

The Wow Principles

e-newsletter

by Ken and Dahlynn McKowen

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Returning to Normal

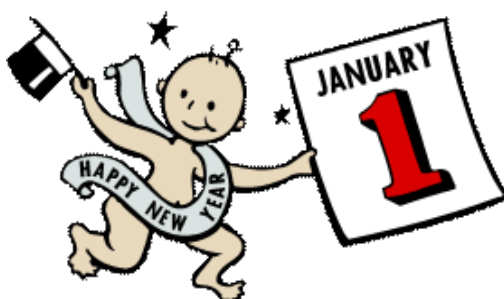
By Dahlynn McKowen

Before I begin this month's article, I must thank all of you who have stories in our three *Not Your Mother's Books* (NYMB) flagship books: *On Being a Woman* (released October 9th), *On Being a Stupid Kid* (November 6th) and *On Dogs* (December 11th). **THANK YOU!**

Releasing three major books—and working with approximately 60 contributors per book—within nine weeks is a feat in and of itself, but even more astounding for a small publisher. We couldn't have done it without the dedication of our awesome copyeditor, dedicated proofreaders and kick-ass PR consultant. Laurel McHargue and Kathleene Baker and their families deserve extra kudos—as the co-creators of *Stupid Kid* and *Dogs*, respectfully, they dropped nearly everything to help complete and final their manuscripts under deadline. And don't forget, this all happened with the holidays in full swing.

But the most thanks go to you—the contributors—and to the countless others who submitted stories for consideration for these three books, but did not make the final

Continued on page two



This issue marks our ninth year of providing quality writing and publishing content. Be sure to check out the back issue list on our website. Happy New Year!



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Writer@PublishingSyndicate.com



Returning to Normal

Continued from page one

cut. The world of publishing is a cut-throat and difficult one, especially if you are a small publisher. Tough decisions must be made, and as CEO and publisher of Publishing Syndicate, the buck stops with me. Period. From setting production schedules to dealing with contributors who prove difficult to work with (with some making our in-house “beware” list), I have my work cut out for me. But an internal optimist, I prefer to look at the book half full, not half empty.

That brings us to the topic of this month’s article—how things really roll here at Publishing Syndicate when it comes to production of our NYMB and *OMG! My Reality!* anthologies. The idea for this article struck when a contributor from the *Stupid Kid* book wanted to know how quickly she could expect a decision as to whether another of her stories had been accepted for a different book. Those first three NYMB books—and their hurry-up-and-get-it-done-now production schedules were a true anomaly—are not the norm.

Traditionally, a book under production—regardless of its type—takes about two years from start to finish. This includes pre-production (all work done prior to printing) and post-production (release, distribution and marketing). With the advent and availability of e-book and POD publishing, this schedule has shortened, but not by much. Keep in mind that a publisher still has costs tied up in both phases of production, and while books can be created and released faster, the costs remain the same. For Publishing Syndicate, production costs—including our time—to release a book runs from \$8,000 to \$10,000. If we schedule 10 books a year, we budget the amount needed. The fact that we could physically release double that number of books per year—thanks to emerging and new technology—doesn’t negate the fact that our company currently does not have the available staffing and budget to do so.



The point I want to make is that even though we whipped out three NYMB books at the end of 2012, things have now returned to normal for 2013 and beyond. Granted, we’ll have a

Continue on page three

Returning to Normal

Continued from page two

rush here and there for one reason or another, but we are now utilizing a standard production schedule and will stick to that schedule.

Here's a **brief** overview of a NYMB or OMG! book production schedule, commencing from the date of a story submission deadline:

Within three months of posted deadline (Phase 1 of pre-production):

- First-round story selections made by co-creator
- Permission Release Forms (PRF) sent to story contributors by Publishing Syndicate (PS)
- Co-creator works with contributors on initial editing changes
- Co-creator delivers entire manuscript to PS

Phase 2 of pre-production, to take place over six weeks:

- PS reviews manuscript (read in-house by several staffers)
- Suggestions made by PS to co-creator on story and chapter positioning and reworked, if needed. It is at this time that stories are cut from consideration.
- PS matches stories moving forward to their completed PRFs to insure all legal paperwork is in order.
- PS requests Subject Release Forms from contributors, if required. Story will not move forward until this additional paperwork is completed and returned.
- PS sends manuscript to copyeditor, and then proofreader(s)
- Edited manuscript goes into layout
- Galleys (what the story looks like in the book) are sent to contributors for last review
- Book files are readied for printing
- Book files are reformatted for the different e-books



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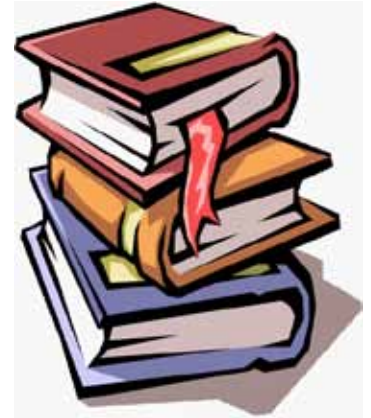
The Wow Principles e-newsletter

Returning to Normal

Continued from page three

Phase 1 of post-production, estimated time of four weeks:

- Book is sent to printers
- Distributors are notified the book is available
- On-line e-book process is initiated
- Outside marketing services initiated
- Printed books arrive in-house



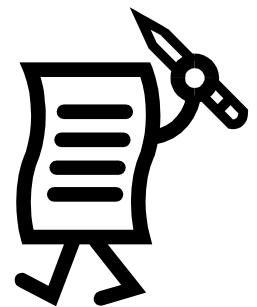
Phase 2 of post-production, estimated time of three weeks:

- Print books are sent to all contributors
- Marketing program launches
- Official release of book

Taking all of this into account—sans any big domestic or international news events or snafus at Publishing Syndicate or the printer—the entire process takes about six months. NYMB books such as *On Being a Mom* and *On Family* had deadlines of October 1, 2012, so their release dates are well into 2013. The reason for this is with the series being so new, we had yet to determine our 2013 schedule. Now you can see why creating three books in nine weeks was such an accomplishment!

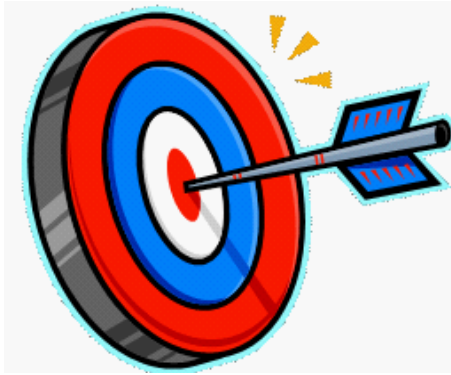
The first part of 2013 will bring the release of four NYMB books: *On Travel*, *On Parenting*, *On Do-It-Yourselfers* and *On Being a Mom*. The back half of the schedule has not been entirely finalized, but here's an insider scoop—we are in immediate need of stories for *On Cats*, *On Dieting*, *On Teachers*, *Military Life*, *On Dating*, *On Pets* and *On Holidays*. For the latter title, we have too many stories about Valentine's Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas, but welcome stories about Kwanza or Hanukkah. Our biggest need is for stories about the not-so-common holidays such as St. Patrick's Day, New Year's Day or Groundhog Day. Don't get "holidays" and "special occasions" confused; if you have a great birthday or graduation story, please submit to NYMB...*On Special Occasions*.

In closing, patience is key when submitting your stories to either NYMB or OMG! On behalf of the Publishing Syndicate team—including all of the co-creators—a sincere thank you. Now let's get you published!



Want Writing Success? Study the Market!

It's a given that if you want to be good at something, you need to practice, practice, practice. The same goes for getting a story published—you must study the market, through and through.



Regardless if you're penning a story for a *Not Your Mother's Book* selection or a national magazine, it is important to read, even devour, recent issues of your target publication. Your submission has to fit the publication. You'd be surprised to learn how many times we hear complaints from a writer about a publication not accepting his/her work based on the fact that "they just don't understand or appreciate MY style of writing." Seriously.

You don't have to buy a book or magazine to study your market. Try the local library or borrow the book from a friend. If you must buy a book, buy an e-book: they are usually cheaper than a print copy and you can use the search feature when looking for certain topics.

Successful writers are those who work hard, don't cut corners and aren't afraid to try. It's like the lottery: you can't win if you don't play. By playing smart and studying the market, you'll better your chances of publishing success.

What's Coming Up in February's Issue?

Guest columnist Laurel McHargue, a very funny writer and co-creator of the newly released *NYMB...On Being a Stupid Kid* and the upcoming book *NYMB...On Dating*, will write about, and we quote, "The concept of romance... love versus lust...and how writing about love (specifically love letters) has evolved since Keats was around." Does that sound saucy enough to you? We asked her to pen a romance-themed article, considering February is the month of *amore*, and the fact she is creating a funny and daring dating book. We here at PS are as intrigued as you are, so be sure not to miss February's issue!

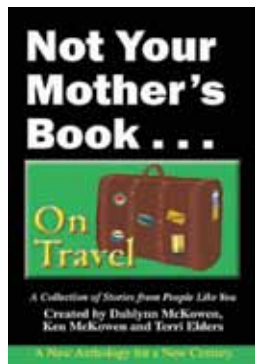
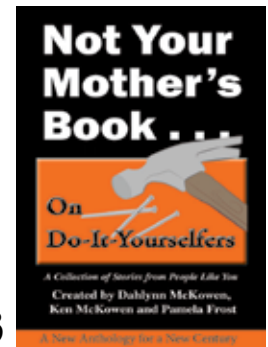


The Wow Principles e-newsletter

Book Updates . . .

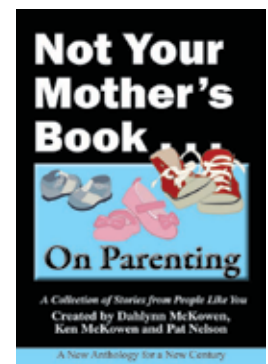
Not Your Mother's Book . . . On Do-It-Yourselfers: Last chance to submit your story for this title. Co-creator Pamela Frost just shared with us that she'd love to see a few more stories about home "crafty" projects. Think Martha Stewart meets the Three Stooges. Remember to keep your stories light, funny and, if you're game, daring!

Deadline: February 1, 2013



Not Your Mother's Book . . . On Travel: The book is in copyediting. If you haven't received a Permission Release Agreement, then your story was not picked up this time. The release date is March 26th, when the country starts to thaw out and everyone is ready for a road trip or jaunt abroad to foreign lands!

Not Your Mother's Book . . . On Parenting: This book will go into copyediting right after *On Travel*. Permission Release Agreements have been sent to those whose stories made the first-round selection. Release: April 30th.



We are pleased to introduce the newest member of the Publishing Syndicate team: Terri Spilman. Terri will be the co-creator of *Not Your Mother's Book . . . On Dieting*.

Terri has three stories in *NYMB Woman*: "Honey, You're a Fat Ass," "W—The *Other* Scarlet Letter" and "Vajazzle My What?" By far, the dieting chapter in *Woman* was the most popular, thus the creation of this great new title in the NYMB series. All we need now are stories! There's a detailed list of chapter headings on the PS website for this book, so check it out.

Terri's humor is very self-deprecating, as evident in a spoof she posted on her blog (www.TheLaughingMom.wordpress.com) when she did a live TV spot to promote *Woman*. Terri is seated to the right in the photo. Her quickie bio: "Terri Spilman spends most of her time contemplating life over a bag of potato chips in her pantry when she is not writing. She's hoping as the new co-creator of the *Not Your Mother's Book...On Dieting* she'll be motivated by all of the entertaining dieting stories to finally lose her menopot." Welcome aboard, Ms. Spilman!



SEND IN YOUR STORIES!

Updated 1/27/13

Not Your Mother's Book . . .

A new anthology for a new century!

Stories needed for 30+ new books. Must be written by people age 18 and up. Details and submission guidelines on the PS website.

HURRY! DEADLINES!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



On Do-It-Yourselfers:
February 1, 2013

On Cats:
May 1, 2013



More deadlines will be posted for other titles within the coming months, so start writing!

OMG! My Reality Youth Series

Time to get published!

We are accepting stories for four *OMG! My Reality!* titles: *Kids*; *Preteens*; and *Teens*. Stories must be written by those age 25 and younger. Please share this information with everyone. Thanks!



Do you know a teenager who loves to write? Tell him/her to submit stories to the upcoming *OMG! My Reality! For Teens*. Being a published author is great for college and job applications. More info at our website:

Info at www.PublishingSyndicate.com



My Story is Out: High School Years

Created by Lyndsey D'Arcangelo

The nation's newest anthology for LGBT teens!

Story selections are being made right now! Lyndsey can use 10 or so more stories penned by those age 25 and younger, sharing their LGBT experiences of coming out. Send now! www.MyStoryIsOut.com

Dream of ThingsSM

Dream of Things has a great line-up of anthology books. On their website, be sure to click on the "Workshop" tab for a listing of titles. Good luck!

www.DreamofThings.com

Go for it! Get published! 