

2017 Conference Workshops

10:30 to 11:45 a.m.

A) Creating Plots for Page Turners—Robert Dugoni (repeated later)

From initial query letter to published novel, the writer must convey an understanding of classic story structure. Bob will teach the fundamental relationship between good stories and journeys, using in-class exercises and assignments to help writers better understand story structure and evaluate their novel's plot. Participants will also be better equipped to choose effective options for the opening chapter, make critical judgments about the middle of the book, and ensure the ending brings together the forces set in motion and delivers an emotionally satisfying conclusion.

B) Fourteen Novels: What I've Learned/Mistakes I've Made—Mike Lawson (repeated later)

Learn from a pro who has navigated the publishing world. Mike Lawson will discuss some writing basics, such as how to begin a book, pacing, characters, accuracy, writing a series, endings, etc. He'll also discuss the business aspects of writing: the author/agent relationship, author/editor relationship, contracts, royalty statements, and taxes.

C) Why Bad Things Must Happen to Good Characters: How to Create Conflict in Fiction—Melanie Dobson

Fiction readers connect deeply with main characters who face formidable challenges and opposition. In this workshop, we will discuss how to create compelling characters as well as both internal and external conflict so readers empathize with our characters and cheer for them to overcome every obstacle along their journeys.

D) Finding Your Angle: Freelancing for Beginners, Book Authors, and Platform Builders—Jane Hodges

Many writers are curious about freelancing, but aren't sure where to start—or what to expect. In this workshop, we'll discuss freelance writing as a form of supplementary income, a place to build a platform for a future book, a way to launch or advance a journalistic career, or a means of earning a living from home. Then, depending on writers' goals, we'll discuss how to find and pitch to clients, package and promote your work, and set realistic expectations about the income and editorial results you can expect when you dive into the marketplace.

E) Steps to Successful Indie Publishing: Part One—Kyle Pratt

The Internet has fundamentally changed the way we do business. This is especially true in the publishing world. Bookstores are disappearing as more people use the Internet to buy books and their ereaders, pads, and phones for reading. A new way of publishing dubbed “APE” focuses on writers as Author, Publisher, and Entrepreneur. Using the growing arsenal of technologies including Kindle, Kobo, print-on-demand, ACX, and the other tools of the digital era, Kyle believes many more writers can be successful APEs.

In **Part One**, Kyle will discuss:

Step 1: So, you have a manuscript—You've finished writing the manuscript and are considering indie publishing. What do you do? In this step, I discuss the editing process, critique groups, and what you should expect from a good one. I also discuss the four types of modern publishing and which might be right for you. Finally, we'll examine what it means to be an indie author and how to be a successful one.

Step 2: The four skills every indie author needs—What are the four skills every indie writer/publisher needs, and if you don't have them, what do you do? Indie authors need writing skills, but beyond that, they need to edit their manuscript, design book covers, and work with computers to complete and upload manuscripts. Few authors possess all these skills, but in the age of the Internet, they can easily find people who do. Kyle will discuss where and how to find people with the skills you need.

F) Bundle Up! The Pros and Cons of Book Bundles—Debby Lee

Creating book bundles and anthologies can be a chilly endeavor. In this class we'll discuss the unique advantages as well as challenges of creating multi-author collections. Learn some stress-reducing tricks for creating your boxed sets and maximizing success without getting (frost-)bitten in the process.

1:30 to 2:45 p.m.

A) Playing God: Creating Memorable Characters—Robert Dugoni

What is it about certain books that when we finish the final page the characters stay with us for days? What is it about those characters that made them so memorable? Using examples from his own and other writers, Bob will teach techniques to make your characters well-rounded individuals who will keep readers wondering about them long after the plot ends.

**B) Fourteen Novels: What I've Learned/Mistakes I've Made—Mike Lawson
(repeated)**

C) Stitching Together Timeslip Fiction—Melanie Dobson

Timeslip fiction is a growing genre, but what exactly is a timeslip novel? And how do you weave together two or more time periods into the tapestry of a novel? In this workshop, we will discuss how to structure a novel that slips between past and present storylines, effectively integrate backstory, and create a compelling novel for today's readers. Melanie has published nearly a half dozen novels that slip between past and present stories.

D) Easy Social Media Marketing for Writers—Veronika Noize

Social media is making stars out of some writers, but most writers—particularly self-published writers—are not getting the traction and visibility they want from the social realm, even after spending hours and hours being “social” on dominant platforms.

This info-packed class will share simple, easy and fast strategies specifically for writers, including:

- how to set up for marketing on social media
- what to expect from your social media marketing
- three quick and easy social strategies to use immediately
- plus bonus: The DIY Facebook Cheat Sheet

E) Steps to Successful Indie Publishing: Part Two—Kyle Pratt

Now that you've polished the manuscript and created a cover, how do you distribute and market your paperback, ebook, and audiobooks worldwide?

In **Part Two**, Kyle will discuss:

Step 3: Uploading: Creating books and ebooks—This step is an introduction into how indie publishers create books, ebooks, and audiobooks. Kyle will identify free programs to assist with the book creation and where to find affordable professional book designers. Today, authors can create audiobooks at home for little cost or have them done professionally using the Internet.

Step 4: Introduction to indie marketing—With your book available for purchase, how do people discover your books among the millions available? Marketing is essential for the indie author and publisher. In this step, Kyle will discuss free ways to promote books that even bestselling authors use, and share inexpensive marketing tips employed by large publishers.

F) Books, Games, and Bylines: What It Takes to Be a Novelist, Game Writer, and Journalist—Lisa Brunette

For those who love to write—anything! A successful career writer for two decades and counting, Lisa Brunette will walk audiences through the skills and qualities that can make or break you as a novelist, game writer, and journalist. Brunette provides real-life examples of how one opportunity might flow into another, with a quest for the story at the heart of each. She also shares the pros and cons of being a “multipotentialite” writer in three volatile marketplaces.

3 to 4:15 p.m.

A) Creating Plots for Page Turners—Robert Dugoni (repeated)

B) Fourteen Novels: What I've Learned/Mistakes I've Made—Mike Lawson (repeated)

C) Three Notes Played on a Silver Flute—Poet Laureate Tod Marshall

Join Washington State Poet Laureate Tod Marshall for a free, hands-on poetry workshop designed to engage participants' imagination through language. The class will explore energies that can bring new directions to our writing as we gather in a supportive community to make compelling and fresh metaphors. No previous writing experience necessary.

D) Networking for Writers and Introverts—Veronika Noize

Feeling drained, overwhelmed, and disappointed by your business networking efforts? Here's good news: Ronnie is sharing her secret strategies for networking a little, but getting a lot out of it!

Do you:

- shudder at the thought of entering a room full of strangers?
- prefer to stay at home?
- hate to waste time and energy on small talk?

If so, you will love her “introvert-friendly” networking strategies. And if you actually use them, you will find they magnetize opportunities like crazy.

What you'll learn:

- When, where and how to network in the real world
- When, where and how to network online (so easy!)
- How to show up “everywhere” while you're really relaxing at home or in the office
- How networking actually improves your luck

Fair warning: Extroverts HATE these networking strategies. So seriously, skip this workshop if you're extroverted.

E) Developing Plot Using Character Creation—Jennifer Vandenberg

It is often said that books are either plot-driven or character-driven. Plot-driven stories often focus on twists, turns, and external conflict while character-driven stories focus on a unique individual and how his or her life changes the direction of the narrative. In this program, we will examine how introducing new characters can influence the direction of the plot.

As a group we will bring a character to life and then explore how the traits we listed can build plots in different genres. We will then create a second character and see how the similarities and contrasts between the two individuals can take a plot in a new direction. Participants will leave with a checklist for creating their own characters and a great tool for improving the plots of their stories.

F) How to Be Both: The Balance Between Writer and Publicist—Kait Heacock

The reality of contemporary publishing is that an author is no longer just an author—living and writing in solitude, emerging only when it's time to collect accolades. Now authors must be their own publicists, whether or not they have a publicity department at their disposal. How do you talk about your writing? What should your social media platform look like? Where do you find and build writing communities? How do you interact with potential reviewers in authentic, relationship-building ways? These questions and more will be addressed as we look at the art of self-publicizing.