



# The Authority

Connecticut Authors & Publishers Association—Since 1994

Connecticut's Source for  
Writing, Publishing &  
Marketing Information

Volume 29 Issue 6 <https://ctauthorsandpublishers.com> June 2022

## June 18 CAPA Meeting — In Person! Social Media and Marketing Essentials

By Liz Delton

For most authors, the hardest part of writing a book isn't writing it, but getting it in front of readers, whether you're self-publishing or traditionally published. That's where social media and marketing come in--but where do you start? What platforms should you be on? What do you talk about? Do you need

a newsletter or a blog? And most importantly, how do you translate it into book sales?

Author of over a dozen books,



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## Meet the June Member of the Month— Kiersten Schiffer By Patti Brooks

Kiersten Schiffer is an about-to-be published author living in New Hartford.

How this first novel, *The Playlist Diaries*, evolved is a story in itself.

After her four children had grown, Kiersten sat down to write a memoir. Before long it was reading like an autobiography. Then Kiersten couldn't resist adding some fiction and then to add more interest, she gave her work a shot of romance.

Now, as *The Playlist Diaries* is going through its final edits, Kiersten believes she has written a coming-of-age trilogy.

Kiersten grew up on a cattle ranch in Indiana. Like many young girls, she pestered her parents until they got her a horse that she rode Western. When she had grown, Kiersten worked as an environmental educator in New York's Catskill Mountains. She worked in camps and often taught horseback riding.

Settled now in New Hartford, she



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## May 2022 SWCAPA Report

By Joe Keeney

Twelve members attended the SWCAPA meeting held on May 9<sup>th</sup>. Brian Jud sponsored and moderated the Zoom meeting.



Author April Cox talked about Common Mistakes Made by Self-Publishing Authors. She covered the process and whether it was right for you.

April provides coaching, publishing services and freelance consulting to clients. She has also created, Self-Publishing Made Simple Program which has successfully brought hundreds of authors through the self-publishing pro-

cess. Contact her at <https://www.thelittlelabradoodle.com>.

### SWCAPA Speaker: June 13, 6:30 pm

#### The Five Most Common Mistakes Made by Children's Book Authors,

by Bobbie Hinman, winner of 28 Children's book awards.



Bobbie shows you how to produce a well-written children's book by helping you understand structure through examples. She is brimming with mountains of information about structure. Among the topics she covers are developing your idea, understanding the story arc and structure, writing meaningful dia-

logue, understanding tense, choosing a narrator, creating compelling characters, using appropriate tone and vocabulary, learning to rhyme and much more!

Bobbie Hinman is a former elementary teacher and the author of five children's picture books. Bobbie has been a speaker at numerous schools, libraries, bookstores, and major book festivals across the United States and Canada. Her articles have appeared in the Independent Book Publishers Association (IPBA) magazine and in many blogs and interviews. She is currently in demand as an editor of children's books. Bobbie can be reached at [bestfairybooks.com](http://bestfairybooks.com)

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

### Article Submission

*The Authority* welcomes articles written by members. Here are our guidelines.

**Topics may cover any aspect of writing, publishing and marketing.** Your personal slant on this is of interest to all of us and welcome.

Articles should be no longer than 400 words. If the article is longer, the editors reserve the right to reduce the size or divide it into sections that would be run in successive issues.

All articles will be edited. Submit single spaced with no built-in formatting. Submit articles to Brian Jud at [brianjud@comcast.net](mailto:brianjud@comcast.net).

Send submissions for the **Meet-A-Member** column to Joe Keeney at [jkeeney9267@spamarrest.com](mailto:jkeeney9267@spamarrest.com) or Barbara Meredith [dbmeredith@charter.net](mailto:dbmeredith@charter.net)

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

### CAPA Board of Directors

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## Meet A Member

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works at “Hands of Grace,” a Lutheran food pantry three days a week.

And, Kierstan happily exclaimed, “It gives me the rest of the week to write!”

Indeed writing has become a major part of her life. Kiersten already knows her next novel is set in the camp world, specifically for disabled kids.

“By the way,” she wanted you to know. “It will be a romance.”

## June 18 Speaker

### Continued from Page 1

fiction and nonfiction, both self and traditionally published, Liz Delton will talk about essential tools every author should use in order to get the word out, most of which will only cost you your time.

## Writing Tips

### By John Long

“In expository prose, dump all qualifiers: rather, little, pretty, etc. In dialogue, it sounds unnatural not to use qualifiers, since everyone uses them in normal conversation.”

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“Vicious criticism stings, but I’ve learned that if the critic hadn’t taken me seriously he wouldn’t have put so much energy into the mugging.”

## Artisanal Prose

### Improvisation and Fiction From the Heart

By Adele Annesi

“Improvisation is an important element in the construction of any novel.



You are making up a good deal of the story and its environs. In this way novel writing is closer to jazz than it is to the mathematical precision of the modern interpretation of European classical music.” *Elements of Fiction*, Walter Mosley

In fiction, as in music, improvisation is a critical element, because if the writer isn’t surprised by what happens in the story, even one based on real events and people, the reader won’t be either.

One of the scariest things writers face is the blank page. So it’s usually a relief when the writer knows where a story is going and sets off down that path. So why, then, would the writer take a detour for parts unknown or a dead end?

Crime fiction novelist Walter Mosley, author of *Elements of Fiction*, says that one reason to take the risk is that “... the story we’re writing is a living thing and has opinions of its own. As the writer, we are part of these decisions, but that doesn’t give us, or our conscious minds, complete control.”

Fiction writers need both insight and inspiration. When we start a story, we may have a good sense of the plot and the characters. But it

doesn’t usually take long to realize we don’t know everything. “Creativity has much to do with experience, observation and imagination, and if any one of those key elements is missing, it doesn’t work,” per Bob Dylan in *Chronicles Vol. 1*. When the writer reaches a fork in the road or a roadblock, it’s the right time to ask, “Now what?”

It’s also a great time to ask, “What if?” In fiction, as in life, what-if questions can be vexing because they force us to face uncertainty, the unknown. In fiction writing, these moments offer the prospect of discovery. This means the writer can use what-if queries as catalysts to develop and deepen the work, even if it means exploring a trail that doesn’t follow the existing storyline.

So, what if the road less traveled leads to wasted time and energy? Mosely anticipates the question: “... a novel attempting to rise above the level of mere story does not get there because of our knowledge and certainty, our education and intelligence alone. The novel flourishes when its author begins to take risks.”

So how do we take risks, and what sorts of risks can we take? Here are questions to ask, based on key elements of fiction:

**Character:** What if a character wants to do something apparently not in keeping with who that person is (or as we envisioned them)? Why not craft a scene and find out?

**Conflict:** In life and in fiction, conflicts abound. The question fiction writer may be what *other* problems, besides those we’ve anticipated, naturally arise from the story. As a reminder, the three main areas of conflict are: the character with other characters, the character with the character, and the character with nature.

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## Could Book Publicity Could Cost Authors \$10,000?

By Brian Feinblum



They say the best things in life are free. Just ask anyone sitting on a beach, petting their dog, or enjoying a romantic coupling.

They also say there is no such thing as a free lunch. Just ask anyone who gets a free hotel night after taking a two-hour timeshare property tour.

Well, when it comes to book publicity, free costs a lot. Make no mistake about it.

Have a look at the true cost of these “free” activities:

**Book giveaways.** Authors pay to give their books away when they sign up with GoodReads, Library-Thing and other give-away services. Whenever authors give away printed books, the cost of printing and shipping needs to be factored in, as well as the cost of membership to these sites.

**Website downloads.** Free means it can't be sold. You are giving away content that you created and could otherwise be compensated for.

**Social media accounts.** It is free to be on Twitter, Instagram, and other social media platforms, but it costs

you time and mindshare. Time is money.

**Free webinars or workshops.** pending time to set them up, recruit attendees, crafting your presentation, dress rehearsals, and the execution of the event could be time spent on making money. Plus you are giving away content that could be charged for.

**Pricing your e-book at zero.** All of these free downloads cost you opportunity to sell that book to those people.

**Contacting the news media on your own.** It takes a lot of time and effort — and some book and mailing costs — to reach out to the news media in hopes of getting reviews, interviews, or media coverage.

Everything you do — even the free things — can cost money, time, lost opportunity, and mindshare. Is it worth it?

You can do some type of crude cost analysis to measure how many leads were generated from your activities and then attach a dollar amount to the effort and the result. But on instinct, all of this free activity seems to make sense because it is what is available to you. You do it because you can, and because seemingly not enough alternatives are available to you.

### Free can possibly lead to:

- \* More book reviews being posted.
- \* Social media posts being made by others about your book.
- \* Sales for your other books that are not free.
  - Media exposure of your book.
- \* Sales of other items or services that you offer.

\* Positive word of mouth.

\* Random discovery by publishers, literary agents, and Hollywood.

\* Good will from charities.

\* The spreading of your book's message and the impacting of lives that otherwise would go untouched.

Free is a business model employed by many industries. So, why should the book industry be any different?

Well, the economic scale is very different. Authors don't make a lot of money on a book sale but they seem to invest a lot to earn that sale. Then again, no one puts a gun to their head to give things away.

Still, it may just be that authors feel they have little choice in the matter. If their options are limited and their competitors are doing it, well, when in Rome, do as the Romans do.

There certainly are success stories from all of the free activity. Authors get more reviews, sales, and word of mouth going as a result. But they need to go into this type of marketing knowing that they easily can give away the equivalent of thousands of dollars in books, postage, digital content, and time that could be used to earn a paycheck.

For the industry overall, free is a losing proposition. Authors are only training consumers to read for free. Millions of free books and pieces of content being read means people have less time and little desire to read books one has to buy.

However, the author seeking to establish their brand and grow their name could serve themselves well by giving some things away.

Free is a gold mine of opportunity with a cost. You must decide if it is worth it.

## Artisanal Prose

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**Dialogue:** What happens when someone says something unexpected? To explore this, write a scene without scripting it first, and see where it goes.

**Plot:** Instead of going in the expected direction with a particular plot point or event, what if the story took a left turn? While uncertainty is uncomfortable, where there is uncertainty there is opportunity.

**Setting:** While you may already know where your story is set, setting includes everything from weather, location and geography, era, society—everything that makes up your story world. Even the slightest change can dramatically affect and layer the story and characters.

**Theme:** A story's main theme forms the backbone of the story. But what secondary themes might there be that inform the main topic?

When in doubt, consider Mosely's advice: "... when the Voice of novel, asks *Why not take this detour and see if we can get something out of it?*—you should listen."

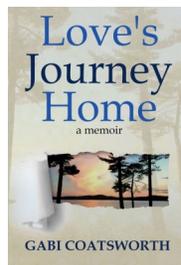
Happy writing!

Adele Annesi is an award-winning author, editor and teacher. For questions on writing, email [Annesi@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Annesi@sbcglobal.net)

## CAPA Member Celebrating Success

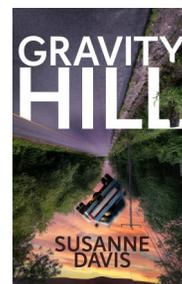
*No Rules* by Sharon Dukett won the 2022 Memoir Prize for Books (Adventure category).

Hygienic Art presents An Evening with Author Sharon Dukett on June 18th from 5 - 6 PM at 79 Bank Street, New London CT 06320. "Join us on June 18th from 5-6 PM for an hour of personal storytelling with Next Generation Indie Book Award-winning author, Sharon Dukett at the Hygienic Art Gallery. She will read sections from her memoir, *No Rules: A Memoir*, published by She Writes Press.



Gabi Coatsworth's memoir, *Love's Journey Home*, was published on May 7, in paper, eBook, and audio formats. The memoir chronicles her life with her husband, from their first meeting in Copenhagen in 1974 to his death decades later. The book has been described as a compelling and moving memoir of a marriage where passionate love is lost and found, and reached #1 on Amazon's new releases in the Death and Grief category. In addition, she recently came first in the Connecticut Press Club Awards contest for her website and for her social media campaign for a book launch, and placed in the National Awards of the NFPW (National Federation of Press Women).

Susanne Davis's novel, *Gravity Hill*, forthcoming Sept. 2022 was runner up for the Blue Moon Literary Competition, and is being published by Madville Publishing. In other news, my most recent novel, *Stray Dog Watch Over*, is a finalist for Black Lawrence Press Big Moose Prize.



## The Five Biggest Mistakes New Authors/Publishers Make When Promoting Their Books

Virtual Event by Sandy Smith

When you finally finish writing your book, you might think that the biggest hurdle is behind you. While that's true to an extent, there are many important pieces for launching a book that come after the writing and publishing phases, and one of the most important is promotion. Understanding just how competitive the book industry is, there are certainly a few frequent mistakes and missteps every author should try to avoid when getting their book out into the world. To increase your chances of success, watch out for these common pitfalls: Running down the clock, underestimating the power of the author platform, spreading yourself too thin, making it all about you/your book, feeding into criticism.



**Webinar on June 22 (7:00 pm ET): Register for this event here: <https://bit.ly/3thyum1>**

## Tips for Being an Amazing Podcast Guest

By Jeniffer Thompson

You've probably heard before that being a podcast guest is a fantastic marketing tool. And it's true! Your publicist, your marketing team, and business articles you've read, all promote being a podcast guest because it really is a pretty simple and highly effective way to put yourself out there and get noticed!



So, if you've been looking for the opportunity, or have already been asked to be a podcast guest, don't panic! We've got you covered with these ten tips below.

### 1. Do Your Research!

You don't want to head into this unprepared, so first and foremost, do your research. Make sure you're aware of what the podcast is all about. Listen to a few episodes, note the host's interview style, the length of the podcast and it's tone. This will help you know what to expect and therefore put you more at ease when the time comes.

### 2. Be a Prepared Podcast Guest

Now, you don't have to write out an entire script of what you'll say but having some notes or an outline of some points you want to make is probably a wise decision. Know your stuff! Knowing key points of your material will likely come naturally if you're an expert in the topic or you'll be talking about your book. But if you need to brush up on some things to keep current, make sure you do that too.

### 3. Use Decent Equipment

If you're not in studio as a podcast guest, which is likely these days, and common even in non-pandemic times, you'll need your own sound equipment. First and foremost, having a decent mic is pretty essential. Here's a budget-friendly mic we recommend.

If you're doing the podcast via Zoom or other video platform, you'll also want to make sure you have good lighting and your background looks put together and appealing. Here's a whole blog you can refer to for more tips on looking your best on Zoom.

### 4. Do a Test Run Beforehand

Test that mic and your camera and get familiar with whatever platform you'll be using in advance. You can even try a sound check to get to know how your voice sounds with your equipment. If you sound too quiet, too loud, or find yourself mumbling, practice speaking clearly until it sounds right.

A few minutes before recording you'll want to double check that you're mic is on and working, you're not on mute, etc.

### 5. Be Aware of Excess Noise

Breathing, swallowing, and chewing will all be picked up and amplified by the mic. Think SNL parodies of NPR shows. Listeners don't want to hear that, as you can imagine. Even background noises such as paper rustling, toe tapping, and doors shutting somewhere in the background can be heard. Remember, the mic picks up everything!

### 6. Relax and Be Yourself

This one should be easy, right? Well, not always. Knowing you're being recorded and any number of potential listeners will hear your interview can make a

lot of us feel a bit nervous. A good way to help ease your jitters is to pretend like you're just having a normal conversation. Have fun with it! Have a cocktail or glass of wine beforehand if that'll loosen you up a bit. Take a deep breath. And remember, it's not that serious! Have a bit of fun. The recording is going to be edited before airing anyway, so any mistakes can be edited out.

**7. Don't Drone On.** Sometimes when we're nervous we tend to talk a bit too much. To keep this from accidentally happening and to be a good podcast guest, cap any response at a couple minutes. Pause in between complete thoughts, so if the host wants to steer the conversation another way, or ask a follow up question, you give them the opportunity to do so.

Being a podcast guest isn't a job interview. Think of it more like a conversation over coffee. No one is judging you on your answers or performance. The host will know how to keep the conversation going, but you don't want to give just yes or no answers, or leave big gaps of silence.

### Don't Worry About Everything Being Perfect

As we mentioned above, podcasts do go through an editing process. If you mess up, there's protocol for that. And remember, it's all about getting to know you and hearing what you have to say. There are no right or wrong answers. So relax, and have a good time!

## Motivational Tip

"Rock bottom became the solid foundation upon which I rebuilt my life."

J. K. Rowling

## Hey Buddy, Watch Your Language!

By Chris Amorosino

I played a two-minute video during an online meeting with the goal of giving people encouragement during the pandemic. At one point in the video this positive, uplifting presenter says that she's not implying that these times are not tough, and she says we will all suffer some inconveniences.



After the video, one person said he found no comfort or encouragement in that message. He seemed focused on the fact that the presenter said the economy and pandemic would inconvenience us. The video presenter's choice of the word inconvenience blocked this person from gaining anything from the message.

Poor word choice vacuums effectiveness out of communications. A major newspaper quoted a chief of police in Arizona as saying that his department's job is to prevent crime. I suggest the chief watch his language. Isn't the job of the police not to prevent crime but to maintain and promote peace? That's a big difference.

If my goal is to prevent crime I'll focus on shady behavior and unsavory characters. If my goal is

to keep the peace I'm likely to focus more on encouraging and protecting law abiding citizens.

When we give a group of people a name that group often tries to live up to that name. Call me a police officer and I'll focus on policing. Call me a peace officer and I may focus more on peace keeping.

Many times, word choice alone has a more significant effect on the reader or listener than the actual content or meaning or facts in your message. The same group could be described as freedom fighters or as terrorists, depending on what you want to communicate. I could call something a clever plot and get one reaction or call the same thing a conspiracy and get the opposite reaction.

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## Schedule of Upcoming Meetings (Unless otherwise noted, these will be virtual meetings at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6762224705> )



### CAPA CENTRAL (Avon)

(All meetings run from 10:30—12:00 pm Attend in-person meetings at the Avon Senior Center. To be a speaker or for more info contact [BrianJud@bookapss.org](mailto:BrianJud@bookapss.org))  
 June 18: Liz Delton: *Social Media and Marketing Essentials* for indie and traditional authors  
 July 16: Eileen Albrizio describe why writers should "show, not tell"



### CAPA SOUTHEAST (Groton)

(All virtual meetings run from 6:30 —7:30 pm. Watch them and ask questions of the speakers. For more info contact Patti Brooks, [patti@pattibrooksbooks.com](mailto:patti@pattibrooksbooks.com))  
 June 20: Speaker and topic to be announced  
 July 18: Speaker and topic to be announced



### CAPA SOUTHWEST (Shelton)

(All virtual meetings run from 6:30 —7:30 pm. Watch them live and ask questions of the speakers. For more info contact Joe Keeney, [jkeeney9267@spamarrest.com](mailto:jkeeney9267@spamarrest.com))  
 June 13: The Five Most Common Mistakes Made by Children's Book Authors  
 July 11: Speaker and topic to be announced

## CAPA's Co-op Connection

In-person events are returning to CT! Save money as you market your books by sharing the cost of these events with other CAPA members.

- 6/5 Westbrook Spring Arts & Crafts Fair
- 8/6 Stonington Village Fair
- 9/8 Hebron Artisan & Craft Show @ Hebron Harvest Fair
- 9/24 Colchester Festival on the Green
- 9/30 Southington Apple Harvest Festival
- 10/7 Southington Apple Harvest Festival
- 11/6 Connecticut Bridal & Wedding Expo (Hartford)



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## Hey Buddy, Watch Your Language!

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Words have personalities. The words odor and aroma may be defined similarly but only one makes me want to move in closer. Call someone a statesman rather than a politician and you communicate something different. I could tell you to watch your language or I could ask you to use words that appeal and don't repel.

Your words are your face on the screen or page. Put on your best face. Look smart and smile. Always comb, brush, and floss.

Contact Chris at  
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