



COMMUNITY WRITING WORKSHOP

FACILITATORS: APRIL
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- Introductions:
- Name
- What do you write (or what would you LIKE to write)
- Your favorite Writer (it's so hard to pick just 1)



EACH WORKSHOP

...

- Writing in the Day: 1-2
Prompts for getting new writing
on the page
- A Craft Lesson
- Workshop YOUR Work with
feedback from peers!



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- **Prompt 1:** *a writing sprint*
 - This type of writing helps the ‘stuck’ writer. Consider a Work-in-Progress: Then just write for **8 minutes** — the point is not to judge what you are producing, but simply to move the pen (or the keys) forward, without judgement.
 - You can respond to THIS prompt instead:

Tell me about a time where you got to go somewhere new.

- Today's Craft Lesson is really about publishing...
- ... and because April is working on her own goalsetting:
- Prompt 2: What is your ideal publication situation? Where do you dream about your writing being read?



Publishing

Today we're going to speak in 'general' terms—with some resources provided!

Self-Publishing verses Press Publishers

We'll discuss the markets for the following genres/categories of writing:

- Poetry
- Nonfiction → Investigation and/or Self-Help
- Nonfiction → Memoir / Essay
- Fiction → Genre (i.e. sci-fi, romance, historical, mystery)
- Fiction → Literary
- ScreenPlays → film, television, stage

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- These are all the things I wish someone had explained to *me* when I first started my writing journey!



Rule 1:
Write the
thing **YOU**
want to
read.





Rule 2: Accept that the thing YOU love may not have a MARKET ... or it may be a challenge to 'find' your market

Rule 3: There is a BIG difference between getting paid for your work and having people read and interact with your work.

Rule 3.5: There are VERY different ways to get paid. (I still mean \$\$ here – I’m not talking about being “paid” through exposure, which is nonsense and a myth)



The Basics

Traditional Press Publishers

- Editor &/or publisher have a contract with a writer
- Publisher has final 'say' over the publication
- Pays the Author a % of the sale price
- Handles *some* marketing / distribution

Self-Publishing

- Writer has full control over all aspects of publication (depending on the services they choose to outsource)
- Writer also has full responsibility for distribution and marketing

Pros & Cons

Traditional Press Publishers

- + can handle mass distribution
- + Lends some 'legitimacy'
- + Books eligible for more 'prizes/awards'
- Controls price point & point-of-sale
- Can (and sometimes does) veto writer's choice in text/cover art/& Title

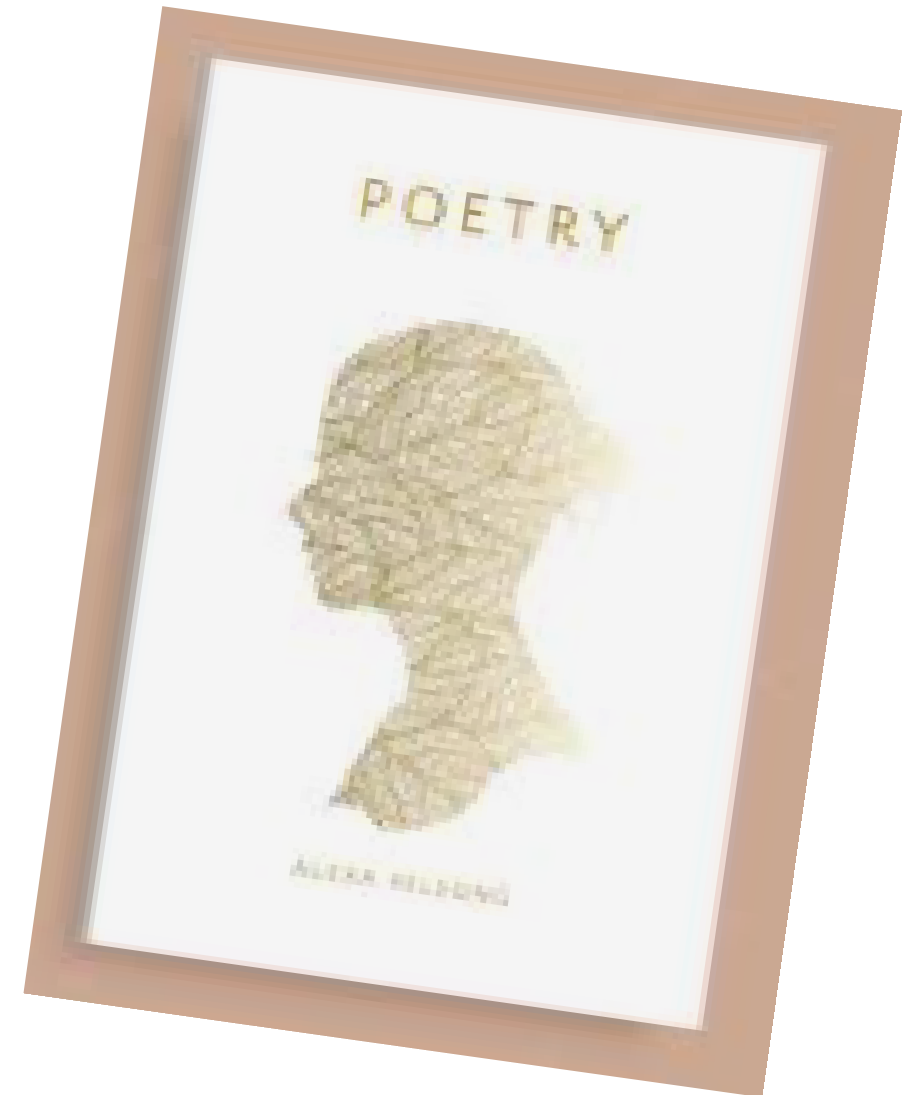
Self-Publishing

- + Writer has full control over all aspects of publication (depending on the services they choose to outsource)
- Writer may not have the skill-set for aspects—like marketing plans, setting up events, choosing materials, graphic design
- Needed editorial oversight to 'clean up' a text

Poetry (a)

1-offs (Or Poems that appear in Journals & Anthologies)

- Academic presses typically affiliated with university writing programs
- Small, Independent Presses that do runs of 200-500 (or less)
- Prefer unpublished work (this is complicated, but many consider a social media ‘share’ as a publication, depending on your number of followers)
- Can be monthly, quarterly, seasonal, or thematic
- Some require a ‘reading fee’
- Some a paying markets; many are not



Poetry (b)



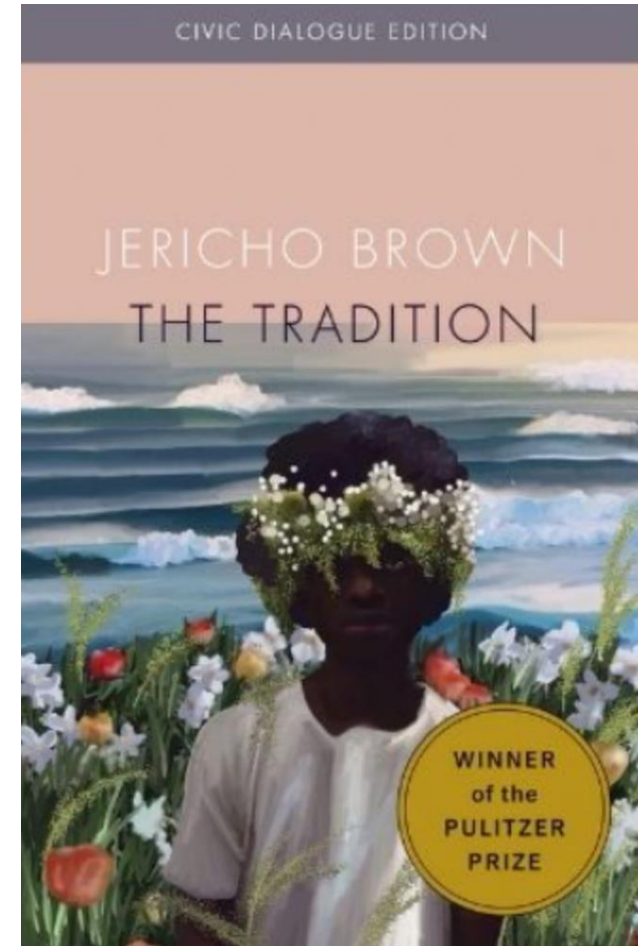
The Chapbook (or Chapter Book)

- Small booklet of 15-40 poems
- Can be part of a ‘prize’ or award
- This is the ‘bread-n-butter’ of the poetry world.
- Some require a ‘reading fee’ that then pays for the prize money and publication
- Small press runs of typically 25-200
- Usually *not* a digitized product and have extremely limited shelf-life

Poetry (c)

The full-length Collection

- 100 (or more) poems
- Can be part of a ‘prize’ or award
- Can be accepted through general submission, but often is a) contest/award **or** b) solicited
- Depending on the prestige of the press, this could be as few as 200 books in a press run, or 1,000s



Nonfiction: Investigation and/or Self-Help

There's no 'right' way to get a book like this published, but MANY create the 'pitch' first, then Shop the Query around to Presses and/or Agents

- Can be costly if measured in 'time' to investigate → that's why many writers in this field find a publisher *before* they complete the manuscript
- Often 'chapters' are articles that have already been published in major Newspapers or Periodicals
- The Reputation of the Writer MATTERS
- There are major 'press imprints' that focus on NOTHING but this market → there are also agents or who specialize in representing this type of work

Nonfiction: Memoir or Essay

Again, there's no 'right' way to get a book like this published, but MANY create the 'pitch' first, then Shop the Query around to Presses and/or Agents

- The Reputation of the Writer Matters
- Very Narrow Market
- Almost all need to be represented by an Agent *first*;
 - I personally could not find a press that would take unsolicited queries or submissions without representation
 - This category is often filled by professional free-lance writers & requires the development of an area of expertise

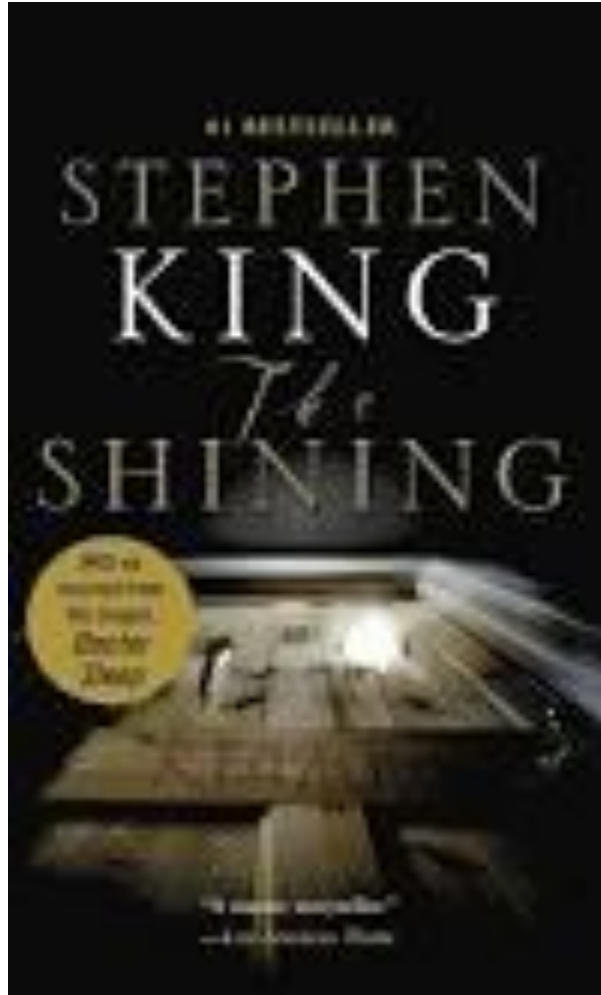
Fiction: Genres

This is where the money is (lol) \$\$\$

What even is Genre Fiction?

This is the easily catalogued type of fiction most people love to read!

- Follows certain internal standards and expectations that mark a book as part of a 'genre'
- Some say there is a 'formula' to this writing → but I like to think of it as a 'list of expected ingredients'
- 85,000 to 150,000 words (think mass-market paper-back)



FICTION: GENRES

- Some presses (both large and small) will take query letters—and will then request a writing sample or 1st chapter if interested
- MANY presses expect all manuscripts to be represented by an agent *first*
- Different genres have different manuscript expectations for publication
- Proof of writing output is often required—that is, someone who has already completed manuscript 1-2 in a trilogy, and has mapped out 3, may receive attention before I personally could not find a press that would take unsolicited queries or submissions without representation

Fiction: Literary

This is the work that defies easy description

- If Genre fiction is ‘plot-driven,’ then Literary Fiction is ‘character-driven. Both can be romantic, magical, surreal, ‘expectation-bending.’
- Sometimes the difference is literally how many subplots OR a marketing choice based on who the publisher thinks the book will appeal to
- In the past, the price-point has been higher
- Almost *ALWAYS* agent-represented work *ONLY* (smaller presses may take literary fiction with a query-letter)

Screenplays

Agent-centric Work

- Industry expectations around the 3 ACT Structure
- Some agents only represent certain ‘types’ of writers
- Just because a screenplay has been optioned for ‘screen’ does NOT mean it ever sees the screen.

- There ARE Presses that are ONLY interested in publishing and copyrighting work for the stage—and then handle the ‘licensing’ fees for theatres to ‘opt’ in to a production

- If you’re the writer, there are NO rules if YOU decide to get a group together, put on your play, and charge an audience. MANY KS playwrights do this and are active in getting their work in community theatres

Let's go back to those 3 “Rules”

1. Write the thing YOU want to Read

The thing with following traditional expectations is that you are then limited by expectations.

Write the thing that brings you JOY

- Poets constantly invent, or *re-invent*, Form.
- Consider how you want people to experience YOUR work—MANY writers are fully digital and have NO physical copies of their books
- Some writers choose to share their work in a Serial format, through Blogging [which is a WHOLE OTHER conversation]

Maybe YOU are a story-teller or performer.

Maybe your work is meant to be experienced in a live, interactive format, but you are STUCK on the idea that this 'essay' belongs in *Chicken Soup for the Soul*.

Maybe it just gives you joy to share your stories as an ongoing podcast...

Then DO THAT.

Rule 2: Accept that the thing YOU love may not have a MARKET ... or it may be a challenge to 'find' your market

Rule 3: There is a BIG difference between getting paid for your work and having people read and interact with your work.



The traditional model of writing a book and then living off the proceeds does NOT exist. Please do NOT quit your day job.

Elizabeth Gilbert [*Eat, Pray, Love*] did not quit her 'day job' until her 3rd book was published... and even then, she never anticipated the popularity of 1 of her books and has admitted to NOT having equal success since

Rule 3: There is a BIG difference between getting paid for your work and having people read and interact with your work.



What ARE ways you *could* get paid?

- Sell your work in print format
- Become 'expert' at something and *teach* or *speak* on related topics
- Consider experimental ways your work could be experienced ← figure out what that would cost → write a grant
- Monetize your Blog (see wordpress or substack)

Some Better Resources that can answer more in-depth questions:

Kansas Writers Association

Meets 3rd Saturdays at Evergreen
Branch, 1:30-4:00

Website includes basic information
and a self-publishing check-list

Submission Managers for Traditional Publishing and *some* Presses

Submittable

Duotrope

Self-Publishing:

Amazon publishing

Lightning source

Lulu

Createspace

Smashwords