



Heart to Heart

January 20, 2007

Amazing Face Reading

Join us as therapist Ann Marks demonstrates how reading face structure and features can reveal a person's personality, stress levels, intimacy requirements, and problem solving capabilities. Face reading provides a deeper level of communication between people and Ann Marks will illustrate, through a hands-on method of learning, how writers can utilize the process to create more believable characters. More information is available at www.amazingfacereading.com.

Ann Marks has earned two masters

degrees – one in theology and the other in counseling psychology and is a qualified therapist. After teaching and counseling for over twenty years, Ann became the first woman Executive Vice President of Challenger, Gray & Christmas, a multi-million dollar international outplacement firm based in Chicago. After fourteen years with Challenger, she left to become the Executive Director of the Young Presidents' Organization International Forum whose world headquarters is located in Irving, Texas. She has traveled extensively all over the world both for business and pleasure.

A book should be luminous not voluminous.
Christian Nevell Bovee

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President's Corner



Dear Chapter Mates,

Thank you so much for the opportunity to be president of our wonderful organization. I really love this group. It's my "ME" thing. The one thing I do for Jen that's not related to kids or husband or church or business. I've gotten so much enjoyment out of getting to know so many of you and I hope to meet those of you I've never met.

As most of you know, NT will be celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary this year. Our chapter was founded in March of 1983 by a handful of women who loved to write and knew how important a support group of like-minded people would be. We have many different activities slated to help us celebrate and, hopefully, they'll send us into our next twenty-five years with as much excitement and enthusiasm for writing and our chapter as the charter members had back in 1983.

We'll kick off our year long celebratory activities in March. Most of the excitement will happen in conjunction with the RWA National Conference, which will be in Dallas this year, but a couple of them will take place over the course of the year. The board and I hope that you'll all participate in as many activities and events that you can.

When I decided to run for president, I sat down and made a list of goals for me as the president and for our chapter as a whole. One of those goals is to increase our membership. Since I've been a member, our membership count

has grown, but only a little. Having been on the board for the last two years, I know we take a hit each spring while we wait for everyone to renew his or her membership.

Let's be pro-active this year and renew our memberships before the January 31st deadline. There are several ways to do this: in person, via mail, or via Internet. You can pay your dues in cash or by check at the meeting, by check or money order through the mail, or via credit card or PayPal over the Internet. And, *please* don't let financial difficulties keep you from retaining your NT and/or RWA membership. If you have a financial need, please contact a member of the board to discuss a scholarship to either or both organizations.

Another goal is to get more of our members writing on a more consistent basis. To that end, the Silver Anniversary Committee has been working to implement a Book In A Year program with a great incentive – a complete charm bracelet at the end of a year.

Several of my other goals, in no particular order, are: celebrate NT's 25th Anniversary in style & bring positive recognition to our chapter during the RWA National Conference; put some of our funds into a CD; obtain a chapter copy of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 10th Edition; complete the revisions of the Policy & Procedures Manuals; have more interactive monthly programs; and have a lot of fun this year. Let's revisit this list in December and see if I've stayed on track.

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2007 NTRWA Board Members & Liaisons

◆ President Jen FitzGerald jen@stormsedge.com	◆ Membership Director Carolyn Williamson carolynwilliamson@charter.net	◆ Newsletter Editor Kim Campbell ronandkimromance@yahoo.com
◆ Vice President/Programs Tara Waldie waldie@flash.net	◆ Recording Secretary Ron Campbell rlc465@aol.com	◆ PAN Liaison Candy Havens tvscoop@sbcglobal.net
◆ Treasurer Angi Platt angipltatt@aol.com	◆ Publicity Director open position	◆ PRO Liaison Sandra Ferguson sandraferguson@sbcglobal.net

Writing Your Book in Multiple Drafts

By Julie Rowe

The following article first appeared in the June 2006 edition of the Writer's Saddle newsletter and may be used with proper credit.

There are about as many ways to write a novel as there are writers. Some plot extensively, some write with no idea where the story is going at all. Some use story boards or index cards or even dartboards.

I write multiple drafts.

The first draft of any book I write generally takes about twenty days of writing, depending on how many pages long the book is. I write short contemporary so I write ten pages a day until I get to my target word count. I've had a lot of people express surprise or even envy at my writing pace.



Well, I must confess, I have a secret: The first draft is complete and utter garbage.

I mean it. It's terrible. Really, REALLY bad.

My secret is, I don't actually finish that book until I've revised, rewritten and edited that draft six or seven or eight times. Yes, you read that right. I write that puppy over and over again. So the first draft might be quick, but it really takes me about three months to actually have a half descent manuscript finished. And that's for a two hundred to two hundred fifty page manuscript.

The first draft is really only there to get the basic story written. I develop the characters (their traits can and do change), nail down the conflict and figure out how to torture my H/h as much as possible. I try very, very hard NOT to edit during this draft. My

only goal is to write the story as fast as possible. I find that if I turn off my internal editor my creative side comes out big time. I'll have lots of time to edit in successive drafts.

Speaking of editing, the second draft cleans up the big stuff. I make sure the continuity flows well, fix the character whose name I switched to something else half way through the first draft, and make sure the conflict, external and internal, is cohesive.

The third draft is devoted to pacing. No dragging scenes, and no sprinting through important growth moments. I make sure the ending is sufficiently long, emotional, and romantic.

Speaking of romantic, the fourth draft ensures the sexual tension is kept high throughout.

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Administration

PAN (Published Authors Network) is the name given to the discussion group intended to meet the needs of writers published or contracted to publish works in the romance genre.

Heart to Heart is published monthly by NTRWA, a non-profit organization founded in March of 1983 by aspiring and published writers of romance fiction.

Heart to Heart welcomes articles for publication in its monthly issues. Articles should contain fewer than 1000 words and pertain to matters of interest to romance writers.

Heart to Heart reserves the right to edit according to space or clarity, and to refuse articles that its editorial staff deems inappropriate for its readership. Deadline for publication is the 25th of each month.

SISTER CHAPTERS: Feel free to reprint articles from our newsletter as long as proper credit is provided for the chapter and the individual author.

Non-RWA organizations please contact the editor regarding reprints.

December Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 11:35 am. The minutes for October and November were approved.

V.P. Shannon Canard presented her report on the mini-conference. It was determined to be a success from content if not from a financial standpoint. A few expenses may be outstanding.

For the program in January we will have Ann Marks, a face reader to tell about what you can read in a person's face and how to use this to develop the mannerisms of your characters.

Membership Director Carolyn Williamson presented her report that we now have eighty members. There were no visitors.

Treasurer Tara Waldie presented her report.

The GE Contest money is slow

coming in.

Nikki Duncan made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report and Carolyn Williamson seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Jen FitzGerald announced that the deadline for the newsletter is December 25.

Angi announced to check the website for GE Contest updates. We are still looking for judges.

Carolyn needs a new assistant to mail out Visitor Cards.

A motion was made to adjourn, by Ron Campbell and seconded by Nikki Duncan, but Patricia Vermeire objected. After much discussion it was determined that we would take a recess to count the votes for the new officers.

An announcement was made that we started 2006 with nine pro members

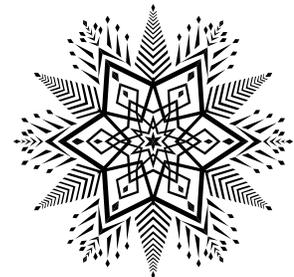
and now we have twenty.

The meeting temporarily went into recess at 11:50. The meeting reconvened at 11:55 to announce the results of the election.

New President: Jen FitzGerald
VP/Program Director: Tara Waldie
Treasurer: Angi Platt
Recording Secretary: Ron Campbell
Membership Secretary: Carolyn Williamson
Newsletter Editor: Kim Campbell

Publicity/Website Director: Open ~ no one ran for this post and the person receiving write in votes did not receive a majority of the total votes cast.

Ron Campbell revised his motion to adjourn, seconded by Nikki Duncan, the meeting adjourned at 11:56 am.



*"Cove is the irresistible desire to be irresistibly desired."
Robert Frost*

Visiting NTRWA

Anyone interested in the romance genre is invited to attend NTRWA meetings and workshops. Visitors may attend three times before NTRWA requires they become members. All members of NTRWA must be members in good standing of Romance Writers of America (RWA).

Romance Writers of America
16000 Stuebner Airline Drive
Suite 140
Spring, Texas 77379

www.rwanational.com

Phone: 831-717-5200

FAX: 831-717-5201

info@rwanational.com

Read Like a Writer

The following article first appeared in the January 2007 issue of the Toronto Romance Writers newsletter, romANTICS, Paula Watkinson, Editor.

By Carrie Lewis

When the holiday season has wound down but the winter maintains its icy grip on my life, I hibernate. I curl up with a book and steaming mug of hot chocolate and settle in until spring. But rather than just losing myself in the tales other writers have spun, I now find myself jotting notes in the columns or on scrap pieces of paper as I read.

Let me explain.

A couple of months ago I joined a Read Like A Writer group—a small group of writers who gather every month or two over a shared meal and a pre-chosen book. Each person chooses a different aspect of the novel to examine and presents a short review of their findings. There is discussion and revelations, laughter and food—it's a great way

to get to know people, learn more about the craft and read some novels I might not have thought to pick up on my own.

As writers, we are familiar with the endless reviews of our work and that of our friends. We know the process of careful examination of errors and problems. We know what it looks like when something doesn't work.

What seemed to be missing from our literary diets is the examination of what does work. A Read Like a Writer's group analyzes how an industry leader captivates the reader, builds sensual tension, develops POV, uses setting and dialogue to move the story forward, etc. We try to discern how that book found a place on someone's keeper shelf. What makes them great? What can we learn from their masterful use of each device or tool? Rather than adding to the endless lists of "do not" we create a checklist of "DO!"

The last book my group covered was a fantasy novel and my topic of

examination was sexual tension. I enjoyed the book on first reading but sensed something was missing from the intimacy. I couldn't put my finger on the problem. I only knew that there wasn't the gut-wrenching sensual tension or much excitement for me when I came to the love scenes.

I rummaged through my writer's tool box and pulled out Linda Howards' "The 12 Steps of Intimacy" and painstakingly went through each love scene in my group's chosen book to figure out how the writer had successfully created sexual tension, and where she missed opportunities to pack an emotional punch. Because of this in-depth exploration, I was able to pinpoint not only what wasn't working, but why it didn't work. My goal now is to more masterfully manipulate the sensual scenes and avoid these errors that so disappointed me.

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Many Happy Returns...



Lois Lazarescu, January 2nd
Beth Shriver, January 5th
Arline Todd, January 10th
Micqui Miller, January 28th
Shelley Bradley, January 28th



What Writing Eight Novels in Eight Years Has Taught Me

The following article appeared in the July 2006 issue of the Galley, Georgia Romance Writers' monthly online newsletter. Permission is granted to sister RWA® chapters to reprint with credits to author and chapter.

by Karen White

I've learned that I only have two hands. I need a year to write a book, regardless of how long my editor or agent may think it should actually take me; I believe they have learned to deal with this. I will not drive back to school to deliver a forgotten book or PE bag. My children have learned to deal with it. I expected to be on the NYT list after my first book. I've learned to deal with it. I can only work as hard or as fast as my two hands will allow me. This will only change if I somehow manage to clone myself.

I've learned that frozen vegetables are okay, regardless of what my mother thinks. Same goes for ordering gifts online and making cakes out of a box.

I've learned that there will be times when I will see my gift as a blessing and adore every word that flies from my fingertips. There will also be times when I will view this very same gift with derision, calling every word drivel, and every page a waste of a good tree. From this, I've learned that writing is a lot like the stock market: there will always be ups and downs, and you have to be in it for the long haul to be able to reap any benefits. I've learned that crying is a good thing. If I'm doing that while writing an emotional scene, then I'm doing it right. Laughing is good, too, as long as it's supposed to be funny.

I've learned that sitting with bad posture for extended lengths of time while absorbed in writing a novel

can seriously damage your back. And the prospect of having needles inserted into spine to relieve pain can actually be a welcome thought.

I've learned that there are mean people out there; people who apparently have nothing better to do than write inane or bad reviews on Amazon or elsewhere. I've learned that good friends and family are a nice buffer and to try and spend more time with them. Voodoo dolls help, too.

I've learned that grocery shopping is overrated. My ability to concentrate on the manuscript at hand is indirectly proportional to how stocked my pantry is. Procrastinating by snacking is one of my favorite activities. So is shopping online. My husband is threatening to enroll me in a three-step program for the latter. I simply tell him that I don't have time—I'm too busy procrastinating and shopping!

I've learned that my writing is not a hobby. It's a calling and something I feel compelled to do. If I ever devote this kind of time, money, and energy to a hobby, I want somebody to shoot me or have me committed.

I've learned that summer vacation is as much for me as it is for my children if not more so. I've learned that they live in a veritable country club for most of the year (with a personal maid, chauffeur, chef, social planner and personal secretary) and that she needs a break. I've learned to turn a deaf ear to their plea for lounging by the pool all day and put them to work. My daughter will be learning how to use a database for my

mailing list this summer and my son will become more acquainted with the washing machine and vacuum cleaner. There will also be the nirvana of all mothers: Summer Camp.

I've learned that the word 'no' is actually a word I can become comfortable in saying. I can almost say that I have at times enjoyed the feeling of it rolling off my tongue.

I have learned that no matter how many times it happens, I'm always touched by the kind words in a fan letter.

I've learned that despite good sales, good reviews, kind fan mail and awards, there will still be times when I look down at the page I've just written and say to myself, "This sucks."

I've learned that with every novel, I've learned something new. Gained more confidence. Gotten better. Found new ways to express myself or tell a story. But it has never, ever become easier. Like my father used to tell me, if it were easy, everybody would be doing it.

I've learned that despite all the ups and downs, there is nothing in my life that I would change. Except, maybe, the size of my hips and the annoying habit my family has of needing to be fed every day.

Karen is the bestselling author of six published novels and was a 2005 nominee for the Georgia Author of the Year Award. She currently writes women's fiction for NAL's trade paperback line, Accent. Her most recent book, Pieces of the Heart, was published in April 2006.



President's Column Continued

Continued from page 2...

I'd also like to encourage everyone to get involved some way, some how. Even if you live far away (Hi, Jane in Australia!), there's something you can do:

- ◆ Be on the Newsletter Committee! (Jane could certainly work on the newsletter, although someone from the US would have to take care of the mailings.)
- ◆ Write articles for the newsletter:
 - ~ Are you good at punctuation? What about a series of articles on various types of punctuation?

~ Most of us are avid readers – if you read all the latest releases, why not write up a review or two each month?

~ Our audio library is growing and now we have established a great collection of workshops available on CD. Commit to listening to one or two workshops a month and write a review of those.

- ◆ Be on the Publicity/Web Site Committee (Now anyone with a proficiency using Microsoft FrontPage or some other WYSIWYG web site software and an Internet connection can help out with this)

- ◆ Participate in chapter events:
 - ~ GE contest
 - ~ Fall Writers Roundup
 - ~ Roundtable Critique

As for general NT business, the board as yet to decide which months we'll be meeting, but all meetings will be held at La Hacienda Ranch at 9 am, unless otherwise announced. All general members are welcome to attend.

Here's to a fabulous year. I hope to see you all at our monthly meetings.

Jen



Newsletters are now available in electronic format.

**If you are interested in receiving your newsletter via email,
please contact Kim Campbell at ronandkimromance@yahoo.com.**

Member News

Congratulations to Mindy Obenhaus on her newest grandbaby ~
Aila Marie born December 15th.



Congratulations to the 2007 NT Board:
President: Jen FitzGerald
VP/Program Director: Tara Waldie
Treasurer: Angi Platt
Membership Director: Carolyn Williamson
Secretary: Ron Campbell
Newsletter Editor: Kim Campbell

Barb Woodward sold Cupid's Work is Never Done to Ellora's Cave.

**Don't forget to renew your
membership by January 31st!**



Kudos to all of you who wrote and edited and proudly listed your totals, but due to space considerations, only the top five producers will be listed...

So many people have been writing and adding their name to the list and that's a very good thing.
Everyone keep up the good work!

NEW PAGES ~ Top 5

Nikki Duncan, 288 pages
Rosemary Clement-Moore, 175 pages
Candy Havens, 150 pages
Barb Woodward, 150 pages
Beth Shriver, 120 pages

EDITED PAGES ~ Top 5

Sherry Davis, 480 pages
Carolyn Williamson, 415 pages
Micqui Miller, 150 pages
Candy Havens, 250 pages
Beth Shriver, 240 pages

Way to go everyone. Keep those fannies in the chair and the fingers on the keyboard!

Read Like a Writer Continued

Continued from page 5...

This doesn't have to be done in groups though. For example, I have discovered that my retention of information while reading technical books is not as good as I would like. I have read books on setting, dialogue, character development and editing to name a few. But I am of the learning-type that demands the information be applied before it becomes truly useful. So reading like a writer allows me to use the wisdom and insights these books offer to better understand why I love some books but not others as I go through them.

For example, I am currently revisiting Christopher Vogler's "A

Writer's Journey". But rather than just hope this time I retain more, I have decided to apply the lessons to the novel I am reading right now. I have picked out the initial stages of the hero's journey and am excitedly pinpointing the various archetypes as I go through—Nothing intense, just a few notes in the margin to exclaim "Ordinary World!" or "Mentor!" I am like a kid boastfully winning at Hide and Seek. The author has woven a tale around each of these stages but I am now able to peer through the prose to the literary foundation beneath, calling it out as I go.

For anyone who is a bookworm and a perpetual student like me, this is

the ideal. If you're introverted or geographically isolated, this can be done solo. Otherwise, Read Like A Writer groups are an excellent way to network (a term that typically makes my introverted heart seize up). It's a fun and friendly environment where I can learn more about the tricks and tools of the trade from the authors I love best. Plus I get to pat my introverted self on the back after each meeting for a night of networking that feels suspiciously like fun...

Carrie Lewis is the PRO Liaison for the Toronto Romance Writers.



Miriam Webster's Word of the Day...

logorrhea : excessive talkativeness or wordiness

palaver : 1 a : a long parley usually between persons of different cultures or levels of sophistication
b : conference, discussion 2 a : idle talk b : misleading or beguiling speech

mouse potato: a person who spends a great deal of time using a computer

ignescence: yielding fire or sparks

slatternly: negligent in dress, sluttish

Writing Your Book in Multiple Drafts Continued

Continued from page 3...

The fifth and sixth drafts nab all those little mistakes I seem to make no matter how hard I try not to. Grammar problems, spelling errors, missing words, and awkward sentences.

At this point I put the manuscript away for as long as I can stand it, a couple weeks at least. The longer I can stay away from it the better. I often begin the process with a first draft of a new novel, then go back for draft number seven on the old one.

Draft number seven hunts for the emotion, the romance, the story. Do I like this book? Would I buy it myself? If I can't answer yes, it's time to figure out what's missing and fix it.

Once this is done, I usually start the submission process or write a pitch in anticipation of pitching the book at a conference.

Let's pretend I've gotten that request, either from a query letter or editor/agent appointment. I always, ALWAYS read the manuscript again before sending it out.

I should mention here that when I'm in all those drafts, I use a million small Post-It-Notes. I make notes on them and stick them all over the place so I know where I need to do something. I'm also a compulsive goal setter. I set goals for each book, each month, each week, each day, and sometimes goals for the morning and afternoon. I love Book-In-A-Weeks and Book-In-A-Months. They're the perfect program for writers like me who write in multiple drafts.

Writing in drafts has an upside for after you submit your book, too. I received my first revision letter not long ago. Along with it came

a deadline. I found that because I was used to making wholesale changes to the book through earlier drafts, working through the revision letter wasn't that hard. I simply applied the same process. Started with the big changes and worked my way through the drafts.

Writing in multiple drafts isn't for everyone, but for anyone who'd like to give it a try, I can honestly say I like my writing drafty.

A Golden Heart double finalist in 2006, Julie Rowe has been writing for eight years and has completed thirteen manuscripts. Her freelance work has appeared in numerous magazines and newsletters. She admires all writers everywhere. If this article has inspired you, Julie would love to hear from you at: julie.rowe@shaw.ca.



NT Book Club Titles for 2007

January 4, 2007: [Santa, Baby](#) by Jennifer Crusie, Lori Foster, & Carly Phillips

February 1, 2007: [Touched by Darkness](#) by Cathy Spangler

March 1, 2007: [Seventh Key](#) by Evelyn Vaughn

April 5, 2007: [Touch of the Wolf](#) by Karen Whiddon

Cathy Spangler and Karen Whiddon will be attending the meetings at which their books will be discussed—and Von Jocks aka Evelyn Vaughn is a regular attendee.

NT Book Club meets the 1st Thursday of each month at 7:30 at the Barnes & Noble in North Richland Hills.



Writing Myths—A Few Last Notes



By Shelley
Bradley

A few last notes: The best piece of advice I got after publishing about the craft end of things came from my first editor. She told me that, among her authors, she got to decide who moved up the publishing ladder and who didn't. And she sometimes decided that based on craft ability. Now, not all publishers will give their editors that sort of freedom, but they will have a say so. Anyway, this editor told me that, while the whole book is important, that last chapter better wow readers. It sells your next book. And books sales are how you move up that elusive publishing ladder. It's tempting to just slap a last chapter together. After all, many of us are tired of the book by the end and are just ready to be done. I force myself to put extra special care on

the last chapter now. I spend more time with it now than I do the first chapter. I only wish I'd started that practice sooner.

Other pieces of advice I can give you now are to:

- Write the best book possible
- Surround yourself with people you trust, who will be honest with you
- Be realistic about your climb on the career ladder
- Celebrate every success (sales, good reviews, contest wins, whatever)
- Take care of yourself. This business can be demanding. Make sure you allow yourself enough sleep, exercise and down time so you don't burn out
- Be steady and professional. Make your own deadlines and stick to them. It's good practice

for later

- save your emotions for your characters. Keep them out of your interactions with your editor and agent as much as possible
- Write for the joy of writing, not the satisfaction of having written.

With determination, patience, smarts and drive, maybe you'll beat me to the top! Good luck to everyone!

The author of sizzling contemporary, erotic, and historical romances, Shelley Bradley lives in the southwest with her husband and daughter, juggling the many roles in her life: writer, mother, wife and all around laundress. In her "free" time, she is a reality TV junkie, enjoys reading, obsessively studying all things Harry Potter, doing step aerobics and weightlifting, and listening to an eclectic blend of music.



*"If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant:
if we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome."*

Anne Bradstreet





Jen FitzGerald
Newsletter Editor
7000 Robinhood Lane
Fort Worth, Texas 76112



NTRWA
2100 W. Northwest Hwy
Suite 114-1081
Grapevine, TX 76051

Meeting Information

January 20, 2007

NTRWA Monthly Meeting

La Hacienda Ranch

5250 Highway 121 South

Colleyville, TX

10:00 ~ 10:30 Meet & Greet
10:30 ~ 10:45 Welcome & Announcements
10:45 ~ 11:45 Workshop
11:45 ~ 12:00 Break/Order Lunch
12:00 ~ 1:30 Business Meeting

Visitors Welcome



Amazing Face Reading
with
Ann Marks