So You Want to Become a Published Author: Insider Tips from a Librarian

Deborah Turner, Ph.D.
author, librarian, poet, writer

Association of Southeastern Research Libraries (ASERL)
Topics

• Your book’s contents
• Publishing options
• Marketing
• Pre-sales
• Post publication
• Questions and responses
Survey: What are you writing?

• Academic/scholarly
• Fiction
• Nonfiction
• Poetry
• Something else?
About me

• Professional
  • Poet and writer
  • Librarian
  • Academic

• Personal

Finishing Line Press, August 2020
Topics

• Your book’s contents
  • Publishing options
  • Marketing
  • Pre-sales
  • Post publication
  • Questions and responses
Your book’s contents

• Content helps determine audience
• With audience, you can begin to consider:
  • Your publication’s shelf life
  • How to publish
  • How to market

Editing tips #1
• def woke (urban)
• syn dreary
• “She woke up to another day...”
Books are a work of art!

Bedtime reading anyone?
Topics

• Your book’s contents

• Publishing options
  • Marketing
  • Pre-sales
  • Post publication
  • Questions and responses
Publishing options

• Self publish
  • Amazon’s Kindle Direct Publishing (KDP), Draft2Digital (D2D), or Smashwords
• Traditional (clothe or paperback)
• Note about hybrid publishing models and vanity presses

Publish (ˈpəbliSH/): prepare and issue a work (a book, journal, piece of music, etc.) for public sale
Publishing options, continued

• When to represent yourself?
  • Academic, professional, small press
  • Willingness to do it all yourself

• When to pitch to an agent?
  • Big name
  • Top 5 publishers

• Resources
  • Writers conferences
  • Writers’ union or association
  • Contests– Finishing Line Press or Feminist Press
Topics

• Your book’s contents
• Publishing options

• Marketing
• Pre-sales
• Post publication
• Questions and responses
Marketing – brainstorming activity

• Think about everyone you know (contact info?)
• Now think about the ones who are likely to read your work
• Jot down what they have in common
  • Reading groups, like to cook, quote movies...
• Identify your audience and potential audience
  • LCSH, Dewey subject headings
  • Thesaurus -- keywords
  • Online & social media (hashtag search) – informed vs #woke
Marketing

• Build your audience
  • Find a writing community
  • Create email & mail lists
• Contact them regularly
  • Social media posts
  • Newsletters
• Call to action

Want help? Need ideas?
• Sign up for a writer’s mailing lists (in your genre)
• Check out MailChimp or Constant Contact
• Blogs, Podcasts, YouTube
Topics

• Your book’s contents
• Publishing options
• Marketing

• Pre-sales
• Post publication
• Questions and responses

Editing tips #2
• It was a dark and story night...
• “She woke up to another day...”
Pre-sales

As soon as you sign a contract:

3. Create a press kit and a media kit
2. Get “blurbs” / endorsements
1. Announce it!!

**Turner’s Sweating... blurb strategy**

–“I can imagine using these poems as models and mentor texts....” Jeffrey D. Wilhelm, English university professor, *Reading Don’t Fix No Chevys: Literacy in the Lives of Young Men*


–Leslie Heywood, English/writing university professor, *Pretty Good for a Girl*
Pre-sales, continued

A 4- to 12-week period used to generate enough sales to:

• Meet some minimum pressrun
• Determine your royalty rate
• Earn one or more perks
Topics

• Your book’s contents
• Publishing options
• Marketing
• Pre-sales

• Post publication
• Questions and responses
Topics

• Your book’s contents
• Publishing options
• Marketing
• Pre-sales
• Post publication

Questions and responses

Editing tips #3
• Popular baby names 1940s
• Leather seats & cut grass
• Triple check all pronouns
Deborah Turner
Questions and responses

Email: Deborah.Turner.is@outlook.com
Facebook: facebook.com/deborah.turner.940641
Instagram: Instagram.com/ DTurnerWriter
Twitter: @DTurnerWriter
https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/20216759.Deborah_Turner
Website: www.deborahturner.online

Find upcoming readings or sign up my mailing list.