



## NOVEMBER 2021

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[www.Southernwriters.org](http://www.Southernwriters.org)

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## Southern California Writer's Association

### November 2021

- **President Larry Porricelli's Message**
- **November's Featured Monthly Speaker: Lee Matthew Goldberg**
- **NEW SCWA Member Bookstore**
- **Hump Day: Every Wednesday 10 a.m. on SCWA Facebook page:**  
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/southernwriters>
- **Debby's Room: Wednesdays 10:20 a.m. following Hump Day (on the SCWA Facebook page ROOMS tab)**
- **Such Good News!**
- **October Highlights: David Corbett**



### Have you subscribed?

Check out our new YouTube channel at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLrqSfwTMaCi139ISRV50KQ>

**Through the 2020 challenges SCWA has risen to new heights with a wide range of talented presenters and programs who will inspire, educate, and motivate writers and readers alike through our online programs.**

**Our best and brightest authors and guest speakers' presentations have now been uploaded to our own YouTube channel. Our content includes the Hump Day Book Tours, Pub Shops with insights into book publishing and marketing, and our monthly author spotlights and workshops.**

## **President's Message for November 2021 from Larry Porricelli**

**Message from the President  
Lorenzo Porricelli**

### **Exciting Trends in Publishing Right Now**

Greetings fellow writers! In the midst of the annual NaNoWriMo Event that has several SCWA writers engaged, I offer to you these current trends in literature to encourage everyone to write, write, write. There has never been a time such as this in history, where books are available on so many platforms and widely distributed, and most importantly, sought after by an immense, connected worldwide audience.

A writer who exemplifies and defines the success of the trends discussed in this column in current literature, is *New York Times* bestselling thriller writer **Lee Matthew Goldberg**, who will be speaking at our Monthly Literary Event on November 20 at 10 a.m.

His subject is "Writing a Reliable Unreliable Narrator." Goldberg is one of the most engaging and unique writers of his generation, widely sought and read on many literary avenues. He will talk about creating believable, authentic characters readers will love—and how to write them. He has written eight novels and has a number in film production right now. Read his bio and make a reservation at: <https://www.southernwriters.org/events/november-scwa-meeting/>

Here are some facts about publishing trends right now:

- The most popular genres of books depend on the format and situation. The bestselling book genre is romance and the most profitable fiction book genre. Religious and inspirational books are the most popular nonfiction genre, while thrillers are the most popular audiobooks. But all genres are selling well!
- According to a 2021 Gallup Poll, 48% percent of Americans read 1 to 10 books per year, and 35% read more than 11 books per year.
- Young adults, 18- to 29-year-olds, are the heaviest readers, and since 2002 there has been a significant increase in reading among those over 65. Yes, over 65—as we got our eyes fixed and can see clearly once again!

What are publishers looking for right now? These are just a few signs we see now in publishing trends:

- More escapist fiction
- More quality and more quantity
- The expansion of the audiobook
- Greater diversity in authors and subject matter in books

What are literary agents looking for in 2021? Consistent favorites:

- Short story collections
- Narrative nonfiction from fresh perspectives
- Journalistic stories with literary flair
- Writers who challenge the norms of publishing, such as EL James

Everybody's listening to audiobooks. Digital downloads are growing fast. As platforms and listening devices are more convenient, the audiobook market has enjoyed double-digit increases almost every year over the past decade. This year, half of all Americans age 12 and older said they had listened to an audiobook. Publishers responded with slick new productions that rivaled the golden age of radio drama.

Girls take over. In 2005, Stieg Larsson's first novel was originally called *Men Who Hate Women*, but when it appeared in English, the title was sexed up to *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*. That change began a trend. In 2012, Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl* sold more than 2 million copies. Paula Hawkins kept that momentum with *The Girl on the Train*, which sold more than 15 million copies by 2016. Success attracted hordes of marketing imitators. But the "Girl"

phenomenon wasn't just a case of copycats on parade. It also heralded a talented new class of women barging into the old boys' club of thrillers and changing the rules of the game.

TV producers gorging on new novels. Under the old model, authors hoped to sell rights to their novels to movie producers, but the proliferation of streaming TV platforms during this decade created vast new opportunities for fiction writers.

For an ongoing literary seminar that meets your every need as a writer, visit the SCWA YouTube Channel. You will find a treasure of writers who have spoken of their work, inspiration, success, and hardships, as well as the amazing Storytellers Toolbox by Janis Thomas.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLrqSfwTMaCi139ISRV50KQ/about>

The YouTube Channel is created by Diana Pardee, with interviews by fabulous literary interrogator Maddie Margarita, edited by Robert Rollins, and executive produced by the SCWA Board.

The Literary world is aflame. Creativity and excitement are like rocket fuel. All genres are selling and being read! The Day of the Author is upon us! Go forth and write!

Happy Thanksgiving!

Lorenzo Porricelli



We've been posting deeper content to help members succeed among the posts in our SCWA Members Only Facebook group. Make sure your dues are up-to-date and join us there. Some recent topics include self-publishing lingo, landing pages, building your tribe, tips for author headshots, and book launch success. Diana Pardee is curating the best quality content she can find and welcomes your suggestions. DM her on Facebook at Diana Pardee.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups.SCWAMembersOnly>

## SCWA Events This Month: November 2021

- SCWA Featured Monthly Speaker: November 20, 10 a.m. PST. We are happy to welcome **Lee Matthew Goldberg** who will speak on Writing a Reliable Unreliable Narrator. Register at: <https://www.southernwriters.org/>
- SCWA VIRTUAL HAPPY HOUR: Every Friday at 4:30 p.m. PST Join us with your funny stories and holiday libations for good news and good cheer. Sign up on our website and we'll email you a link and password. <https://www.southernwriters.org/>
- SCWA HUMP DAY BOOK TOUR: Join **Maddie Margarita** and fascinating authors for lively conversation on their books. Livestream it every Wednesday at 10 a.m. PST on our Facebook page. You can also access previous interviews on SCWA's YouTube channel. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/southernwriters>
- Debby's Room: Every Wednesday at 10:20 a.m. PST. Join **Debby Putman** and **Dot Caffrey** for casual conversation about the writing craft and anything that you wish to bring for discussion. Click on the Rooms tab for Debby's Room on the SCWA Facebook page.

"You can always edit a bad page.

You can't edit a blank page."

\*

Jodi Picoult

Have you missed an SCWA event? Find the replay on SCWA's YouTube channel at:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCLrqSfwTMaci139ISRV50KQ>

where we will upload replays as they are edited and ready.

If you're interested in these and all SCWA events, please check out our website for membership details at:

<https://www.southernwriters.org/>

**Featured Monthly Speaker:  
November 20, 2021  
Lee Matthew Goldberg  
Writing a Reliable Unreliable Narrator**

Join us Saturday November 20, 2021, at 10:00 a.m. PST when SCWA welcomes **Lee Matthew Goldberg** speaking on Writing a Reliable Unreliable Narrator.

**When: Saturday, November 20, 2021**

**Time: 10:00 a.m. PST**

**Where: Zoom, RSVP for your link at:**

<https://www.southernwriters.org/meetings>

**Cost: Members: \$10.00**

**Nonmembers: \$15.00**



Do you like narrators who are untrustworthy? Or who tell stories from their own questionable perspective? Thriller and horror writer **Lee Matthew Goldberg** talks about creating believable, authentic characters readers will love—and how to write them.

**Lee Matthew Goldberg** is the author of eight novels including *The Ancestor* and *The Mentor*, currently in development as a film off his original script, and the YA series *Runaway Train*. He has been published in multiple languages and nominated for the Prix du Polar. *Stalker Stalked* will be out in Fall '21.

After graduating with an MFA from the New School, his writing has also appeared as a contributor in *Pipeline Artists*, *LitHub*, *The Los Angeles Review of Books*, *The Millions*, *Vol. 1 Brooklyn*, *Lit Reactor*, *The Big Idea*, *Monkeybicycle*, *Fiction Writers Review*, *Cagibi*, *Necessary Fiction*, *Hypertext*, *If My Book*, *Past Ten*, the anthology *Dirty Boulevard*, *The Montreal Review*, *The Adirondack Review*, *The New Plains Review*, *Underwood Press* and others.

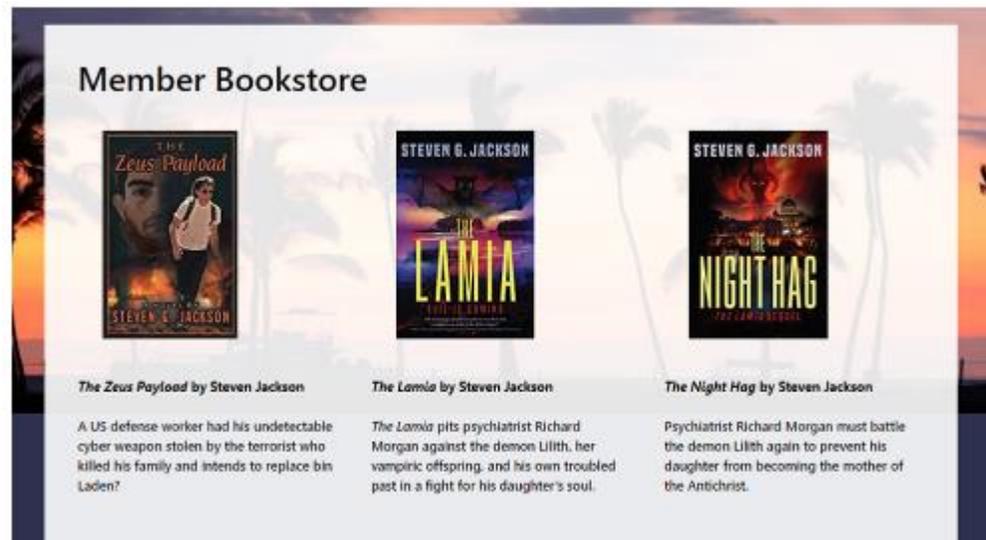
His pilots and screenplays have been finalists in Script Pipeline, Book Pipeline, Stage 32, We Screenplay, the New York Screenplay, Screencraft, and the Hollywood Screenplay contests. He is the co-curator of *The Guerrilla Lit Reading Series* and lives in New York City. Follow him at [LeeMatthewGoldberg.com](http://LeeMatthewGoldberg.com)

## JOIN THE SCWA BOOKSTORE

At last we have created an [SCWA Bookstore](#) to feature books by our talented members in the Member Bookstore tab on the website. We'd love for you to be a part of it.

We hope you will take advantage of this new SCWA benefit—which is open only to SCWA members who have a profile page on our website ([Member Profiles— Southern California Writers Association](#)). If you don't have a member profile page yet, you can create one [here](#).

Below is a sample of what the [SCWA Bookstore](#) looks like, as well as some sample book covers and loglines. Clicking on the cover image takes you directly to Amazon for an easy purchase option. SCWA earns benefits as an affiliate.



If you'd like to participate, please use the CONTACT SCWA tab on the website where you can upload cover images and other information (20-30 words), We'll do the rest. Just in time for the holidays!



## About NaNoWriMo

NaNoWriMo is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that believes in the transformational power of creativity. We provide the structure, community, and encouragement to help people find their voices, achieve creative goals, and build new worlds—on and off the page.

It's now November, and many of you are participating along with thousands of other writers in NaNoWriMo. How is *your* word count adding up?

Join several SCWA members and sign up at:

<https://nanowrimo.org/sign-up>

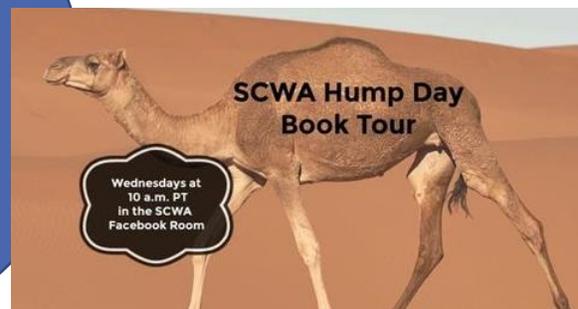
SCWA will be posting content regularly on Facebook to support all of you. Check SCWA's YouTube recording of Janis Thomas' Prep for NaNoWriMo.

Take a break every week in Debby's Room with **Debby Putman** on the SCWA page right after Hump Day. Stop in at 10:20 a.m. every Wednesday for encouragement and troubleshooting. **Dot Caffrey**, who has met the 50,000-word count in eighteen NaNoWriMo events, will have plenty to share as you write your way through November.

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Hump Day  
Book Tour

LIVESTREAMED  
Every  
Wednesday  
10:00 a.m.



Look for our SCWA group on Facebook. Click on the Events tab to join us!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/southernwriters/events>

If you can't join us, look for replays on the SCWA Facebook group page and on SCWA's YouTube channel. Subscribe anytime at

<https://bit.ly/2I890Db>

**Recent Hump Day guests include:**

James Bartlett Tara Laskowski Susan Farese Dennis Palumbo Dorothy McFalls

Lee Matthew Goldberg Dr. Mary Hill-Wagner Joe Clifford Sheila Lowe

Pamela Fagan Hutchins Richard Miller Morgan Kristy Tate Mary Castilla

Shawn Reilly Simmons Nancy Cole Silverman Quan Huynh Wendy Hornsby

Kathleen Krevat David Putnam Mike Farley Lani Forbes Caitlyn O'Leary

Janelle Brown Mary Anna Evans Kaira Rouda Laurie Stevens Matt Coyle

Glen Erik Hamilton August Norman Tori Eldridge Ava Homa Dana Swift

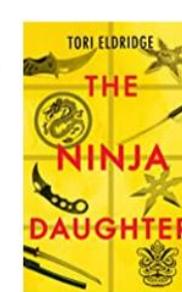
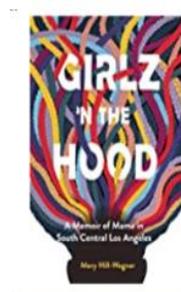
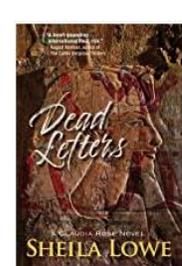
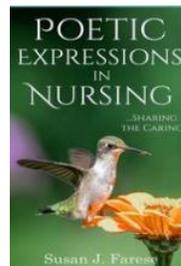
Naomi Hirahara LA Chandlar Greta Boris Joe Perry Thomas Perry

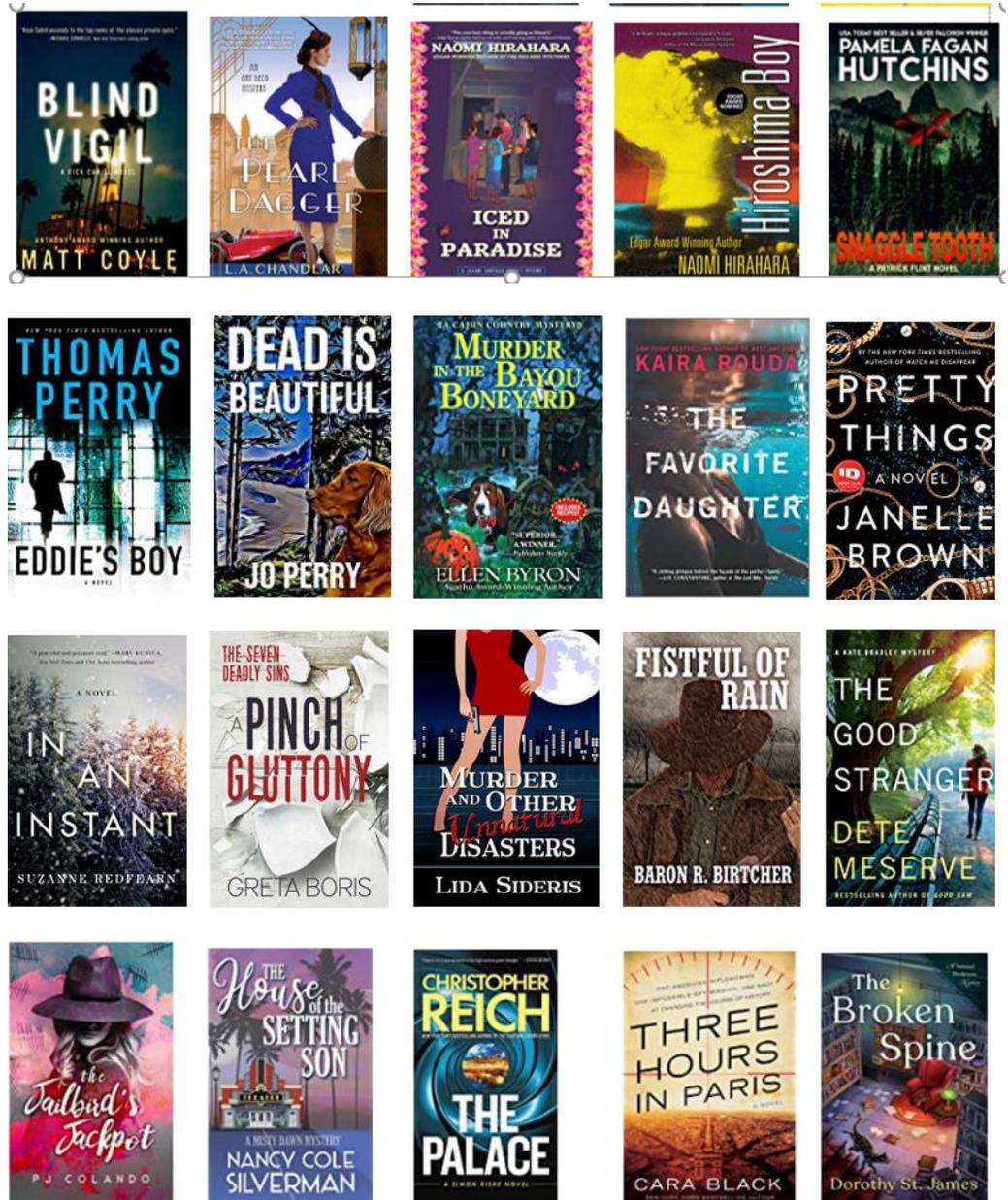
Suzanne Redfearn Chris Reich Baron R. Birtcher Dete Meserve

Anne Cleeland Cara Black Christopher Reich Kaira Rouda Dorothy St. James

PJ Colando Patricia Smiley Lisa Black Johathan Brown Nancy Cole Silverman

**Build up your stack of TBRs with some of the books by our guest authors:**







Lit Up Orange County is brought to you monthly by **Maddie Margarita**, hosting a lively salon of notable authors reading and discussing their books. If you've missed any of these special events, check on Facebook Lit Up Orange County for replays and announcements.

**LitUp! OC will livestream its monthly program here:**

<https://www.facebook.com/litupoc/>

**When:** November 23, 2021 6:30 p.m. PST

**Where:** Facebook Livestream

**CELEBRATE ALL THE GOOD NEWS!**



**Leonard Szymczak's** *Bob Cratchit's Christmas Carol* is now available in print and ebook. The book reached #1 bestseller in new releases for his category!

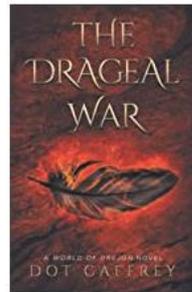
Here's the link:

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09KHKDZ2P>

**Lillian Nader** is unstoppable! Not only did *Arts and Poetry Magazine* give her bio, her book, and three of her poems a full page in the latest edition, her one-act play *The Sharmyn Show* will be performed in December at the Stage Door Repertory! Get tickets for *Holiday Voices* presented by the New Voices Playwright's Theater on the Repertory website:

<http://www.stagedoorrep.org>





**Dot Caffrey's *The Drageal War*, a prequel to *The Power Trilogy* is now available in print format on Amazon, and as an ebook on a wide array of platforms including Kobo, Apple, Barnes & Noble, Bookshhop.org, and Amazon.**



## **CALLING ALL NEWSLETTERS!**

Many of SCWA's members offer regular newsletters or blogs for their readers. Here are a few, and we'd love to post connections for any and all of our members. Your blog, website, and newsletter can also be included in your SCWA website profile.

Sign up for **Dot Caffrey's** newsletter on her website: **[www.dotcaffrey.com](http://www.dotcaffrey.com)**.

Send us your links for your blogs, podcasts, and newsletters so we can feature them and let all our members discover the wealth of information within reach.

Use the CONTACT SCWA tab in the website to add yours to share with other members.

## Members' Showcase: OPEN for your Submissions

**Did you know SCWA will publish excerpts of your work in our MEMBERS' SHOWCASE on the SCWA website? Yes, we will.**

**We want to show your works-in-progress, excerpts from your published book, first lines, favorite paragraphs, and anything you would like to share in any genre, even a page of rants from your journal.**

**The range of creativity among our members is impressive. Take a look at some of the fine work our members have already shared and then share some of your own.**

**<https://www.southernwriters.org/members-showcase-2/>**

**Here are the details for the SCWA Showcase:**

- **Send the work you'd like to showcase, for instance, first lines, an excerpt, an essay or a poem or something else (up to 1500 words). Include your byline (your name, the name of the book it is from, if applicable, and your website).**
- **All current SCWA members are eligible.**
- **You retain your copyright.**
- **Submit for free!**
- **Send to [scwashowcase@gmail.com](mailto:scwashowcase@gmail.com)**

**Take a look at the Showcase entries by many of our members. It's a terrific way to get acquainted.**

**Posting in the Member showcase is always Good News for our newsletter as well as for Facebook. We look forward to waving a flag for your books!**

## HIGHLIGHTS: Featured Speaker for October 2021 Dennis Palumbo FEAR:

“Fear! Keeping Readers Up All Night!  
An SCWA Halloween Spooktacular! with Dennis Palumbo”



“Today [in a novel], there’s rarely only one death. We live in an age of trauma, and we do expect a boogie man around the corner,” says **Dennis Palumbo**, M.A., MFT, author, screenwriter, and licensed psychotherapist whose private practice concentrates on those in the creative arts. Beginning in Hollywood as a screenwriter, he was also a staff writer for the ABC-TV series *Welcome Back, Kotter* and other TV series. His feature film, *My Favorite Year*, was nominated for a WGA Award for Best Screenplay (See his other published work at the end.)

“All writing is autobiographical,” Palumbo declares. To build fear and suspense, he says to think about what scares you. Then you can more easily figure out what will scare others. “Think of your childhood traumas,” like fear of monsters under the bed or “mysterious stuff in the neighbor’s trash can.” He puts in things that scare him—like home invasion and carjacking.

Another type of scare is “someone being other than what they represent.” He has had many of his idols as patients, and “they’ve all suffered.” The trope then is “What a person presents to the public or friends is not what he is.” The theme for a story can be “Everything is not as it seems.”

When starting your story, “Don’t be afraid of the character’s subjective feelings.” In fact, have the character describe his/her interior experience. What does he/she want not to happen? “Am I going to be followed by fear all the rest of my life?” “I don’t like the looks of this room.” Use physical symptoms: “My heart pounded.” What does he/she not want to happen? Palumbo also suggests having the main character do or say something that contradicts what someone else there already knows. Suspense builds when we know a character is lying—whether for innocence or a murder.

Palumbo says *suspense* and *dread* are not the same thing. “Build suspense about things the character is not aware of: what will the character find?” Irrational things are always scary. “Why would a house like that need so many locks?” Google.com says, “... *dread* is great fear in view of impending evil; fearful apprehension of danger; anticipatory terror.” There is always great relief after a scare, but scares foreshadow things/situations the character should be afraid of. Foreshadowing can also be in someone’s wondering.

Palumbo next advises changing your sentence structures according to any scene’s emotions. When you yourself are anxious, do you think in short or long sentences, statements, or thoughts? Shorter, punchier sentences can indicate breathlessness or shallow breathing: “There was blood. Everywhere.” Palumbo says his personal opinion is that with longer sentences, “The writing is telling you the situation. Use what works for you.”

Regarding pacing, Palumbo also gave this help: at the end of a chapter, the character could say, “I knew I had to figure it out.” That makes the readers turn the page.

Palumbo usually starts his books with an event in the present tense. In the second chapter, he uses past tense to explain who the main character is and what he’s doing. Then Palumbo returns to present tense. He uses flashbacks sparingly.

Our speaker brought up the movie *High Noon* (with Gregory Peck and Grace Kelly) and how it kept cutting to a clock in different scenes. He asks, “Is there a clock in your stories?” In other words, is there something in your scenes that symbolizes trouble that you could brush by now and then? Also, you can make any setting suspenseful if you relate some detail in it to the main issue. He advises too that since the initial murder begins to leech the suspense, have a second horror. That’s when he noted that today’s thrillers, etc., rarely have only one death. You have to move your story along in every scene.

Palumbo the writer identifies as a *pantser*. He starts with a sentence he likes; then, can he figure out who or what? “Totally inefficient way to go about it.” He winds up doing lots of rewriting because he’ll write twenty pages into a cul-de-sac. He doesn’t recommend his process.

From his thirty years as a psychotherapist with writers, Palumbo published *Writing from the Inside Out*. It doesn’t tell you how to write but is “all about what writers go through” when writing. He has received “really gratifying responses” from readers.

At the end of his talk, SCWA's Maddie Margarita asked Palumbo, "Does writing help you solve some of your own issues?" "Oh, yes," our speaker responded. "At minimum, writing is therapeutic."

His fans think Palumbo's latest novel, *Panic Attack*, is the best of his mystery/thrillers that feature psychologist and trauma expert Daniel Rinaldi: *Mirror Image*, *Fever Dream*, *Night Terrors*, *Phantom Limb*, and *Head Wounds*. From *Crime to Crime* is a collection of mystery short stories. More of his short fiction has appeared in *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine* and *The Strand*.

Palumbo's column, "Hollywood on the Couch," is on the *Psychology Today* website. His contributions of helping writers have been published in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times* and other publications and on NPR and CNN. Dennis Palumbo has been interviewed numerous times on The PBS author show, *Between the Lines*.

Glenda Brown Rynn, Reporter

[grynn@cox.net](mailto:grynn@cox.net)



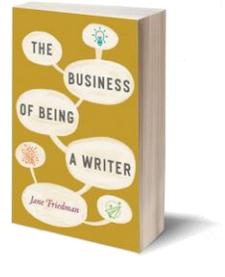
Barbara Howe has reviewed *Panic Attack*. check it out on her blog:

<https://3no7.wordpress.com/>

## RESOURCES FOR WRITERS

How do you find your way through the ocean of resources available online for writers like us? Check out this sampling of what we have found to be of interest. Links are included so you will be able to investigate further.

**MOST RELIABLE:** [www.janefriedman.com](http://www.janefriedman.com) Jane has a long history in all areas of book publishing and has a solid reputation for being the best go-to for writers of all levels.



- **WRITERS HELPING WRITERS:**  
[www.writershelpingwriters.net](http://www.writershelpingwriters.net) has many one-of-a-kind tools and resources for writers. Newsletter available.
- ***Authors Publish, A Magazine for Writers.***  
<https://www.authorspublish.com/>

*Authors Publish* assembles monthly lists of themed submission calls by magazines and journals, often paying for your work. Even a modest payment is at least encouragement, and can add to your portfolio.

- *Publishing ... and Other Forms of Insanity*, the newsletter for the website *Published to Death*, sends a monthly list of writers' conferences, fee free contests, and agents for all genres who are looking for submissions.
- Are you querying to find an agent? **AGENTS SEEKING CLIENTS** is a regular feature of the *Publishing ... and Other Forms of Insanity* newsletter. In the most recent edition, 7 New Agents Seeking Commercial Fiction (all genres), Memoir, Literary Fiction, Kidlit, Romance, Fantasy and more.
- This edition also lists 4 Agents Seeking Thrillers, Speculative Fiction, Nonfiction, Kidlit, Commercial Fiction, Memoir, and more.

**See these lists and much more at:**

<https://publishedtodeath.blogspot.com/>

Details of what agents are looking for and how to reach them will give you a head start for your submission process. Check the website every month for up-to-date information and resources.

Note: Always check the agency website and agent bio before submitting. Agents can switch agencies or close their lists, and submission requirements can change.

## Benefits of SCWA Membership

### **WELCOME, WELCOME, WELCOME!**

- ❖ **Active members receive up to 60% off admission to SCWA meetings.**
- ❖ **Members are eligible for a free 30-minute consultation from book shepherd Sharon Goldinger on any publishing contract.**
- ❖ **Discounts are available for active SCWA members for registration for the La Jolla Writer's Conference and for early registration for the Southern California Writers' Conference.**
- ❖ **Access to professional network of publishing, business consultants and editors.**
- ❖ **Participation in SCWA marketing platforms on [southerncafwriters.org](http://southerncafwriters.org) and SCWA social media platforms.**
- ❖ **SCWA Member's Only group on Facebook where we rewind and replay recent featured guests and their presentations.**

## SCWA Board of Directors

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**Mailing Address for inquiries by mail: PO Box 47, Huntington Beach, CA 92648**

**Southern California Writer's Association**

[www.southernwriters.org](http://www.southernwriters.org)

### TERMS OF USE AND CONTENT INFORMATION DISCLAIMER

The SCWA encourages open, respectful communication between individuals interested in the craft of writing through a variety of social and traditional media, such as Facebook, SCWA website and emails. Any individual using inappropriate language, discussing inappropriate topics, or commenting in a disrespectful way will be removed from access to any future SCWA communication methods.

The SCWA communication sites should only be used for dialogues related to the craft of writing. Non-writing related topics should be done via other forms of personal communication. Please review the content disclaimer located in the newsletter via the SCWA website [www.southernwriters.org](http://www.southernwriters.org) or on the About page of the SCWA Facebook page. The SCWA does not endorse individual opinions placed of any of its sites.

The SCWA receives information on various services, writing contests, and events. As a courtesy, we will forward the information to our members. Unless otherwise indicated, the SCWA does not discourage, encourage, or recommend any of the services, contests, or events. Many of these services, contests and events cost money; therefore, we recommend that you evaluate the opportunities based on your individual situation and interest. Because of our membership email protection policy, please do not forward information to the general membership directly. **We request that all members forward any information to the SCWA President for approval and forwarding to the membership.**

SCWA members wishing to share appropriate writing-related information and resources are welcome to do so via the SCWA Facebook page. The SCWA Board members and Newsletter Editor will determine the information to be contained in the SCWA on-line newsletter, which is primarily used for official SCWA information.