



## Navigating the Wild, Wild West of Publishing by Cathy Davis

Growing up in Oklahoma was magical. As a preschooler, I have vivid memories of spending weekends and summers with my grandmother on the ranch.

As a young teen approaching driving age, you learn about those bright yellow yield signs on the Oklahoma highways that say, "DO NOT DRIVE THRU SMOKE!" You see, Oklahoma has a very dry and arid climate and has a lot of tumbleweed that blow across highways. If two tumbleweeds happen to bump into each other, it could cause a spark, resulting in a fire. Rolling over a burning tumbleweed on a highway could mean a possible explosive disaster for a vehicle driving down the road, especially if one gets caught under your car!

We were taught that if you see smoke on the highway, to **slow down, pull over** to the side of the highway, and **turn around** when it was safe to make a U-turn in the highway . . . in other words, DO NOT DRIVE THRU SMOKE, and avoid the rolling tumbleweeds!

I liken these instructions to what I tell authors when approached by someone who claims to be a "publisher." The publishing industry in the U.S. is an unregulated industry, and anyone can call themselves a publisher — even if they have only uploaded their Word file to Amazon and figured out the answers to the DIY questions. I know of printing

7 pm, July 12  
via ZOOM



Cathy Davis

companies who now call themselves publishers. And as someone whose first job out of college was for a local printer, I understand their need to diversify!

You see, **every** author I've ever met swoons over the possibility of hearing these words, "I'd

**love** to publish your book!" Unfortunately, in an unregulated industry, anyone can say those words, whether they know what they are doing . . . **or not!**

Part of my job is to help you understand the publishing landscape, learn more about the types of options you have, and how to recognize when it's time to **slow down, pull over, and turn around.**

### Where do we start?

- **Who are you?** Define your author platform. Find your voice. Why are you here? What do you stand for? What will you **not** stand by and let happen?

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Join us on August 9 to learn about "Navigating the Wild, Wild West of Publishing," featuring Cathy Davis.

*Cathy Davis founded Davis Creative in January of 2004 and expanded services to include publishing in 2008. Davis Creative Publishing is now a sought-after industry leader, helping over 2,000 authors become published, and nearly 1,000 authors to become #1 International Best Sellers. She is a board member of her local National Speaker's Association (NSA) chapter and former co-dean of the STL Speaker's Academy. Connect with her at [creativepublishingpartners.com](http://creativepublishingpartners.com)*

### ZOOM (new as of 5/24/23):

Sign-up is free. Join from your smart-phone, computer, or tablet. If it's your first time, follow the prompts and allow it to access your camera and microphone. Use this link for the meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/94227448734>.

Meeting ID is 942 2744 8734. Passcode is 563402.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

via ZOOM

August 9, 7:00 – 8:30pm  
Navigating the Wild, Wild West of Publishing  
with [Cathy Davis](#)  
<https://zoom.us/j/94227448734>

August 14, 6:30 – 8:30pm  
and  
September 18, 6:30 – 8:30pm  
SLPA Authors Summer Series  
Spine Indie Bookstore & Café  
1976 Arsenal St., St. Louis, MO 63118  
<https://www.stlouispublishers.org/event-5314579>

September 13, 7:00 – 8:30pm  
Unique Pathways to Publication:  
An Author's Panel  
with [Kerri Holloway](#)  
<https://zoom.us/j/94227448734>

## Unique Pathways to Publication: An Authors Panel moderated by SLPA Board Member Kerri Holloway

Join the St. Louis Publishers Association on September 13 for "Unique Pathways to Publication: An Authors Panel," moderated by SLPA Board Member Kerri Holloway.



Kerri Holloway

The process of writing and publishing a book requires patience, determination, and confidence. The journey to publication is never a straight line. In fact, the distance between point A (story idea) and point B (published book) is unique for every author.

Hear from SLPA member authors Terry Baker Mulligan, Michael DePung, Katie Otey, and J.L. Sullivan, as they share behind-the-scenes experiences, including lessons learned, practical advice, and their next steps. Come prepared to take notes and ask questions. Visit [www.stlouispublishers.org](http://www.stlouispublishers.org) for more information about our featured panelists.

SLPA Board Member Kerri M. Holloway is a freelance editor and copywriter with over 20 years' experience helping authors, nonprofits, small business owners, and Christian ministries. As the principal of Successful Improvements, she is committed to helping people share their story and specializes in transforming ideas into a polished and effective message. Visit [successful-improvements.com](http://successful-improvements.com).

• **What do (or can) you write about?** What makes your content interesting to others? What can you write about that no one else has already touched upon? What types of content will sell?

• **How do I get published?** The great thing about publishing in the 21st century is that you have many options!

- Traditional/Trade
- Author Be Aware (Independent/INDY, Hybrid, DIY)
- Author Assisted

When it comes to Navigating the Wild, Wild, West of Publishing, you have **lots** of options. Take time to educate yourself on the pros and cons of each. Ask **lots** of questions and avoid the “smoke” that potentially may not be in your best interest. You’ll be better able to make decisions on what is the best route for **you** — so that you can **slow down, pull over**, and **turn around** when something doesn’t feel or look quite right.

*Excerpt from blog post dated June 14, 2023. Used with permission. Edited for length. <https://creativepublishingpartners.com/navigating-the-wild-wild-west-of-publishing/>*

## SLPA Authors Summer Series at Spine Indie Bookstore & Café

Our first event on July 10 featured Jean Walters, SLPA member and author of *The Magic & Mystery of Dreams: The Ultimate Handbook for Interpreting Day and Night Dreams and the Symbols in Your Life*. **Meet us there again on August 14 to support SLPA member authors Dixie Gillaspie, Michael Kuelker, and Darian Wigfall.** For more details, [visit stlouispublishers.org/event-5314569](http://stlouispublishers.org/event-5314569).



## KUDOS CORNER

**SLPA Board President Andrew Doty**  
**Owner of Editwright**

Andrew Doty, SLPA President and owner of [Editwright](http://Editwright.com), presents the debut memoir from his client **James Gibson**. In his inspirational account, *Just a Long Walk: Healing & Discovery on the John Muir Trail* (cover design by fellow SLPA member [Peggy Nehmen](http://PeggyNehmen.com)), James reveals how he pressed the reset button on his life by hiking across the 210-mile John Muir trail from Yosemite National Park along the High Sierra mountain range to Mount Whitney, the highest peak in the continental United States. Since the book’s release in November, it became a finalist for the [17th Annual National Indie Excellence Awards](http://17thAnnualNationalIndieExcellenceAwards.com) (motivational and cover design).



Visit [justalongwalk.com](http://justalongwalk.com).

All I have learned,  
I learned from  
books.

— Abraham Lincoln



Meetings on the  
second Wednesday  
of every month



## LAST MONTH’S RECAP Publishing Short Stories

**S**pecial thanks to **Brad R. Cook**, author of historical fantasy and award-winning short stories, for sharing practical tips to maximize your work by publishing short stories. Visit [bradcook.com](http://bradcook.com) and [@bradcook](https://twitter.com/bradcook) on social media.



Brad R. Cook

**Short stories come in a range of formats:**

- flash fiction (up to 1,500 words)
- traditional short stories (1,000 to 10,000 words)
- novelettes (7,500 to 19,000 words)
- NOTE: most contests require submissions between 3,000 to 5,000 words.

**Benefits include:**

- paperbacks are easier to sell by hand
- easy add-on to another item for sale
- enables more books to display at live events (conventions, fairs, festivals)
- attractive to readers with limited funds, especially children
- people enjoy short reads
- people like little books (portable, small size, easy to hold)

You can use short stories to explore other genres, develop characters, or to expand your brand. Consider writing a short story for your novel. It’s a good way to sharpen your writing, flesh out characters, and improve plot lines. You may be able to include your short story in an anthology (a collection of short stories or poems). Whether your short story is an ebook or a paperback, be sure the content is well written with a bold and attractive cover, even at thumbnail size.

**In-person gatherings are suspended due to COVID-19 concerns.**  
**All meetings will be held online until further notice.**

### Admission and Membership

- Monthly meetings on Zoom are **FREE**
- **Membership is \$60 per year.**

Visit: [stlouispublishers.org/join](http://stlouispublishers.org/join)  
[stlouispublishers.org/benefits](http://stlouispublishers.org/benefits)

### SLPA NEWS & VIEWS

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