

Research Proposal Memo

To: Dr. Karen C. Holt
From: Rachel Lefoll, Emma Mason
Date: 28 January 2010
Subject: From Print to the Press: the Creative Writing Process to the Editing and Publishing Process

Purpose

We propose to inform those who read our research paper of the process of creative writing and publishing. We will also research trends in publishing and the relationship of world events to popular fiction. The purpose of our paper is to discover the best method of creative writing and the best process of getting that writing published.

Background

Our group has an interest in the editing and publishing field because, as English majors, we both hope to go into careers involving them. While one of us like to go into editing and publishing specifically, the other would like to work in creative writing. We felt that studying the publishing process would help us both to understand what the system is like from a writer's perspective. We have done no outside research previous to beginning this paper, other than what would be required for looking into our major. We both feel that learning more about the editing and publishing process will better prepare us for our future.

Significance

As a partnership, we are very different. One is very interested in the creative writing process and the other is very interested in the editing process. We are interested in discovering the best method for getting a creative work published and also in what ways publishing companies can influence their writers. This will be important because we as English majors hope to one day break into the creative publishing field and as there are many avenues, it would be beneficial to know which path will yield the best results.

Studying trends in publishing will help us understand how world events influence the wants of the everyday reader, which is imperative to the writer that wishes to be successful. Also, it is fascinating to see how one event can shape the opinions and ideals of a generation. We will be looking at how events influence publishing, and through those eyes, how events have affected a generation.

Description

To complete this project, we will be using mostly secondary research sources from the library or from online articles. However, we are hoping to be able to interview a

published author who would have experience working within the publishing system. We are hoping this primary source might come from someone who might be knowledgeable about either independent publishing, or using literary agents.

- Self publishing v. publishing with a company (Rachel, Emma)
- Self publishing v. literary agents (Rachel, Emma)
- Do authors prefer to have a critical eye or leave everything to their own mind? (Rachel, Emma)
- Editors, how they change the work (Rachel)
- Publishing trends throughout history (Emma)

Problems

Some of the problems that we might face would be to have the books that we have ordered from other libraries have difficulty coming through with enough time to use them. Also, we might have trouble finding an individual to interview with the needed experience and qualifications. Furthermore, as we continue working on our paper, we might have difficulties in finding research that will give us the particular perspective that we were hoping to write about.

Methodology

We will be doing our secondary research mainly through online articles and print books directed specifically to the two facets of our topic, focusing especially on finding the most trusted path from raw creative work to finished published masterpiece.

We believe that publishers have a great deal of influence over their contracted writers, and the world events have a great deal of influence over what publishers think the public wants to read. We will investigate this by looking at literary movements in relationship to major event timelines. For example, the period after World War One has become known as “the Lost Generation” because of the national feeling of apathy.

Annotated Bibliography

Abbe, Elfrieda. “Writing Her Way into the Story.” *Writer* July 2009: pp.18-21. Print.

This book describes one writer’s method of writing and gives insight into her process. Because she is a widely published author, her view points are valid and informative to the young, unpublished writer.

Carimer, Kevin. “Inside Publishing: When Editors are Edited.” *Poets and Writers*. Vol. 3 No. 3. (May/June 2005). 44-51.

This article looks closely at editors, their preferences, and a little bit into the editing process. It interviews different editors and talks about their styles as well.

Gardner, John. *The Art of Fiction* New York: Vintage Books 1991

This book describes the process of writing, written by a published author who is familiar with what kind of processes work and do not work.

Harrigan, Jane T., Karen Brown Dunlap. *The Editorial Eye*. Boston, MA: 2004. Print.

In this book, the authors focus mainly on the editing process and a guide to electronic editing. It talks about the training and preparation needed to go into the editing field.

Hawkes, John P. *How to Get Your Book Published*. Salt Lake City, Utah: Hawkes, 1976. Print.

This book discusses the publishing process, and how to go about promoting your own book. Though outdated, this book will be helpful in looking at some of the historical trends in publishing and editing.

Henderson, Helene ; Pederson, Jay P. "Lost Generation." *Literary Movements Dictionary*. EDITION. Print.

This article pertains to a specific literary movement, which shows how world events can affect the feelings of a nation and what they wish to read.

Henderson, Helene ; Pederson, Jay P. "Modernism." *Literary Movements Dictionary*. EDITION. Print.

This article pertains to a specific literary movement and how it was affected by the world.

Herald, Diana Tixier. "Serving Today's Reader." Genreflecting: a Guide to Popular Reading Interests. Westport, Ct: 2006 Libraries Unlimited. 31-40.

This book is a collection of different articles and essays by multiple authors on each genre of writing. It also talks specifically about the publishing and editing trends for each genre.

Manning, Steve. "How to Edit Your Writing Now." Tate Publishing.

<http://www.writeabooknow.com/editingyourwork.html>. Jan 20, 2010.

Within this article, the author talks about how to edit your writing once you've finished your actual writing in order to make it ready for publication. It also focuses on working quickly and would an interesting source for the topic of self-publication.

Menand, Louis. "Show or Tell." *New Yorker on the Web*. New Yorker, 7 Jan 2009: 1-6. Web. 19 Jan 2010.

This article deals with whether or not creative writing can be taught and whether or not it should be taught in schools on the basis that it improves critical thinking and imagination skills.

"Publishing." The Macmillan Encyclopedia. 2003.

<http://www.credoreference.com/entry/move/publishing>.

This article within an encyclopedia discusses what publishing process is and the steps involved in getting published as an author.

"Publishing." *The New Encyclopedia Britannica*. 15 ed. 2010. Print.

This article from the encyclopedia gives a brief background for our research in the field of publishing and the publishing process.

“Publishing.” *The Reader’s Companion to American History*. 1991.

<http://www.credoreference.com/entry/rcan/publishing>

This article is also within an encyclopedia and reviews the process of publishing and how it has changed through American History. It also discusses those factors that have greatly affected the publishing world.

“Publishability.” *Oxford English Dictionary*. 1989. Print.

This article gives background to publishability, an area important to understand for writers attempting to be published and also as a jumping off point for new publishers wishing to please the public.

Schwartz, Olivia, Sarah Toman, “Awakening the Writer Within: A Workshop.” *Gestalt Review*. 13.2 (165-173). Print.

This article talks more about the creative writing process and how to improve your writing to make it more publishable.

Sharples, Mike. *How We Write: Writing as Creative Design*. New York: Routledge, 1999. Print.

This book examines the writing process as a whole and lays out a specific method that the authors believes to be useful.

Time Table and Schedule

Assignment	Work Schedule	Due Date
Research	Continually and Independently	Continuously
Outline	3-4 McKay Library	5 February 2010
First Draft	3-4 McKay Library	10 February 2010
Bibliography	3-4 McKay Library	10 February 2010
Revisions	3-4 McKay Library	11-12 February 2010
Final Draft	3-4 McKay Library	16 February 2010

Request for approval

In summation, we respectfully request that you grant us the approval needed to continue our research on the editing and publishing process from the perspective of a professional writer.