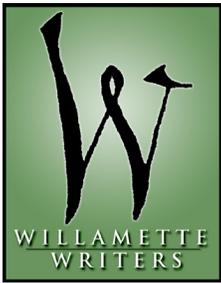


June 2016



WILLAMETTE WRITERS

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2016 Willamette Writers Conference

AUGUST 12-14

Community. Craft. Career.

Sheraton Portland
Airport Hotel

2016 Conference Viewed As Excellent Investment

by John Clark Vincent and Kate Ristau

This year's Willamette Writers Conference is being held August 12-14, 2016, and registration is off to a fantastic start. We're absolutely thrilled at the response. People are registering at an unusually brisk pace, which is understandable considering the quality of this year's programming. We've brought in a top notch teaching faculty, including Jane Friedman, Lidia Yuknavitch, Halle Ephron, Jennifer Lauck, and Eric Witchey. These pros will lead you through eight possible tracks, offering a range of programming to help you further develop your craft.

But that's not all. If you're ready to expand your career, we're here to help. We've recently confirmed even more industry professionals to hear your pitch. We've added these pitch times to registration, and they are disappearing fast.

Because of the positive response, we've extended Early Bird registration until June 15th. This will give you a little extra time to review which agents and editors are available to take your pitches, and give you a chance to create your schedule. You'll want to review this year's workshops, panels, and keynotes as you craft the schedule that will help you expand your writing life.

Based on early feedback, registrants are pleased with the agents and professionals who will be accepting pitches. They're also looking forward to designing a learning track that features so many outstanding writing instructors. It would cost a small fortune if a writer had to pay for individual classes offered by our conference faculty. In contrast, attending workshops at the conference allows you to study and build a relationship with these instructors at a fraction of the cost.

Our Portland residents are well aware of the quality of Lidia Yuknavitch's Corporeal Writing workshops, and our Eugene and Salem chapters rave about Eric Witchey's smart, solid writing advice. And Jane Friedman and Halle Ephron are nationally known instructors who will challenge you to build your writing life, from idea to first draft to revising to publishing.

The possibilities are endless this year. But the rates will only be this low for a limited time. So, join us as soon as you can. Find your community, develop your craft, and expand your career with Willamette Writers.

Member Opportunities

- Monthly Meetings
- Workshops
- Conference
- Young Willamette Writers
- Kay Snow Contest
- Kate Herzog Scholarship
- Conference Scholarship
- Writing House
- The Timberline Review
- FILMLaB Contest

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Report from the Board of Directors

We're working through our strategic planning and have been also working with our budget for the year. It's proving challenging since there are so many programs that we have!

Our phenomenal secretary, Gail Pasternack, having finished the Bylaws last year, is now hard at work on writing our Policies and Procedures. She's also developing other governance documents for the organization. This is a huge part toward achieving our first goal of our strategic: Ensure Stability and Allow Growth. We'll also have the Bylaws available online.

Unfortunately, our Communications Director, Kate Ristau, has left the board. She's working with everyone to make the transition as easy as possible and will continue to do amazing work with the conference committee on registration. We would like to thank Kate for the long hours and for her creativity and vision working in Willamette Writers' communications.

The conference committee is hard at work! The website is live and registration is open. Advanced MS Critiques are available for purchase, as are pitches!

Thank you!

Awards Announcements!

Annual Awards

This year's Annual Award winners are listed below. These awards are decided upon by the Board of Directors of Willamette Writers.

Up and Coming Award - Heidi Schulz

The Up and Coming Award (est. 2014) is Willamette Writers' newest award. It recognizes emerging writers who, in their initial work, have already demonstrated mastery in their craft. This award was established partly in the hopes of acknowledging talented authors at every stage of their career. **Heidi Schulz** may have seemed to many to have already up and come, but Willamette Writers decided there's far much more she can do in the world of writing for middle grade and YA. Please join us as she accepts her award at the Willamette Writers Conference!

Distinguished Northwest Writer Award - Anthony Doerr

The Distinguished Northwest Writer Award (est. 1988) recognizes

noteworthy Northwest authors who have distinguished him or her self with exceptional literary or other writing. **Anthony Doerr**, with his recent Pulitzer Prize winning novel, *All The Light We Cannot See*, his incredible and insightful collections of short stories, and his various essays, inspired the board to nominate and vote for him for this year's Distinguished NW Writer Award. Although Anthony won't be able to join us at the conference this year, he is planning to send along some words of gratitude and inspiration.

Lifetime Achievement Award- Tom Spanbauer

The Lifetime Achievement Award (est. 1989) honors a writer or person in the publishing industry who has demonstrated exceptional achievement in his or her work during a life-time. Tom Spanbauer, author of so many cutting-edge books and founder of Dangerous Writing, definitely fulfilled these requirements for the board. He'll most likely not be able to joining us at the Willamette Writers Conference this year, but we're hoping one of his amazing and talented students will be there to accept his award in his place.



Awards Director Blythe Ayne with 2015 Kay Snow Award Winner Alexis Fitton

Humanitarian Award - Israel Bayer (Street Roots)

The Humanitarian Award (est. 1996) honors a person and/or organization in the writing or publishing fields who have demonstrated exceptional philanthropy in their work. **Israel Bayer** of Street Roots more than deserved this acknowledgement, but also recognized that nearly everyone in his organization deserved some sort of recognition for their efforts--the true sign of an Humanitarian Award winner. So joining us at the conference will be Israel, Managing Editor, **Joanne Zuhl**, and Staff Reporter, **Emily Greene**, to accept their award. They'll also be bringing one of their Street Roots vendors to help show what the program is all about.

Kay Snow Awards

The Kay Snow Awards for Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry, MG and YA, and Screenwriting (full-length feature) have been accepted and are in the process of being judged by our first round readers, and by our finalist judges, including the Roland Smith MG/YA Award, and the Paulann Petersen Poetry Award.

All finalists in the Kay Snow contest are being considered for publication in **The Timberline Review**, the literary journal publication of Willamette Writers.

Letters About Literature

Willamette Writers took on hosting the Oregon Letters About Literature contest this year. This is a national contest from the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, and is designed to promote reading and writing. To enter, readers write a personal letter to an author, living or dead, explaining how that author's work changed the student's way of thinking about the world or

themselves. There are three different grade levels, and Oregon judges decide on the first place, runner-up, and honorable mentions.

Congratulations to **Chaevin Hong**, **Alexandra Sjobeck**, and **Julien Comardelle** for their Oregon Letters About Literature 2016 winning letters!

Chaevin (Level I) wrote an inspirational letter to **Holly Goldberg Sloan** about her novel *Counting By 7s*, while **Alexandra** (Level II) composed an insightful and powerful letter to **Renee Watson** about her poem "Black like me." **Julien** (Level III) chose to write to **Laini Taylor**, author of *Daughter of Smoke and Bone*, and he impressed the judges with his connection to the author and skillful writing.

Unfortunately, none of the Oregon first place winners advanced to the national round of winners this year, but we're looking forward to hosting the program again and learning about all of the wonderful interactions Oregon students have with writers!

Other Awards and Scholarships

The **Kate Herzog Scholarships** for high school seniors and college freshman and sophomores are in their final round of judging and will be announced soon, as well as the winners of our **CS Whitcomb Conference Scholarship**, establishing by and named in honor of our amazing former president **Cynthia Whitcomb**.

There's a new **MFA Scholarship** as well, named for long-time member **Chryl Ann Julia**. It's only open for submissions for a month more, until June 30th, so if you're a member seeking a writing-emphasized MFA scholarship, check it out!



FILMLaB WINNER

And then there's our newest FILMLaB Grand Prize winner!

Please join us in congratulating **Shaun Radecki**, writer of the script *UNDIMMED*, the story of a man tortured by regret as he struggles to undo the mistakes of his past.

And Shaun wrote it all in seven pages.

He'll have his script made into a movie, premiering at the Willamette Writers Conference!

Willamette Writers Board of Directors

President - Jenny Schrader
 Vice-President - Orit Ofri
 Secretary - Gail Pasternack
 Treasurer - Joan Macbeth
 Communications - vacant
 Visual Media - Ruth Witteried
 Conference - John Clark Vincent
 Young Willamette Writers - Teresa Klepinger
 Adult Education - Ken Holt
 Awards - Blythe Ayne

Revision Strategies by Maren Anderson

I just wrote “The End” on the first draft of a manuscript I’ve been picking at for months. My normal M.O. is to write a very fast, very bad first draft. But my revision strategies have been changing lately. You see, this book was slow, slow, slow in coming. ItRevision Strategies Squirrel was also very squirrely. Every time I wrote an outline for the book, the characters turned left, not right, and my outline went out the window.

Some writers might be discouraged by this tangled mess of a draft, but not me. While I firmly believe that you will never be a published author if you don’t have a completed first draft, I also know that you better not submit that tangled web of a draft.

Revision (literally “seeing again”) is what makes that lumpy blob of clay into something beautiful. One thing to make a beautiful story is to have it mimic life a little by withholding some information.

Wait, what?

Remember the old “show, don’t tell,” mantra? That’s the difference between “She was sad” (telling) and “She sobbed in the corner, tearing her hair out by the handful” (showing).

Another way that writers tend to “tell” too much is when they are introducing characters. Most of us want to tell our audience everything about new characters as soon as they walk into a room because we love the characters, and we need the audience to love them, too.

So, what’s the problem? Why shouldn’t we get our reader up to speed on a character as soon as possible?

Pleasure of Discovery

It’s because part of the pleasure of reading is the act of discovery. The pleasure of meeting new people is figuring out who they are. Real people aren’t going to hand you a typed paragraph explaining what they would do in a given situation. Everything if they did, it would probably be wrong (and creepy). Characters shouldn’t be introduced by paragraph, either, and for the same reason.

Character descriptions are inherently less interesting than the character’s actions or dialogue. These things can actually demonstrate qualities that would otherwise just be packed into a paragraph of prose like so many sardines. Let the characters

flop like fish on a deck. THEN I’ll know who they actually are.

Also, if you give a reader a character introduction, the reader will then expect that character to behave according to that definition for the rest of the story. The reader will feel cheated or betrayed if the characters changes (which characters should do, right?), and may think something like, “No, wait. It said that she NEVER liked sardines! Why does she like them now?”

In this scenario, the curtain has been drawn back and you, like that big faker Oz, have been exposed. Good writing doesn’t call attention to itself (which is WHY you are supposed to kill your darlings, and why we need these revision strategies). Making your readers notice a character’s arc because it is different from her introduction is a way to call attention to the writing.

How to Introduce a Character

So, how does a good writer introduce a character without committing any of the above sins?

1. Define the new character through the observations of another character.

Trudy hated to admit it, but Calvin was charming, witty, and slippery as an eel worming his way through an oil spill. She was glad she wasn’t the one signing the apartment lease, but she worried that she might have to call Calvin to fix something in the future. She didn’t like the idea at all.

2. Use the character’s dialogue or actions explain it all.

*Benny walked past the ashtray and flicked his cigarette butt onto the hotel lobby carpet, then walked away as it smoldered. He glared at the broken elevator as if it had timed its malfunction to his visit. Then he began hefting himself up the carpeted stairs, muttering “Mother*****r” every third step.*

3. Use the characters POV to describe something else.

Ginny had never been in a cathedral before, so she stood in the middle of the nave, head tilted so far back her mouth hung open,



like she was drinking from the streams of colored light pouring from the windows. There was nothing like this in Eastern Oregon. She dropped her backpack onto the floor and was instantly embarrassed by the clatter, so she plopped into the nearest pew and pretended to pray.

Notice, I didn't give physical descriptions in the above examples, but I bet you have a picture in your head for each of them. I would further wager that your pictures are pretty close to what I have in my head.

Don't Give Up All the Goodies

Just remember: when you introduce a character, you don't have to give up all the goodies at once. The reader just needs to know enough about him or her to get them started.

Now that you know where you're going, let's use those revision strategies and take a few steps with a writing prompt.

Your Prompt

Your prompt: Find a spot in your writing where a new character is introduced via a chunk of descriptive prose. Re-write the prose using one of the three revision strategies above.

Good luck, and happy writing!

Maren Bradley Anderson is a writer, teacher, and alpaca rancher who lives in Oregon. Her poetry has appeared in *The Timberline Review*, and her novel, *Fuzzy Logic*, was released in 2015 by Black Opal Books. She adapted *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for children in July 2015.

4 Obstacles Keeping You From Finishing Your Manuscript by Benjamin Gorman

Disclaimer – Before I can be slapped with the charge of hypocrisy, let me be the first to say that I have succumbed to all four of the manuscript impediments listed below.

I have two novels in print (*The Sum of Our Gods* and *Corporate High School*), and I'm pretty sure that I could have completed ten times as many if not for these common pitfalls. Identifying the main obstacles keeping you from finishing your manuscript won't, in itself, prevent you from falling into them from time to time. But knowing what to watch out for can certainly help you avoid them some of the time.

MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bonnie Dodge's Blog Featured in *Feisty After 45*

Bonnie Dodge's blog, "Facing Another Birthday with Humor," was chosen as one of the blogs featured in the newly released *FEISTY AFTER 45 The Best Blogs from Midlife Women*. The book contains humorous and inspirational blogs from 45 of the best midlife bloggers, offering proof that tumbling over the far side of 45 is worth the journey. ISBN: 978-0-9883980-1-6.

Kaylin McFarren's *Banished Threads* Published

Continuing with her action-packed mystery series, Kaylin McFarren releases the much-anticipated *Banished Threads* (Creative Edge Publishing LLC) – the third book in her *Threads* series, featuring treasure hunters and adventure seekers Rachel Lyons and Chase Cohen. Kaylin McFarren's action-packed suspense novel *Banished Threads* has been nominated for this year's Best Fiction Thriller by The Global Ebook Awards.



Willamette Writers Nominated for Nebula Awards

David D. Levine for his short story "Damage"

Fonda Lee (*Zeroboxer*) and Tina Connelly (*Seriously Wicked*) for the Andre Norton Award for Young Adult Science Fiction and Fantasy.

The Nebula Awards recognize the best works of science fiction and fantasy published in the United States as selected by members of the Science Fiction and Fantasy Writers of America, membership in which is open to professional science fiction and fantasy authors. The first Nebula Awards were presented in 1966. The 50th annual Nebula Awards were presented in Chicago at the Palmer House Hotel. Comedian John Hodgman emceed the ceremony on the evening of May 14.

MEMBER ANNOUNCEMENTS

Shirley Plummer's *the task of falling rain* Available

Turnstone Books of Oregon, LLC is proud to announce the release of Shirley A. Plummer's debut collection of poems, *the task of falling rain*. Plummer is a native of Oregon, born, raised and schooled in Salem in the Willamette Valley. After living and working in many different places at nearly as many different jobs, in 2007 she returned to Oregon and made writing her central activity. She lives on the central coast between the Siuslaw National Forest and the Pacific Ocean. In 2011 editors began accepting her work. This volume is available on amazon.com.

Patricia Brooks' Memoir *Three Husbands and a Thousand Boyfriend's* Available

Patricia L. Brooks, WW member and Scottsdale, AZ resident, is an award winning memoirist. She recently launched her second memoir entitled *Three Husbands and a Thousand Boyfriends*. Her much anticipated survival story of domestic violence, love addiction, and post-traumatic stress is receiving critical acclaim.

Patricia is president/founder of the highly successful Scottsdale Society of Women Writers, a group she started ten years ago. She is also a consultant/speaker for Brooks Goldmann Publishing, LLC. Contact Patricia at patricia@plbrooks.com or www.brooksgoldmannpublishing.com

Three Husbands and a Thousand Boyfriends is available on www.amazon.com and soon on Kindle.

Warren Easley's *Not Dead Enough* Available

NOT DEAD ENOUGH, the fourth book in the Cal Claxton Oregon Mystery series (Poisoned Pen Press) will launch at Annie Bloom's Books at 7 pm on June 15. Please join author Warren C. Easley for wine, snacks, and a reading that finds Cal involved in a deadly cold case dating back to the flooding of Celilo Falls in the 50s.

Publisher's Weekly calls the book "absorbing," noting that "Easley skillfully blends fact and fiction in this tale of cultural conflict, politics, and murder with a likable hero at its heart."

4 Obstacles, cont'd

1. Video Games / Facebook / Twitter

This may seem too specific, but console games, especially role playing games, are a real problem for me. Why? Because I love them too much. They are immersive, they have propulsive narratives, they are vacations from reality, and they are exciting. That's not what makes them particularly problematic, though. All those things could also be said of a good book, whether you're reading it or writing it. What makes RPG video games particularly dangerous for writers is that they are designed with another specific goal in mind: to eat up as much of your time as possible.

Manuscript gaming is one of the obstacles that can keep you from finishing your manuscript. A group of intelligent, talented people go to work each day trying to create games that will satisfy gamers and critics, and they know that the highest praise for games comes in the form of descriptions of how long people played them...or, better yet, replayed them.

Conversely, if a critic says she beat the thing in a few hours, that's a nail in its coffin. Who wants to spend sixty bucks on a few hours' entertainment when the same sixty can get you a week's or a month's? To non-gamers, this seems counter intuitive. Wouldn't you want something that provided the pleasure of victory quickly? No, because watching credits role is not as much fun as killing hordes of the undead.

Consequently, these are intentional time-sucks. Be aware of that going in; if you have a manuscript to finish, save your sixty bucks until the book is done. By then, the game will be on sale for \$15. And the console will be out of date. And maybe you'll be more excited about your next book idea than an old video game.

Non-gamers might be thinking, "Well, I've already dodged that bullet."

True, but be honest with yourself.

You might have avoided *Dragon Age* or *BioShock*, but how long did you spend on *Angry Birds* or *Candy Crush*? Dodged those, too? Well,



Benjamin Gorman
pondering life and
why ce n'est pas une
pipe.

just as the video game industry thrives on “extended gameplay,” the people behind Facebook and Twitter know that the longer you linger on their sites, the more ads you see. Their sites are designing their keep your eyeballs locked on their pages for as long as possible, too.

So, identify your game of choice and go into it knowing that we, as writers, have an added level of difficulty.

After “Easy,” “Medium,” “Difficult,” and “Nightmare,” there’s a secret level called “Writer” for the person who has to look that next zombie in its remaining eye (or that clickbait article right in it’s “3/28 Next” button) and refuse to go on until there are a few tens-of-thousand more words added to the manuscript.

2. Tunnel Vision

You’re forty-five pages in. You’ve hit a snag. You have a general idea of where you’d like your protagonist to end up on page 153, and you’re excited to write that part, but you’re just not sure what to have her do in order to get there. What to do?

There are about a million books on Amazon that will offer to give you all the secrets to writing the next hit novel/play/screenplay, but most of us do things that wouldn’t appear in any of them.

Those books won’t tell you to check the wordcount of the whole document, but you’ve done that, haven’t you? They probably won’t say to go get the mail or stare at the ceiling or pick your nose, but you’ve done one of those things, I’m guessing. They almost certainly won’t tell you to stop writing and go read a book about writing that you bought on Amazon.

We’re all a bit obsessive in our own ways. If not, we wouldn’t devote so much energy to the often-Sisyphean task of writing. But, in that moment, it’s worth remembering that we are not obligated to write page 46 today. If you’re excited to write the part of the story that may end up being on page 153, write that. Then write the part that is going to be absolute dynamite on page 274. Then write the last page. Then shuffle them until you can’t remember how they were going to make sense. Then figure out the most fun, most inventive new way to tie those good parts together until you have a manuscript that is composed entirely of parts you enjoyed writing.

Escape the tunnel and create an amazing mountain.

3. Excuses

Some people will tell you that excuses are like a specific anatomical region because every person has one. That’s patently false. If we had as many orifices as we have excuses, most of us would be sponges. Writers have more than most people; making

up stories is our business, and we can easily practice that on ourselves, like a failing drug dealer getting high on his own supply.

For most readers, Stephen King’s *Misery* is a book about the horror that can be unleashed by a fan’s excessive zeal. For writers (and, if I’m reading it, for King himself), it’s about all the forces, internal and external, that stand between a writer and a completed manuscript.

You might not be trying to overcome the past trauma of being held captive and tortured by an obsessive fan who was also a serial killer, but you probably have a day job, and that can be almost as lethal.

Plus, you owe some of your time to family and friends. (That’s not sarcasm. If you’re not a hermit, you have an obligation to the people in your life.) And there’s that TV show everyone has been talking about. And you know you can’t be a good writer if you never read; how long could it really take to read the *A Song of Ice and Fire* series? And the lawn does need mowing, and the house needs painting, and you deserve some time to just chill, and...

Most of the stories we tell ourselves about why we can’t work on our novels are rooted in the truth. As writers, we know our stories should be believable, and when we fool ourselves, we employ the same principle of believability. When Polonius tells Laertes, “To thine own self be true,” he’s not only talking about honesty. He’s talking about a kind of selfishness. This is in the context of advice to his son about how to be successful, after all. If you want to achieve your goal of finishing that manuscript, be honest with yourself about just how selfish you can afford to be.

Some other elements of your life will have to come first. Don’t feel guilty about that. Beyond these real needs, some other, less necessary things might simply be more important to you than finishing your manuscript. There’s no shame in that. But distinguish between excuses and priorities so you can satisfy the priorities and overcome the excuses.

4. Marketing

Maybe you are such a successful writer that your Big 5 publishing company has to hire a lawyer to keep your as-of-yet unpublished manuscript in a locked briefcase handcuffed to his wrist on a transAtlantic flight, even when he goes to the bathroom, for fear that someone will steal it. If so, I am honored that you are reading this, Ms. Rowling. You earned it.

If you are anyone other than J. K. Rowling, you need to worry about how to get your work into the hands of readers. It will take up some of your time. If you’ve chosen the traditional publishing route, you’ll need to write query letters, research agents, and try

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Are you taking advantage of your membership benefits with Willamette Writers?

We've included some special offers:

An Editing Special from Jill Kelly

10 pages edited with comments - \$50 for Willamette Writers members (\$75 for nonmembers)

Jill will do a thorough edit on 10 double-spaced pages of your manuscript using Track Changes. Then she'll send the edited pages with comments to you via email.

Editing includes:

- Grammar and punctuation
- Stylistic suggestions
- Ideas on organization: what's missing, what may need to go.

For more information, contact Jill Kelly at jill@jillkellyeditor.com. Offer good in June 2016.

Thank you, Jill, for this special offer!

The Hot Sheet – 15% discount

Willamette Writers members are invited to purchase annual subscription for The Hot Sheet publication at 15% off by using code WW15 at checkout (valid through March 2017). Produced by Jane Friedman and Porter Anderson, the Hot Sheet is the essential publishing industry newsletter for authors delivered directly via email every other Wednesday. Visit www.hot-sheetpub.com.

Scrivener – 20% Discount

Willamette Writers members are invited to visit the Scrivener web store at www.getscrivener.com, select a regular license for Scrivener on their preferred platform, then enter the code WILLAMETTE in the "coupon code" field during the checkout process to benefit from the 20% discount.

Before they purchase, members may wish to take advantage of Scrivener's free trial to see whether Scrivener suits their requirements, and they can find details of this at www.literatureandlatte.com/trial.php.

4 Obstacles, cont'd

to get through the gatekeepers. If you're successful, you'll then need to do the exact same things as the indie authors who skipped that, because publishing companies do not take care of all the marketing the way they once did.

- You'll need a "web presence."
- You'll need to fill up Facebook and Twitter and your blog with "content" (i.e. More writing that keeps you from the manuscript you need to be writing).
- You will need to schedule signings.
- If you're lucky, you'll need to respond to fan mail.

It's very easy to allow all this to prevent you from writing the next book. None of these tasks are bad. You're working on building your writing career, right?

But the marketing can't be the business.

According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, companies should spend 7 to 8 percent of gross revenue on marketing and advertising. (To be specific, that's their advice for those of us doing less than \$5 million a year in sales, which, as of today ... wait, let me check... ..yep, that still includes me). If you justify your Facebook and Twitter time as marketing, that's fine, but the time you spend there which isn't your personal, fun time should be 7% of your writing time. Otherwise, you are investing too much in marketing the last product and not spending enough creating value for your sole shareholder: You.

How many pieces of my own advice did I violate while writing this list? How many of these pitfalls did I dive into head first?

Well, at one point, I fixated on a single quote I thought I'd use but couldn't exactly remember and went into the Google rabbit hole looking for it, to no avail. *Tunnel Vision*. Check. Then I got bogged down in extra work from my other jobs, some of which had to be done (priorities) and some of which just felt more fun at the time. *Excuses*. Check. And, let's be honest, this list won't make it into my next novel. *Marketing*. Check. Check. In an effort to avoid writing out of guilt (excuses), I spent some time pretending to be a warrior more concerned with slaying digital dragons than finishing my next manuscript. *Video games*. Check and mate! You could choose to dismiss this whole list as the product of a total hypocrite. I prefer to think of it as the voice of the utmost authority.

...because I will finish the next manuscript, obstacles be damned.

Benjamin Gorman is a proud member of Willamette Writers and the author of *The Sum of Our Gods* and the Amazon bestseller *Corporate High School*. He lives in Independence, Oregon. He'll finish his next novel sometime soon-ish.

Jennifer Richter at OSU by Ken Holt

Jennifer Richter read from her new book *No Acute Distress*, May 20th at the OSU Valley Library to an overfilled house. Her words sang across the rotunda as if on humming bird wings. Her poems concerning chronic illness are little jewels of tragedy, comedy, and revelation. In these poems, she prods her audience to bear witness to her suffering and touches them with the same compassion she affords herself.

Rita Feinstein, MFA Grad Student introduced Jennifer to the crowd with such brilliance that I asked her permission to include a portion of her words here which she kindly granted. (Thanks, Rita!)

"The first thing you need to know is that the cover of Jen's most recent poetry collection, No Acute Distress, features a giraffe with rainbow-colored spots. The second thing you need to know is that the giraffe's pelt is distinctly leopard-like. Like a giraffe, Jen's poetry is graceful and majestic, yet there is something predatory about its coloration. By which I mean, her elegantly crafted imagery thrums with danger and urgency, and you can never predict when a last line will strike a devastating blow to your heart."

Jennifer has presented at Willamette Writers on the River (WW Corvallis Chapter) and has arranged for grad students to present as well. She is a great asset and friend. The members of Willamette Writers and I wish to thank and congratulate her on her new poetry collection.

Ken Holt is the Adult Education Director on the Willamette Writers Board, a memoir writer and poet, and new glass artist.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Are you interested in meeting other writers? What about working with an amazing non-profit?

Willamette Writers is looking for a volunteer Program Leader to head up the **Letters About Literature** contest, a national competition from the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress for students grades 4 - 12, designed to promote reading and writing. Good organizational and communications skills are a plus, as is a love of children and children's writing!

Volunteers sought to help promote Willamette Writers and its yearlong programs through social media. We're looking for people with graphic design skills, blog writing/editing experience, and/or social media savvy who would like to join our **Communications Working Group**.

Interested? Contact the office at wilwrite@willamettewriters.org.

Can You Help This PSU Research Project?

Are you a published author? Would you mind sharing developmental letters with researchers at PSU? If so, read on, and thank you on behalf of the grad students at PSU!

The Masters in Book Publishing program at PSU is looking to study editorial letters and would like authors to consider sharing theirs with the students researching this project. They are looking for a variety of genres and a variety of genders both in the editor and the author.

Here is the detailed request from Dr. Per Henningsgard who heads up the Masters in Book Publishing program at PSU (and thank you Rosanne Parry for sharing this with us): "I'm working with a group of students on a research project about gender and developmental editing. As part of this project, we need to collect developmental letters written by as many editors as possible, to as many authors as possible. We're looking to achieve a mix of genders in this collection. If you'd be willing to dig back through your files and find a developmental letter or two that you received from your editor/s, we'd really appreciate it if you could share that with us. Rest assured, no identifying details from these letters will be shared outside our small group of researchers."

How to Participate?

If you're willing and able, go to https://portlandstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0kuvVBCy4D7BkDX. You will be asked a few simple survey questions and then you will be asked to upload your developmental letter/s.

Thank you for considering this request. If you wish to share this with any of your writer friends, the students at PSU would be delighted!



Save the Date!

September 17, 2016 is the Corvallis Fall Workshop.

Susan Kelly is returning to discuss dialogue. Registration will open July 15th.

More information posted soon at <http://willamettewriters.org/wwotr/workshops/>

We Hope You Enjoy!

We hope you enjoy this new version of the Willamette Writers newsletter.

We'll be soliciting articles for our Conference Edition next. If you'll be presenting at the conference, have any interesting or helpful advice about attending, or would like to write about your own successful experience there, we would love to hear from you!

Send your articles (150 to 750 words) to newseditor@willamettewriters.org with the subject line Conference Newsletter Article - (your title) and the article in the body of the email.

Willamette Writers June Monthly Meetings

In Portland: "The Secondary 'I' in Nonfiction" with Natalie Serber

On Tuesday, June 7th, 7:00-8:00pm, the Portland member meeting will be held in the Copeland Room at TaborSpace, 5441 SE Belmont St, Portland, OR, Willamette Writers welcomes Natalie Serber, about connecting with your reader in memoir or personal essay.

In Portland – Young Willamette Writers: Fun, Friends, and the Future

On Tuesday, June 7th, 7:00-8:00 p.m., in the Copeland Room at TaborSpace, 5441 SE Belmont St, Portland, OR, the Young Willamette Writers meeting will be the last of the school year, but we have lots of special-ness planned! We like to take these breaks from listening to speakers to do fun, and sometimes very silly, writing exercises. The meeting is free and open to any student in 5th-10th grades.

In Central Point (Southern Oregon): "Diving Deep: Emotion in Fiction" with Susan Kelly

On Saturday, June 4th, 2016, at at the Central Point City Hall Council Chambers,

Willamette Writers hosts writing coach and editor Susan Kelly. The day will include a meeting in the morning and a workshop after lunch.

In Eugene (Mid-Valley): Author's Gala

On Thursday, June 2, 2016, 6:30-9:00 p.m. at Tsunami Books in Eugene, Willamette Writers hosts hosts a local authors gala. Event details to be announced soon!

In Newport (Coast): "How To Find Structure and Write Stories That Resonate With Readers" with Tom Hallman

Sunday, June 18th, 2:00-4:00 p.m. This free presentation will be held at the Newport Public Library in the McEntee Room.

In Corvallis (WWotR): Quarterly Reading

On Monday, June 20th, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church in Corvallis, Willamette Writers on the River hosts a quarterly reading. This gives writers the opportunity to engage in one of the most important practices of the writing life. These events fill up quickly! Sign up table begins at 6:15pm

In Salem: End of Year Celebration

On Wednesday, June 15th, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Salem Public Library, Willamette Writers hosts our Salem Area End of Year Party. Join us for discussion and activities around the topics that interest our members the most: writers groups and pitching. This meeting is the last for our 2015-16 program. We will be on hiatus for the summer.

Join us!



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