouse/partner the latter. (I have had it the other way around and you don't want to go there.)

Some will shrink from such criticism and decide to quit writing – a moment of clarity that will save them much heartache in the years ahead. Others will rant and/or rage: What does he/she know? Quite right. To paraphrase William Goldman, Nobody knows nothing. Mentor can only provide their personal reaction to a piece, suggest how it might be improved, and ask that it not be submitted in crayon. Mentors cannot take the full measure of your genius (or so you will tell yourself).

Is a mentor program worth the money? I subscribe to the Charlie Sheen school of thought: why get it for free when you can pay for a professional? Ponying up for your prose is part of the process. It is an investment in yourself. You are paying for the time spent by your mentor – which can be considerable (if done properly). You are also buying a ticket to be taken seriously – no small consideration for someone just starting out. You are paying to have someone view your work in a professional light. No longer will you need to punish your family and friends. This in itself is an important step in becoming a “real” writer. Your family and friends may even chip in.

Steven Manners is the author of five books and a recovering mentor.

Back Story: When to Use It or Lose It

by Anne Fotheringham

Back story is the personal history an author creates for the characters in a narrative. Writers draw on these back stories to help their readers understand the character's emotions, motivation and actions.

Back story should be used carefully and revealed as needed. Too often, a novice writer falls in love with the back story and dumps it into the narrative in a large chunk at the point where the character first enters the plot. This forces the readers off on a tangent, making them wade through paragraphs (and sometime pages) detailing this character's entire life history. This not only slows down the action, but also delivers unnecessary details that clutter the story and confuse the readers.

The key to working with back story is to bring elements into the story as they relate to the plot's progression. When you first introduce a character, give the readers enough information to explain that character's role. Decide what the readers really need to know at that particular point in the action. For example, when Paul first enters the scene, if you tell the readers he has a confident air as a result of his years in military service, then the readers are not surprised later on to discover Paul has special “skills.” When Paul executes the daring rescue of his girlfriend who was kidnapped by a biker gang, this military back story makes his actions believable. Telling readers the name of Paul's favourite stuffed bear when he was three is irrelevant, however, and can dilute the image you want to create of him as the strong hero type.

Pertinent back story details can be woven into the story using dialogue. Other characters can talk about the hero and his back story or speculate about his abilities. Characters can also talk about their own back story details at an appropriate point in the action. For example, if the clue to finding a treasure is contained in a Latin text, Linda can explain that she studied Latin as part of her Medieval Studies degree. She then translates the clue and the hunt for the treasure can move forward. Here are a few tips on when to use back story and when to lose it.

Use it:

- To give information about personal experiences which explain a character's emotions;
- To reveal personal passions that drive the character's actions;
- To explain the source of special skills the character can use to “save the day” or “solve the mystery.”

Lose it:

- When it disrupts the narrative and stops the action;
- When it provides unnecessary details that clutter the narrative; when it detracts from the image of the character you are trying to create.

Anne J. Fotheringham is a professional writer/editor living in Montreal. Her poetry and short stories have been published in several U.S. and Canadian publications, including Eye Contact, Quills, Spinetingler magazine, and Canadian Stories, as well as in the Winter Dreams, Winter Memories and Winter Magic anthologies. A graduate of McGill, she also holds an M.A. in Writing Popular Fiction from Seton Hill University in Pennsylvania.

The Almost Perfect Crime

by David Reich

I'm a busy man. Always was. Hartley Investments owns a real estate empire that collects many dollars for me, but leaves little time for what I love most: collecting coins. That's my real passion. It led me, Sir William Hartley, to establish the Royal Numismatic Society, and become its President for the last two decades. Its prestigious premises, library and exhibition room are in one of my premier buildings. The membership is limited to one hundred leading coin experts, collectors and dealers: no more, no fewer. We're exclusive; no stranger ever attends our meetings or participates in our deliberations. Naturally we constantly communicate with international groups of similar devotees to keep abreast of newly minted issues and ancient specimens that appear at rare intervals. Therefore, when my secretary entered my office and announced that Rudolf von Bruning had arrived and wanted to see me, I immediately canceled the rest of my schedule and promptly received him.

Rudy, a fellow collector, comes from a wealthy, well-established Berlin family. In his early seventies, his erect, dignified figure is impeccably clad, he is calm, speaks quietly but with authority and carries himself with distinction. As a friend, he's a gentleman, and has often hosted me, and other Society members, at his watering place, the Hanseatic Numismatic Club. As a collector, he has a ruthless, acquisitive streak and, despite our friendship, we crossed swords frequently at auctions or private sales. But my formidable skills didn't prevent him from assembling a coin collection that almost rivals mine and he's always ready to display his rare specimens. Therefore I was happy, indeed eager, to see him.

Putting our jealousies aside, we greeted each other warmly. Knowing that I'd suffered a minor cardiac infarction, he said I looked very fit for my 65 years. I assured him that I'd been fitted with an external pacemaker and would survive to collect many more coins. After exchanging news of professional interest, he came to the point. I am usually addressed as Sir William, but Rudy was less formal.

"Willy, I'd like to attend your next assembly."

"Rudy, you know that no stranger is ever admitted. You must have a special reason to ask."

"Indeed I have. But it's confidential. No one must know."

I was intrigued, and promised full discretion. He leaned forward over my desk and confided the following circumstances.

"Willy, you've heard of the mythical monarch, Midas? He's reputed to have ruled a Macedonian kingdom ten centuries ago and was known for his obsession with gold. Indeed, the currency of his realm was minted in this precious metal. However, barbarians overran his country and melted his coins - none were said to have survived. But I located one of these almost mythical pieces. It bears the unmistakable name of Midas, and his bearded image corresponds exactly with descriptions handed down through the ages. It took much haggling, and, I must admit some special inducements, to obtain the coin. I paid heavily,

but money was no object - it was priceless. The world has not yet been made aware of its discovery and I'd like you to present it to your members. I'll relate its history and how it was acquired - you'll pass it around for their inspection. It'll be a remarkable event, a unique evening for your members and should provoke public interest in numismatic activities. But, of course, all this must remain confidential."

His story fascinated me. "Rudy, I must see it."

He took the coin from a pouch that hung around his neck. It was magnificent - a disk almost two inches in diameter and one quarter of an inch thick of pure gold. Midas' features were sharply etched and the text and date were clear. It sparkled, beautiful beyond description.

"Rudy, it must be worth a fortune."

"Probably, but I swear I'll never sell it - not at any price. However the world must see it."

I phoned my fellow Directors, and explained that the eminent Rudolf von Bruning had made a spectacular discovery of great historical interest that he'd introduce through our Society. Details couldn't be disclosed prematurely. Having a certain influence that came with my position, I convinced them to receive an outsider.

I called a special meeting of the Society, hinting at a historic numismatic surprise. The air was heavy with expectation. I introduced Rudy and outlined his outstanding reputation as an expert and as a collector who climaxed his career with a discovery that he would now describe.

Rudy didn't disappoint. He delivered a clear exposition of the history of the Midas coin, and how he had acquired it. After acknowledging a standing ovation, he handed it to me. I carried it around the room to give everyone a chance to caress it and provide an anecdote to relate ever after. Suddenly the lights flickered and failed. The room darkened. Confusion reigned.

I took charge. "Bar the doors. Remain in your seats. Power will soon be restored."

After five long minutes, the lights flashed on. There was a collective sigh of relief, and a call was issued for the coin. It couldn't be found; I'd given and re-taken it to and from so many hands that no one could remember where it had last been seen. We searched the room. Nothing. I called Security. They conducted a personal, if embarrassing search of everyone present, including myself. Again, nothing.

Rudolf von Bruning was bereft. "What should I do?" he groaned. "I can't create a scandal that would reflect badly on your highly respected members. It's not the money - insurance will cover a high value that I placed on it. No, it's the loss of an irreplaceable, uniquely magnificent artifact that might never again re-surface."

I'd never seen him so distraught and tried vainly to comfort him. We retrieved our coats and made for the door. As I opened it, I felt a crushing pain in my chest that spread through my shoulders and arms, and up my jaw. I recognized a heart attack. My legs folded under me; my next memory was awakening in the local Coronary Care Unit. Tubes ran from my body to life-saving equipment and wires connected me to a large screen displaying curves that chased each other across its surface. Oxy-

gen was fed into my nostrils and fluids flowed into my veins. But I was conscious and able to respond to a worried-looking white-clad apparition sporting a mirror on his forehead and a stethoscope that dangled to his navel.

"How are we this evening, Sir William?" the doctor asked.

"One of us is fine," I croaked through the tube down my throat. "But tell me how I am."

I lay in the ward for a couple of weeks and awaited my doctors' verdict. It came. They sentenced me to death. With lugubrious faces they gathered around my bed and the Senior Cardiologist informed me that my heart had been damaged beyond repair and would soon fail; no pacemaker would help. Could they do anything for me?

"Yes. Invite Rudolf von Bruning to my bedside."

Rudy came this morning. He was haggard. His clothes hung on him, his hands trembled - he looked twenty years older. I told him of my condition. He looked even more stricken. He wiped his eyes.

"Willy, I'm dreadfully sorry. I've always regarded you as a dear friend. Can I do anything for you?"

"You can forgive me. I stole the Midas coin."

There was a shocked silence. "Why? How?"

"Rudy, from the moment I saw your treasure, I knew that I must have it. But you swore never to sell - and if it couldn't be bought, it must be stolen. Then I conceived what I thought was the perfect crime. The presentation would take place in the Society's premises; there, I'd steal the coin and conceal it. But where? Why not in my pacemaker? I removed its electronic board and re-fitted its container with a pivoted lid through which I could readily slip the coin. A few dollars persuaded my electrician to receive a signal from my Medical Alert notifying him when to cut the power. In the ensuing darkness, I dropped the coin into the doctored pacemaker. It wasn't discovered - the perfect crime."

Rudy took it all in. "Well, what's done is done. I'll be delighted to have the coin back."

"And I'd be delighted to oblige you. But when I lay stricken on the hospital gurney, the doctors examining me tested the pacemaker, found it unresponsive and disposed of it. Like other hospital waste, it was incinerated, melted like the rest of Midas' currency. Soon I'll meet my Maker and ask Him to forgive me."

Rudy's voice was hard, betraying his ruthless underside. "Maybe He will, but I won't."

I could hardly hide my disappointment. After years of friendship, after I'd introduced him to my Society, after I'd praised his career that culminated in his acquisition of the Midas coin - he begrudged my last request. I was disappointed in him. Especially when his hand moved to the valve on the tube from my oxygen tank and firmly closed it. I watched the curves on my electronic screen subside until they were flat. Dead flat.

David Reich has a newly-published book "You Could Lose An Eye" (Baraka Books) and his wonderful stories continue to amuse and delight his many grandchildren.

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Writers Must Have an Internet Presence

Beverly Akerman: PRO

I have a dream. In it, we writers live in a perfect world, our time devoted to writing, with a smidge left over for reading, drinking, and lounging poolside with those Chippendale guys. In my dream, publishers say yes to *all* the great writing that comes their way, armies of publicists toiling ceaselessly to ensure readers everywhere know all about this literary gold. In short, good writing *always* gets its due.

Unfortunately, the world we inhabit falls far from ideal.

My first book was released this spring, by a small, respected literary publisher many have never heard of. It's had some reviews, months ago now. Am I supposed to just sit and watch it slip into oblivion?

Not this camper. I consider it my job to help my book overcome its inherent obscurity. How can anyone buy it—no matter how wonderful—if they don't know it exists? So I've accepted some responsibility to bring it to readers' attention. Somehow.

Which means Twitter and Facebook. I think I may be addicted to Twitter and Facebook...er, promoting my book. But that's another story. When it comes to social media, I've definitely drunk the Kool-Aid.

Why ignore these opportunities to publicize my work and engage with readers? Again, how can anyone *find* my book if they've never heard of it? Or of me?

I blog irregularly but I tweet and Facebook often. I highlight my best lines, and send them, along with links to reviews, stories, articles, etc., into the ether. I actively seek out Tweeple with large followings related to my work—e.g. parenting, book, and disability bloggers. Some of these people have *tens of thousands* of followers. I've even been picked up by some of the media mavens themselves. Not to mention a place that rents bulldozers. (Note to self: check width of posterior in the mirror. Today!) Through social media, I've engaged with many other writers; Margaret Atwood has retweeted me, even suggesting to agents that they check me out. That's gotta count for something.

And then there are the readers who get in touch. From an American I've never met (yet!), who ordered a signed copy: "Read the first two stories last night. They are amazing..."

I can't prove Facebook and Twitter work—they're my little experiment. I do believe, for the non-Grisham among us, they remain invaluable. So far, they've gotten me a parenting blogger's review and interview, and a print review by an assistant director of libraries that will blanket a region of one of our Maritime provinces. Not to mention a slew of individual sales.

Twitter and Facebook keep my name/work in the writing community's consciousness, updating readers and potential readers with my triumphs and tribulations. They are somewhat addictive. But it beats watching my book sink like a stone. Because the world is far from perfect for an emerging writer. Even one with a really good book.

Beverly Akerman is the author of the award winning story collection The Meaning Of Children (Exile Editions).

Steven Manners: CON

Imagine a party filled with a vast array of writers, poets and visual artists gathered together in creative celebration. Also in attendance: an assortment of pederasts, pornographers, credit card scammers and identity thieves. All are talking inexhaustibly about themselves. The wall of self-talk is punctuated by non sequiturs, racist comments, accusations of racism, ads about erectile dysfunction and a few You Stinks from the peanut gallery. Would you want to stay at the party?

If it were the Internet – yes. Apparently all night.

The Internet is our vast social experiment. It asks the question: What would happen if everyone on the planet locked themselves away from people they know and interacted only with strangers? What would happen if we rebranded the anonymous as 'Friends'? Should we think of the mix of self-promotion, wish fulfillment and sheer fantasy as information, misinformation or disinformation? And is there room to promote my book?

Which brings us to blogs. To some they are a good thing. They are the committed voice of social revolution. After all, they brought down that guy in Egypt, and that other guy in that other country. But mostly they are an iRevolution – an individual throwing off the shackles of well-earned modesty and drafting their manifesto of Me. The cost of a website is a small price for a writer to pay for the illusion that someone is interested. Of course if the goal is to interest people, the time would be better invested in filming a video of a cat attacking a baby, a gorilla dancing, or people hurting themselves in a rather special way.

In every blog, a novel is buried.

For a writer, a blog represents a unique opportunity to cast aside carefully crafted prose in favour of a blather of ill-formed ideas, opinions and vague pensées. For the unpublished writer, it is a chance to talk about the novel you imagine rather than suffer the pains of writing it. It is like revving the engine until the tank runs dry. For the published author, it is a better time-waster than cleaning the keyboard with a Q-Tip and more gratifying than having children.

Of course you can use your social networks to promote your work to a worldwide audience. Facebook is more about Faces than Books, but a Friend can be thought of as someone you sell to. Twitter offers the virtue of brevity, and what better medium to sell your strengths of extended prose? After all, families are a poor audience: they expect free copies and generally skim. Far cooler to talk about your book with someone actually living in a country experiencing the Arab Spring. They said they'd buy a copy. Maybe when the revolution is over, and the gorilla takes a break.

Steven Manners' latest novel is Valley of Fire. He is the author of five antisocial media (formerly called books).

(Ten Steps to Self-Publishing, cont'd from page 1)

mire). Try to develop a sense of what looks attractive. You'll be amazed at the difference in design of each book.

For your book cover, begin with a simple sketch with one focal point or relevant image for the front. Can you find a high-resolution copyright-free image, or else commission an original illustration to use? Add a prominent book title above the image and with the author's name below. Voilà! That's the basics taken care of!

Now think about the back cover! Look at a variety of published books to get some ideas about layout and design. This is where you insert the descriptive blurb, mentioned above. Add any testimonials or reviews. Identify the name of your press (your imprint). Include your logo (if you have one) and your web site URL (Step 7). The back cover is a good place to mention credits to other contributors, i.e., co-author/illustrator. Add your book's ISBN (Step 4). Insert price and author photo, if desired.

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<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/cip/041003-5000-e.htm>

There you can fill in and submit your completed CIP application online. The CIP data for your book that you receive back in an

email should be copy-pasted, holus-bolus, and popped onto the Publisher's page (I call it the business page) located near the beginning of your book. The Publisher's page contains standard copyright details and your essential book information. Examine a selection of published books to find out what is normally included on the Publisher's page of a book.

7. Create a web page or web site for your book or books

This important task might be a bit of a headache or a lot of fun, or both. If you don't (yet) have your own web page, you can promote your book at www.InvisibleCitiesNetwork.org.

8. Send electronic files to the printer, receive printed books

Once the digital book files have been sent to the printer, you should receive back an advance proof of the book cover, which you must check carefully before authorizing the final printing of the book. If in doubt, seek advice from the in-house technical personnel. Despite your understandable excitement and euphoria when you receive your shipment of printed books, examine each one thoroughly for possible production flaws.

9. Legal deposit

Now it's time to send your first books out into the world. For their archival collection (free of charge), send 2 sample copies of your published book, to **Library and Archives Canada**:

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/legal-deposit/index-e.html>

It's a legal obligation. Ditto for the **Bibliothèque Nationale in Montreal**:

http://www.banq.qc.ca/collections/dons_acquisitions/depot_legal/index.html?language_id=1.

Complete both downloadable forms, print out and mail them, along with 2 sample books each, to their separate mailing addresses.

10. Open a FREE Bowker account

At <http://bowker.com>, open a free Bowker publisher's account and keep it up to date. Your book(s), identified by ISBN(s), should be listed here. This helps to establish your presence on the publishing scene. The U.S.-based Bowker agency runs a global directory of books in print.

Now, all that remains is for me to wish you good luck and great success in your first Self-publishing adventure!

*Christina Manolescu is the founder of Prince Chameleon Press (www.princechameleon.com.) She has published children's fantasy fiction and two novels, *Baglady* and *Waldensong Saturnalia*. She has also managed the print production of ten other self-published books, one of which won a silver Ippy Award. She founded *Invisible Cities* in 2001 to support the work of independent artists and self-publishers. Join the network at www.InvisibleCitiesNetwork.org.*

No Running in the Hallways!

by Joseph Richard Mannella, Managing Editor

As a youth, my life consisted of a litany of negatives. No running in the hallways. No talking in class. No friends allowed at the house when there's no one home. No studying in front of the television. No staying out/up late on a school night. No playing until your homework is done. No snacking between meals.

You can't do that. You shouldn't do that. You mustn't do that. You'll never be able to do that. Everyone has experienced at least a few of these. Most of us have managed to survive relatively unscathed.

Somehow, however, there was always that one friend, that one adult, that one teacher, who pushed you to do more, who didn't put stumbling blocks in your way, who let you know how good you really were at something. Mine was my 6th grade English teacher. Through her persistent guidance and constant encouragement, I grew to love the written word. She educated me in the correct forms of grammar and punctuation that are so woefully lacking in our school system today. She instructed me on the wonders of the thesaurus and the incomparable usefulness of the dictionary. Foremost, she taught me that a story loses its purpose without a reader to enjoy it and I have always tried to make her proud, writing my stories with the readers' benefit in mind.

Of course, as the obligations of adulthood replaced the carefree attitude of my youth, my mind turned to other things. Time for writing was replaced by work and family responsibilities, yet it was never far from my thought processes. My children were born and grew up, and I read to them, introducing them to the books I enjoyed reading in the hope that they too

would learn to connect to them as I had. I wrote stories about them and the nightly ritual of reading became more personal as they became powerful magicians in a land of fantasy.

I wrote with my head . . . and I wrote with my heart . . . and my work matured and became something of which I could be proud. And I must have mellowed over the years because, somewhere along the way, I realized that the negatives of my youth had all played a part in what I had become, even those that came by way of rejection letters from publishers for whom my work wasn't a good enough fit. They taught me to persevere in the face of any obstacle I might face. In fact, I finally got up the nerve to go back to school and get my university degree in Creative Writing, alongside my daughter who was receiving hers 'With Distinction' in another field of study. I was so very proud of her achievement, yet I managed to retain a modicum of pride for my own belated accomplishment.

Today I help coordinate the Canadian Writers Society and, when I was asked by the publisher of this magazine to be its managing editor, I jumped at the chance to nurture the burgeoning talents of fledgling writers, as my teacher had for me. And it all happened because someone believed in me, knew I could be more than what others expected of me.

Over the years there have been others, of course, who have contributed to my artistic growth, but there is only one first. Don't allow anyone to keep you from expanding your horizons, in any aspect of your life. No one has the right to tell you that you can't do better.

Believe in yourself. You may be surprised to find that you aren't the only one who does.

The Write People

by Rosalie Avigdor, Publisher

A few years ago, I befriended Michael Hanna-Fein on Facebook, a social networking site that we all have different opinions about, as can be seen in this paper. We talked of many things together, including our mutual love of writing, the online newspaper he publishes, and his dislike of the laws in New York that didn't recognize same-sex marriages. Many exchanges later, congratulations were in order, and Michael married his love of 30 years, Arnold, in a ceremony in Montreal. They share a life together, with love and devotion and all that goes with a happy union.

Early on in our friendship, a truly happy and memorable event took place when Arnold wheeled Michael into one of our Canadian Writers Society meetings for the first time. We had never met in person, yet it was as if we had known each other personally for many years. Our mutual friendship has continued to be one of trust, respect and understanding.

As I write this, Michael is a patient at the Jewish General Hospital. He hopes to be able to go home shortly for another special event in his life... taking his oath to become a Canadian citizen! When the hospital staff of 7 West heard about this, they gave him a standing ovation and presented him with Canadian flags! They're rooting for him to get well enough to be out by

August 25th but, if not, he'll be given a day pass to let him attend this great moment in his life.

Michael, it's a pleasure to welcome you to our country which you have loved for so many years. Welcome to Canada, and welcome to The Write Place!

Michael and Arnold Hanna-Fein are consultants for the paper.

ZZz zZzz... Wha..? Oh, you're ready to go? So soon? We trust you've enjoyed the paper. We hope it has intrigued you enough to return for our December issue.

In the meantime, our mascot needs a name. We want you to help come up with something original... let your imagination run wild. In the next issue, we'll publish what we've chosen as the best five names and we'll ask you to vote for your favourite.

See you in December!

