

The
Wow

e-newsletter

by Ken and Dahlynn McKowen

Principles

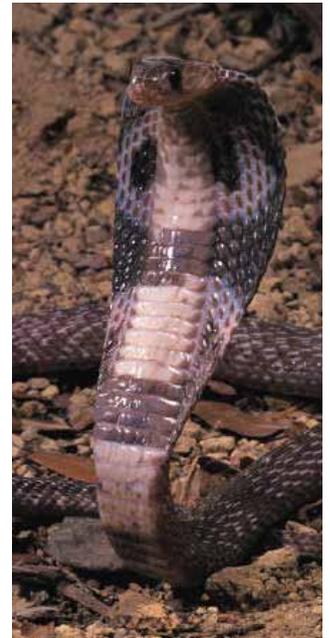
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Blood, Guts and Success

*It's a writer's job to carve with
language, to hew close to the bone.*

-- Stephen King



What scares you? Spiders? Snakes? Hard-water stains? We all have fears and phobias, and thanks to horror writers, we are, at times, forced to face those fears. And that's okay.

On the occasion of Halloween, horror is the theme for this month's *Wow* issue. Horror can be a difficult genre to define and has many crossovers, including science fiction, fantasy and teen-vampire-werewolf nonsense (albeit, a very successful and revenue generating nonsense). What I want you to think about and reflect upon in this issue are those great classic books like Bram Stoker's *Dracula*; *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Robert Louis Stevenson; *The Exorcist* by William Peter Blatty; and Robert Bloch's *Psycho!* I get shivers just typing in the titles! And I would be remiss not to mention the names of more famed horror authors, including Edgar Allan Poe, H.P. Lovecraft and Algernon Blackwood, as well as their modern-day counterparts: Dean Koontz, Peter Straub, John Saul, Graham Masterton, and, of course, Stephen King.



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Blood, Guts and Success

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The last one on the list—Stephen King—is one of my favorite authors. I'm not one for horror movies, but I do enjoy a good horror novel; my coveted quiet time is going to bed early to read one of King's many horror books. When a friend learned I read King before going to sleep, she couldn't believe it. "You don't have nightmares?" she asked, the definite look of fear for my well-being written all over her face. "Not in the least," I replied, even though I did admit getting up one or twice to make sure the doors were locked!



To zombie...or not to zom-bie?

What I enjoy most about King's work is his ability to gross me out without getting too gross, to scare me without scaring me too much. His character development is second-to-none and his ability to think way past reason, and to take his readers to that point with him while scaring the daylights out of them at the same time, is paramount to his success. And he does all of this brilliantly with the written word. Even though he has been known to have a love/hate relationship with many, including his critics, as a writer King is pure genius.



Because I am not an authority on the subject of horror writing, I paid an on-line visit to the Horror Writers Association (HWA). If you love writing horror, you must check out the site, as it's one of the best and most organized writing association sites I have ever seen. For those of you unfamiliar with the organization, they're

noted for being the home of the Bram Stoker Awards, the most coveted award for writers in the horror genre. And next year will mark the award's 25th anniversary. The site also lists markets for writers, advice and tips and has a great FAQ section. While much of the information is posted for public viewing, there is so much more available to those who join the non-profit as a member. And I love a line from HWA's membership page: "Today, with more than 400 members around the globe, [HWA] is the oldest and most respected professional organization for the much-loved writers who have brought you the most enjoyable sleepless nights of your life." Hah! Not me!

Info: www.horror.org

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If you're starting out in the horror genre or want to learn more about this style of writing, I have two recommendations, book-wise. Both are available at Amazon.

On Writing Horror edited by Mort Castle
(Writers Digest Books, 2006)

This book is an anthology written by experts in the craft of horror writing. Broken down into eight different chapters, some of the stories include: *Splat Goes the Hero: Visceral Horror* by Jack Ketchum; *Avoiding What's Been Done to Death* by Ramsey Campbell; and one of my favorite titles of all times, *Freaks and Fiddles, Banjos and Beasts: Writing Redneck Horror* by Weston Ochse.



On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft by Stephen King
(Scribner, 2010 edition)

When it comes to writing—just not horror writing—this is one of the books I highly recommend time and time again. I have read the first edition (2000) many times over, but have yet to pick up the 10th anniversary edition (2010).

In this amazingly thin-for-a-Stephen-King book, the author brilliantly sandwiches his life as a writer between his childhood and a near-fatal car accident in 1999. If ever there was a more dedicated author, you'd be hard-pressed to find her or him; King's work ethic will shame even the most prolific writers. And here you'll realize the many challenges King faced honing his career in the genre, and eavesdrop on those wonderful lessons learned about the life of writing, lessons he shares with the reader. *On Writing* is a must for those bookshelves of all serious writers, and the more dog-eared and worse-for-wear, the better.

What's your favorite horror book of all time? Post your selection on our Facebook page: www.Facebook.com/PublishingSyndicate. We'll hold a random drawing from those who post to win an hour of writing/publishing consulting (\$250 value). See FB contest tab for details.

— Dahlynn 



HOT STUFF!

November is National Novel Writing Month

www.NaNoWriMo.com

Procrastinating on starting your great American novel? Need a little push? Then sign up for “NaNoWriMo” at www.NaNoWriMo.com. The non-profit organization hosts this annual writing event, where participants pen a 50,000-word novel starting on November 1st and finishing no later than midnight on November 30th. The NaNoWriMo website offers a wealth of writing tips and strategies, word count scoreboard, encouragement and support. And when you complete the assignment, simply upload your novel to their website and upon official word count verification, you will “receive a handsome winner’s certificate and web badge.”

Let us know if you sign up for this very popular national and international writing event. Zip an e-mail to Ken@PublishingSyndicate.com and we’ll include a short write-up in November’s *Wow* newsletter. We would love for you to post your progress on our Facebook page, so your fellow pens can follow your writing journey: www.Facebook.com/PublishingSyndicate.com

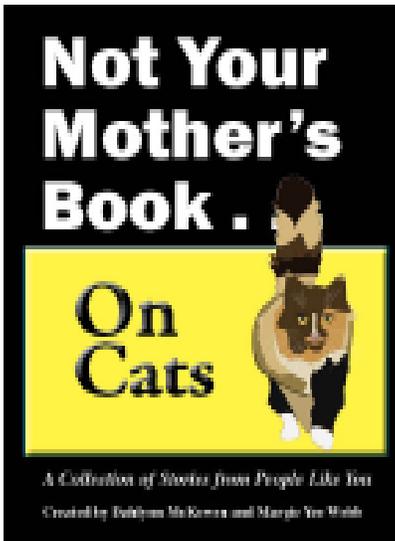


Happy Halloween!

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HOT STUFF! HOT STUFF! HOT STUFF! HOT STUFF! HOT STUFF!

As of October 28, 2011



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