



In This Issue

President's Message, page 1

Feb. Meeting Minutes, pages 2-4

Chapter Conference, page 4

Articles

False Memory Debate, page 5

Confessions of a How-Write-A-Romance Junkie, page 8

Storyteller: A Gamer's Approach to Writing World Building, page 9

The Dorchester Debacle, page 10

Three Qs with Angela James, page 13

NTRWA February Publications, page 13

March Meeting, page 13

President's Corner

As we head into March, let me ask you how you're doing on your goals. . . .

One of my goals this year is to take at least one online class per quarter. Sometimes it seems that even though you do learn something, you realize it's not really the thing you hoped to discover to make your writing easier. But I'm only halfway through the class. And of course, the reason I chose that class has little to do with what I consider one of my major weaknesses.

One of my other goals is to become PRO! Yes, it's only taken me eight years to get my butt in gear. But this is the year I finish a manuscript and do it. Yep, it's true, after all these years in NT & RWA, I've never actually 100% percent finished a manuscript. Those of you not yet PRO—don't wait that long!

To that end I've been working diligently for several months now, determined to get one of my many almost completed stories done. Keep your fingers crossed for me—I get distracted easily, though I'm trying really hard to stay focused. At least on this one thing, while in other areas I change tasks and stories as the mood strikes.

Continued on page....12



February 18, 2012
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Board of Directors:

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Jen FitzGerald
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Michelle Welsh
President-Elect

Nancy Connally
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Angi Platt
Treasurer

Nikki Duncan
Program Director

Jamie Webb
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Heather Long
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Director*

Clover Autrey
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Committee Chairs

Roni Loren
PAN Liaison

Carolyn Williamson
PRO Liaison

Heather Long
Kim Quinton
Great Expectations 2013

Marty Tidwell
Hospitality

Heather Long
Newsletter Editor

Dawn Alexander
Spotlights

D'Ann Burrow
Audio Librarian

Chrissy Szarek
Writing Incentives

Nikki Duncan
Texas Two Step 2014

Angi Platt
Bylaws

Michelle Welsh
Angi Platt
30th Anniversary

CALL TO ORDER:

A regular meeting for the North Texas Romance Writers of America (NTRWA) was held on Saturday, February 18, 2012 at the La Hacienda Restaurant in Colleyville, Texas. The President and Secretary were present. The meeting was called to order at 10:33 a.m. The minutes for the January 21, 2012 meeting were approved as distributed with corrections.

OFFICER REPORTS:

President: Jen FitzGerald reported:

- The Periodic Report of a Nonprofit Corporation has been filed with the Texas Secretary of State.
- Work on the RWA Affiliate papers is in progress. Not due until May.
- Audit Committee met and will report to general membership.
- Announced dates, locations and times of upcoming Board Meetings and invited general membership to attend.
- In the absence of Jeanne Guzman, Jen reminded members about donating baskets for the Two-Step Conference. Members can contact Jeanne at her email or the Yahoo listserv for more information.

Treasurer: Angi Platt reported:

- The Treasurer's report will be filed for audit.

Membership Director: Jamie Webb reported:

- There are ninety-six members of NTRWA.
- Reminded members to pay dues (last notice).
- There were three visitors: Camille DeSalme, Paul Williams, and Kary Rader.
- There were two new members: Lara Kingeter and Stephanie Morris.

Program Director: Nikki Duncan reported:

- The March meeting will be the "Pitch Perfect" workshop.
- The April 21 meeting will be NT's Renee Jones, certified hypnotist.

Communications Director: In the absence of Heather Long, Jen FitzGerald reported:

- Articles needed for newsletter.
- Newsletter deadline is the 28th of the month.

Website Director: Clover Autrey reported:

- The website has been updated, including a list of Great Expectations finalists.

COMMITTEE COORDINATOR REPORTS:

Hospitality: Marty Tidwell reported:

- Items are needed for the raffle prize baskets for the monthly meetings.
- Raffle tickets to win prizes are available for purchase at the monthly meetings.

Writing Incentives: Chrissy Szarek reported:

- Explained Treasure Chest is writing incentive program for rejected, sold, and requested manuscripts. Can always use items for the Treasure Chest.
- The three members how write the most pages each month and the three members who edit the most pages each month will add their names to quarterly drawing for a \$5 gift card of their choice.

PRO Liaison: Carolyn Williamson reported:

- The PRO Listserv featured a Blurb Workshop. The next workshop will be one regarding a one line slogan for branding.
- To become a PRO, a member must submit a manuscript to an agent or editor.
- Reasons to become PRO are featured in the newsletter.

PAN Liaison: Roni Griffin reported:

- Members should record book sales on the clipboards at monthly meetings or contact Roni so they can be recognized at the following meeting.
- Nikki Duncan and Angi Platt received pencils as part of the recognition program for published authors.

Audio Librarian: Jen FitzGerald:

- Discs are available for borrowing.

Great Expectations: Angi Platt reported:

- Final Round Editor Katherine Pelz of Berkley Heat requested full manuscripts from the three finalists in the Erotic Romance Category of Great Expectations Contest.

Texas Two-Step: Nikki Duncan reported:

- One editor is unable to attend as planned so there will be two agents and one editor available for critiques and pitches. Date and details regarding conference can be found at website <http://txtwostepconference.wordpress.com>.

30th Anniversary: Angi Platt reported:

- Explained the details for earning a charm bracelet and charms in observance of NTRWA's 30th anniversary. The form for requesting a charm (after requirements have been met) will be posted at the NTRWA listserv and

in the newsletter.

New Business:

- Announcement of death of member Judi McCoy.
- Carolyn Williamson announced contact information for DFW Writer's Conference.
- Marty Tidwell and Jerri Alexander received recognition plaques for book sales.
- Michelle Welsh received First Sale pen.

Next Business Meeting: 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 17 at La Hacienda.

The meeting adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

Submitted by Nancy Connally

Date Approved: _____

Date Corrected: _____

Don't Miss Out on the North Texas Two Step Conference

Last chance to join us in Irving, Texas March 30 - April 1st for jam packed conference of craft and business workshops, panels, agent and editor pitches and much more...

The conference will kick off Friday evening with a book signing where we'll auction off Saturday lunches with our editors, agents and featured speakers. A percentage of book sale proceeds will go to benefit Children's Literacy.

NTRWA presents special guests:

Bestselling Author Mari Mancusi

Mari Mancusi used to wish she could become a vampire back in high school, but she ended up in another blood sucking profession, journalism, instead. Today she works as a freelance TV producer and author of books for teens and adults. When not writing about creatures of the night, Mari enjoys traveling, cooking, goth clubbing, watching cheesy horror movies, and her favorite guilty pleasure—videogames. A graduate of Boston University and a two time Emmy Award winner, she lives in Austin, Texas with her husband Jacob and their dog Mesquite.

Social Media Pro Kristen Lamb

Kristen takes her years of experience in sales & promotion and merges it with almost a decade as a writer to create a program designed to help authors construct a platform in the new paradigm of publishing. Kristen has guided writers of all levels, from unpublished green peas to NY Times best-selling big fish, how to use social media to create a solid platform and brand. Most importantly, Kristen helps authors of all levels connect to their READERS and then maintain a relationship that grows into a long-term fan base.

Editors:

Lindsey Faber from Samhain Publishing

Agents:

Sara Megibow from Nelson Lit. Agency
Louise Fury from L. Perkins Agency

We are still accepting donations of raffle baskets and raffle basket items, so feel free to pass the word along!

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEES

\$150 General Registration
\$200 Registration at the door if there is room.

Visit the North Texas Two Step conference page via the website for more information (<http://ntrwa.org/texastweststepconference.aspx>) or contact conference coordinator Nikki Duncan (programs@ntrwa.org).

False Memory Debate

By Renci Denham

The following article was first used in the March 2012 edition of The Mid-Michigan Mirror, the online newsletter published by Mid-Michigan Romance Writers of America. Permission to forward or reprint given with proper credit to the author and newsletter.

The literature on memory malleability and the debate as to whether or not false memories exist is vast. The research in the area has changed a great deal over the past few years. Once memories were believed to be permanent, as opposed to current data which suggests memories may be more plastic or malleable.

According to Loftus (2003), and more current research memories are not fixed as once believed but can be quite malleable. Not only can they be lost, but memories can be altered. Usually the scrambled memory does not make a great deal of impact on the world. There are, however, cases in which altered memories can have a huge impact on someone's life.

Take the case of Ronal Cotton who was convicted on the recollections of an eyewitness. Only years later did DNA evidence come into evidence that exonerated Cotton (Loftus, 2003).

Memories can be altered for several reasons. Furthermore, research seems to demonstrate in addition to altering a memory, an experience or memory can be remembered as if it actually occurred when there was no such incidence (Loftus, 2003). In a particular study, family members were enlisted to help persuade children that the child was lost in a shopping mall or had experienced an animal attack. Approximately one quarter of the subjects subsequently became convinced that the incident had actually occurred (Loftus, 2003).

One of the most powerful techniques to induce a false memory is the utilization of photographs (Loftus, 2003). Subjects were shown an altered photograph of themselves in a hot air balloon. Family members confirmed no such experience had ever occurred. Interviews conducted later elicited partial or detailed stories about the event from 50% of the subjects.



The fact that memories of individuals can be false or inaccurate even though the person believes the memory to be accurate has many implications for society (Loftus, 2003). Some psychotherapists utilize

techniques that are suggestive and can lead patients to believe incidents occurred when there was no such incident. These "false beliefs" can cause great damage not only to subjects themselves but also to an individual who may have been accused of abuse during a "false memory occurrence" (Loftus, 2003). In a case in Illinois, a psychiatrist utilizing hypnosis and pharmaceuticals convinced a patient that she had over 300 personalities, ate meatloaf made of human flesh and was a high priestess in a Satanic cult (Loftus, 2003). Law enforcement interrogations can be suggestive and lead a witness to a mistaken memory and a faulty identification (Loftus, 2003). Even witnesses conferring with each other prior to the police arriving on the scene can cross-contaminate memories amongst the individual witnesses (Loftus, 2003).

Research into memory has attempted to minimize contamination of memory and may assist persons in power from making drastic mistakes (Loftus, 2003). Training workshops for police, mental health workers and lawyers and judges as well as following protocols may help reduce false memories that can lead to a wrongful conviction. The utilization of DNA evidence can also be an important tool in nullifying convictions of individuals who have been wrongly incarcerated.

The judicial system in the United States deposes and interviews children in both civil and criminal proceedings (Ceci, Kulkofsky, Klemfuss, Sweeney and Bruck, 2011). Ceci et al. (2011) conducted a thorough review of literature on the subject in an attempt to address the accuracy of children's memories and how a child's memory and subsequent testimony can have a bearing on the findings of the court. One assertion in the current literature is that an interview conducted by a person who has a predisposed bias can influence the testimony of the child (Ceci et al, 2011). The literature seems to indicate that it is not necessarily how many leading questions are asked but how much bias the interviewer has and the subsequent reinforcement of answers elicited (Ceci et al, 2011). The research seems to indicate that the misleading questions by a neutral interviewer do not have the same negative effect as the same questions asked and then positively reinforced by a biased interviewer.



Another assumption that more current research seems to dispel is the belief that only preschool children are susceptible to memory altering. However, when adults are exposed to data that indicates they were lost in a mall as a child, the adults developed false memories of the incident in a similar fashion as children did in past studies (Ceci et al, 2011). Not only does the research seem to demonstrate that individuals of any age can be influenced by false memories, but another misconception proposed is that it requires a great deal of intervention to induce a false memory. On the contrary, false beliefs and memories can be induced by a single suggestive interview. It is often difficult for the courts to differentiate between false and real memories. Even when systematic procedures are applied, it may be difficult for trained staff to determine a false memory from an actual incidence in court proceedings (Ceci et al, 2011).

One school of thought is that a traumatic event is so dramatic that the memory must be repressed in order for the individual to deal with the trauma, whereas another school of thought suggests that a traumatic event is more likely to be remembered than a non-traumatic event (Loftus & Davis, 2006). Fundamentally, there seem to be three criteria to determine if a repressed/recovered memory is accurate: the trauma actually took place, that the trauma was forgotten and inaccessible for some time and that the trauma was later remembered.

In order to determine if the trauma "remembered" in a recovered memory is real requires the ability to verify that the trauma actually occurred (Loftus & Davis, 2006). There often is a lack of physical data to verify if abuse or trauma remembered in a past memory is valid or not. Physician reports, eyewitness accounts from individuals other than the individual experiencing the "recovered memory" and other hard data is often difficult to locate (Loftus & Davis, 2006). Furthermore, when an individual who has "blocked" a memory of abuse is confronted with hard data that abuse or trauma has occurred the individual will state that the

"repressed trauma" was not traumatic at all thus negating the need to "repress" a memory (Loftus & Davis, 2006).

Loftus and Davis (2006) discuss past studies that have supported "repressed memories." These studies centered on women who had been sexually abused from 10 months to 12 years of age. The women were interviewed and did not mention the abuse. Past scholars have suggested that since the women did not discuss the abuse that failure to disclose in itself was indicative that memories of trauma are suppressed. This however may not be the case as several factors may be the cause of failure to disclose. If the abuse occurred at a very early age, the individual could be experiencing basic childhood amnesia--the occurrence that under the age of two the physiological capacity to remember is lacking (Loftus & Davis, 2006). Another factor is simply the women did not feel comfortable disclosing such personal information and the memories were not repressed at all but simply not disclosed (Loftus & Davis, 2006).

The process of memory does not, however, ensure once a memory becomes consolidated that it is not subject to change (Hardt, Einarsson and Nader, 2010). Past studies indicate that memories can return to a state of vulnerability. Reactivating a memory can make it vulnerable to alteration and the memory itself returns to a sort of transient labile state. This "memory reactivation" may create a state that allows new memories to be formed (Hardt, Einarsson and Nader, 2010). Cognitive malleability and changes in memory content can be influenced by numerous factors including misinformation effect, hindsight bias and memory interference (Hardt, Einarsson and Nader, 2010). Memory itself is subject to distortion by virtue of decay. Upon an attempt to recall details of a given experience that may have been subject to memory decay, an individual may utilize a sort of "skeleton" of the memory of the given event as a framework upon which to build a detailed description. The individual may then attempt to fill in the gaps in memory by imagined detail rather than accurate detailed information (Hardt, Einarsson and Nader, 2010).



False recovered memories may have dire effects upon individuals or groups of individuals. Whether faulty memories arise from suggestive procedures utilized by overzealous therapists, law enforcement officials or the judicial system or from an individual's desire to obtain financial gain in a civil suit, "recovered memories" must be subject to external validation. Loftus and Davis (2006) cite cases of faulty "recovered memories" such as a female who stated she had a "recovered memory" of being gang raped in a Satanic ritual and another woman who "remembered" her clitoris being removed. In both cases, a gynecological exam proved both recollections to be completely faulty as the woman in the first case still had an intact hymen and the woman in the second case still had her clitoris. Such accounts, if taken at face value, without corroboration have led to incarceration of innocent persons. Take the case of the McMartin preschool trial (Wikipedia, 2012). The McMartin preschool investigation and trial ran from 1984-1990.

Accusation began when a mother asserted her former husband, a teacher, had molested their son (Wikipedia, 2012). The case was investigated but was found not to have sufficient evidence. The police then sent over 200 letters to all the parents of children at the day care center that instructed parents to question their children about the possibility of being a victim or witness to "oral sex", fondling or sodomy. Several hundred children were then interviewed by a Los Angeles clinic that specialized in child abuse. The interview techniques utilized were highly suggestive. What resulted from these highly suggestive interviews were accusations of Satanic rituals, abuse occurring in a non-existent underground chamber and Chuck Norris assisting in the filming of child pornography. The trial proceedings finally ended in 1990 resulting in one of the longest and most costly trials in American History (Wikipedia, 2012).

At this time, there are person's still incarcerated based on eye witness accounts of individual's whose "memories" have been altered. When utilizing accounts of individuals during a criminal processing it is imperative both police and court ordered mental health professionals remain neutral so as to not induce a false memory that may result in the conviction of innocent persons.

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Confessions of a How-To-Write-Romance Junkie

By Tereasa Bellew

The following article was first used in the January/February edition of the The Mid-Michigan Mirror, the online newsletter published by Mid-Michigan Romance Writers of America. Permission to forward or reprint given with proper credit to the author and newsletter.

Pssst. I've got a confession. I've had a life-long affair with pens and paper, books and well, men.

So the day I combined them was like emerging from a fog. I remember the moment when the desire to become a writer first hit me. No, it wasn't during a snowstorm, but a rather dull, quiet time in my life. A time when the voices in my head grew louder and refused to be ignored. Imagine my relief when I discovered I wasn't psychotic at all. Nor were the men I dreamed about a subconscious sign of an unhappy marriage.

Sharing the characters that lived in my imagination however required a lot more nerve. These were fictionalized people that I'd conceived in my head and painstakingly attempted to paint on paper.

Not soon after submitting, the rejections started to fill my mailbox and with them came a growing uncertainty. Maybe I couldn't write after all, at least not well enough to interest outsiders. So I turned to books, but not for pleasure. This time I was searching for power, for kernels of knowledge, guidance I could use to spin that golden yarn.

Anyone who's ever searched this topic knows there are literally hundreds of books available on how to write a romance. Intense classes are taught everyday on ways to create three dimensional story people. 'Dig deeper' became a common phrase. Find the bones. Give your characters flaws. Develop personalities and conflicts that tug at a reader's heartstrings.

I explored hundreds of blog universities and websites all dedicated to the aspiring writer. I discovered- not mastered, mind you- how to write a strong opening and the importance of ending every chapter with a hook. I became pretty good at identifying POV and whose voice I should be listening to in any given scene. Notes covered my computer screen, 'less is more' and 'use strong verbs' 'patrol for repeat offenders' and 'cliché alert!'



The first three to five years into this journey I devoured one 'How-To' book after another. Every time I'd hear someone recommend the easiest way to plot your novel, or how to revise and edit the current one, I'd get fidgety. I just knew my manuscript would sell if only I learned what such & such was demonstrating.

But all this research took time. Not to mention the number it did to my self-esteem realizing there was still so much I didn't know. Ten years and I was no closer to learning how to write than when I started. Rarely did I send manuscripts out anymore. I critically judged every line. The word count wasn't exact, the characters were too edgy. Or worse, the requesting editor was no longer there.

The sands of time were piling up and sadly, my fire to write for publication had started to fade. I knew a manuscript needed to be fresh, original, capable of blowing some unsuspecting editor away with a WOW! A novel needed to grab the throat of a reader in the first paragraph, better - in the first sentence.

All of this left me feeling very small. My manuscript was far from perfect, not to mention in line with many established authors all competing for a contract. I felt defeated before even starting. In essence, I had become an old horse simply standing on the mark.

So what exactly was this article about and how does it relate to the title? Well, only that I've come to believe sometimes we can use research or the pretense of fine-tuning our craft as an excuse not to fail. And it occurred to me, has anyone ever learned to swim without getting in the water? You simply have to get wet. Why didn't I realize that before now?

Bio: Tereasa Bellew joined MidMichRWA in 1999 and has completed four full length novels and a several short stories. The novella, Night Bird, is scheduled to be released in May 2012 by The Wild Rose Press under the pen name Teresa Blue.

Storyteller: A Gamer's Approach to Writing World Building 103: Using Maps to Build Your World

By Robin Bachar

I love maps. There's a tapestry of a map of Middle Earth over the fireplace in my apartment, and as gamers my husband and I have had many game maps tacked up on the walls near our computers. For a gamer having a reliable map is often essential to your character's success. As a writer, a map can be invaluable to creating your world and plotting your story. While drawing up maps for your own setting is traditionally associated with fantasy, they can be useful for sci-fi and modern paranormal/urban fantasy settings.

Mapping a Kingdom, Planet or City

If you're creating your own setting, the idea of mapping it out can be intimidating, especially if you haven't sketched anything since Art class in high school. First, embrace the mantra that it doesn't matter if you can't draw, because no one is going to see your map but you. One day you might want a professionally done version for your book or website, but right now it doesn't matter that Blobville is next to Trapezoidland. What matters is getting down the basics-place names and terrain details. Second, don't worry if you can't name every city, village, town and farm on your map. A tip I learned that I use in my own writing is to place something in brackets



when I don't want to stop and name it, like [Hero's home town] or [Heroine's high school]. That way I remember what it is, but I don't have to sit and ponder if Oakville is a better name than Pineville when neither is going to end up in the story. Don't be afraid to leave an area blank or unnamed. Blank areas on game maps are often filled in later in expansions. The EverQuest map grew larger with each expansion as new continents were added.

In a game a map is so much more than just the names of places, because it can also tell you what monsters live in that area, what resources you can harvest, what travel routes connect it to other areas, what quests you can complete there and what areas are enemy territory. These are all good details to include in your map too. If Blobville and Trapezoidland are at war, the characters in your story need to know about it if they're traveling through that area. Even if your characters aren't going near those lands during your story, it might come up in their backstory, or in a later novel.

For modern settings, if your story takes place in a real world location you might think you don't need your own map. However, you can always modify an existing map to reflect the world in your story. Do the vampires control a specific part of town? Is their territory encroaching on the werewolves' area? Shade in their territory with colored pencils. Use pushpins to mark where the major characters live or any additions or deletions you make to the city. If dragons descend on Chicago and destroy Navy Pier, that would be a good thing to keep track of on your map for future books.

Mapping a Castle, Dungeon, Spaceship, or Character Home

All castles aren't created equal, and not every dungeon is made of 10' by 10' stone corridors. If a significant portion of your story takes place in the same location, like a character's home or spaceship, or if they're exploring a dungeon looking for loot or monsters, then it can be worth your while to map the location out. There's a variety of software you can use, but that can get pricey (and confusing, and possibly boring). I've used the game The Sims to design character houses-if you try it, I suggest using one of the instant money cheat codes so you can build what you need right away. Plus then you have the additional bonus of making your characters and seeing how they interact in Sim life.

A low cost alternative is to simply use graphing paper. Remember graphing paper, the stuff you had to use in Algebra before the invention of the graphing calculator? I've used graphing paper to design dungeons for my Dungeons & Dragons campaign, and it's great for designing building and ship interiors. Even a simple sketch of a heroine's home can be helpful, and this way you don't have worry about remembering if it was a one or two bedroom house, or how the kitchen is laid out.

In closing, if you're stumped on where to start with your design, don't let it stop you. Google an example of it for inspiration. In Blood, Smoke and Mirrors I needed to describe the layout for a luxury hotel suite, but I'd never been in one, so I didn't have a frame of reference for what it should look like. After poking around the sites for a few Vegas hotels I found what I was looking for and was able to move on with the scene.

Good luck, and happy mapping!

About the author: Robyn is the Vice-President/Secretary and Webmistress of the Prairie Hearts RWA Chapter. Her novel Blood, Smoke and Mirrors and her novella The Importance of Being Emily are available from Samhain Publishing. You can learn more about Robyn's writing at her website: <http://robynbachar.com>.

The Dorchester Debacle

By Sunny Cole

This article first appears in the March issue of MRW Impressions, newsletter for the Midwest Romance Writers. It may be reproduced by sister chapters with proper credit to author and chapter.

The best source I've found for following Dorchester's latest issues (and probability of their filing bankruptcy) is author Brian Keene's blog. Of course as an author who lost monies to them, he's pretty bitter, but he's also factual.

<http://www.briankeene.com/?p=10520>

That link should take you to a blog post about them that lists a timeline you can follow (it's lengthy, so unless you're just killing time, you may want to reserve it for later).

It is my hope that others in the industry realize that editors, such as Chris Keeslar, who worked so hard for their authors, aren't linked with the bean counters who caused the hoopla. Two quotes by their last editor, Keeslar, reflect an attitude authors can relate to and admire.

Keeslar to author Anna DeStefano: I personally hope this reality [re: ebooks] pushes the industry back toward a craftsmanship-oriented model, where we develop a multitude of talent rather than mass produce and bank only on bestsellers.

Then this: No one is better situated to tackle the craftsmanship angle than the traditional publisher, with their great resources and know-how. But they'll have to realize that that diversity is where true quality and profit lie. For everyone.

If you wish to read the entire interview she had with him, it's the 5/6/11 blog post at <http://www.annawrites.com/> Title of post: Publishing Isn't For Sissies. You'll know you've arrived if you see the photo of Chris that is to the left.

Speaking of Dorchester former editors...

Former editors of Dorchester moved on to other houses. Here is what Leah Hultinschmidt (now with Sourcebooks) is looking for, according to her blog:

I am having such a blast working on a number of the young adult projects on our Spring 2011 list for the Sourcebooks Fire imprint. But our list for Fall is looking mighty slim. So I'm on the hunt-down—looking to acquire good stuff fairly quickly.

The YA market right now is incredibly competitive, so it's imperative to have a hook to grab booksellers/media/readers in 2-3 sentences. Having an author with a track record or built-in fan base is also immensely helpful. The book needs a riveting plot with a fresh premise. I want to be completely absorbed in the world—whether it's summer in the Hamptons, a dystopian future or 1880s London. Right now only truly objective criterion is the word count: 60,000-90,000. I'm open to just about any setting and genre. The main protagonist should be older teens, and the book should have strong crossover potential to the adult market.

Further details are on her blog: http://romanticreading.net/2010/09/12/what-im-looking-for-in-ya/?utm_source=feedburner <http://romanticreading.net/2010/09/12/what-im-looking-for-in-ya/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+romanticreads+%28Romantic+Reading%29>

&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+romanticreads+%28Romantic+Reading%29 [Her blog is Romantic Reading.net.]

Alicia Condon is now with Kensington and edits Brava.

<http://www.kensingtonbooks.com/finditem.cfm?itemid=14298> Check that link for submission guidelines for Kensington books. Alicia Condon, Editorial Director of Brava (paranormal and fantasy romance, romantic suspense, historical and contemporary romance, young adult paranormal romance of 80,000 – 100,000 words). acondon@kensingtonbooks.com <mailto:acondon%40kensingtonbooks.com>

Most Pages Written

Angi Morgan - 127 pages
Stephanie Morris - 89 pages
Michelle Welsh - 83 pages
Nikki Duncan - 76 pages
Chrissy Szarek - 70 pages

Most Pages Edited

Barb Han – 762 pages
Angi Morgan - 708 pages
Nikki Duncan - 460 pages
Jerrie Alexander - 412 pages
Marty Tidwell- 384 pages



...continued from page 1

So how about you—how are doing on those goals?

In my January column, I mentioned the need for some help.

So firstly, thanks so much to Kim Quinton, Christine Crocker and Kim Miller for serving as our Audit Committee and showing up early to February's meeting to go through our treasurer's books.

Secondly, thanks to Heather Long and Kim Quinton for taking on the 2013 Great Expectations Contest.

Thirdly, Nikki Duncan volunteered to head up the 2014 Texas Two Step Conference Committee. We appreciate her hard work on the 2012 conference and know that the 2014 conference will be even better.

And lastly, we haven't gotten any additional takers on the 30th Anniversary Committee. Our president-elect, Michelle Welsh is the interim chair and Angi Platt is the charm bracelet/writing incentive coordinator. Other than those two ladies and moi by default, that's it. If you have any ideas or are interested in joining the committee, please e-mail Michelle at presidenelect@ntrwa.org.

Before I sign off, remember our 2012 conference is at the end of the month. It's going to awesome. Nikki and Tracy and the gang have done a bang up job. Spread the word, time's running out!

See you on the 17th,

Jen

Three Qs With Angela James



By Heather Long

Getting ready for conference or just polishing your manuscript. I chatted up Carina Press Managing Editor Angela James.

Q: What top three things has Carina been looking for, but not seen?

A: My standby answer to this question for years and years has been a cowboy space opera series in the vein of Firefly (but not Firefly fan fiction!) We'd love to see more fantasy romance or fantasy with romantic elements and novel-length erotic romance (over 70k). It's difficult to find authors writing erotic romance of this length these days!

Q: From the editor's perspective how do you define a successful pitch session?

A: One in which the author has intrigued/excited me about the book without talking AT me for ten minutes, but rather engaged me in conversation.

Q: What specifically would you like to see new or established authors do, when they pitch in person?

A: See above.

Join Us March 17, 2012 for Perfect Pitch

March is our pitch perfect month, but rather than doing the traditional “pitch practice” where people stress about having the perfect pitch we’re going to switch things up a little.

The pitch is your ability to talk about your story. The ability to talk about your story requires a blurb. A blurb is a necessity for all query letters and back cover copies when you publish your book.

In this workshop, we’ll do a spin on the pitch appointment where you practice talking about your story through the blurb. So, get your blurbs written (less than 200 words is ideal) and prepare for some fun. We’ll break into groups and everyone can take turns reading their blurb to get feedback on how to tighten it and maybe give it a twist to liven it up if need be.

From there, you’ll be ready to talk about your story with editors and agents, and after all that’s what a pitch appointment is all about. have the chance to ask the question they always wished they could ask an editor—without worrying about looking silly.



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NTRWA
2100 W. Northwest HWY
Suite 114-1081
Grapevine, TX 76051
NTRWA monthly meeting

NTRWA monthly meeting
Third Saturday of the month
Doors open @ 10 a.m.
La Hacienda Ranch
5250 Highway 121 South