



## Successes and Failures

by Jo Lena Johnson

At the risk of being ostracized or judged, people don't readily discuss their failures, mistakes, or poor outcomes. One of the reasons I pushed to offer the Successes and Failures session in October was because I've seen so many authors struggle and be disappointed, disillusioned, and discouraged, especially after their books have been published. I think it's because of unrealistic expectations.

If one has not completed a published book, they can't necessarily relate to the blood, sweat, tears, flashbacks, obstacles, and setbacks many writers face. It takes optimism, creativity, tenacity, focus, emotional fortitude, and strategic planning to write and publish a book – literally giving all you've got. In order to complete the task, you must be willing to push the

boundaries to get it out, down, and in good order.

So the thought of failure – or inability to achieve sales success, gain exposure, or reach the intended audience is not something one can focus on during the writing, or else the fear and worry will take over. Some of you know what I mean about taking over... How many of you have unpublished manuscripts in file cabinets, on old floppy disks, or on zip drives right now? How many have been attending conferences, meetings, and workshops or scouring the internet for more information – justification for not going for it?

Yes, whenever you make your thoughts, feelings, ideas, or stories public, they are subject to scrutiny, rejection, criticism, and more; however, if you weren't

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### Successes and Failures

A Panel Discussion • October 10, 2018



MODERATOR:  
Jo Lena Johnson



Rhoda Banks



Gary Kodner



Bobbi Linkemer



Fangfang Xu



Todd Smith



### All About Editing

with Andrew Doty & Karen Tucker

Nov 14 at the St. Louis Publishers Association

Did you know there are six steps to producing a book, and THREE of them are editing??? But ask yourself: What do you really know about editing? Do you understand the differences between developmental editing, copyediting, and proofreading? Do you know what order they need to be done in? Do you know how you should prepare your manuscript for editing, or even how to find reliable editors, and how much they will cost?

On Wednesday, November 14, you'll have a chance to get all the answers you need, as professional editors Karen Tucker and Andrew Doty team up to talk **All About Editing** at the monthly St. Louis Publishers Association meeting at THE HEIGHTS: Richmond Heights Community Center.

Learn about the different types of editors and editing, tips and tricks for communicating effectively with your editors, and advice on editing your own manuscript to save time and money.

**Karen Tucker** is a content editor, copyeditor, and proofreader with 20 years of professional experience in technical and educational material, motivational books, memoirs, and novels, as a freelancer and the editor behind Comma Queen Editing (commaqueenediting.com).

**Andrew Doty** is a book coach and developmental editor, editorial director of the St. Louis Publishers Association, editor-in-chief of punctum books, founder of Write for a Change, and owner of the creative publications agency Editwright (editwright.com).

Don't miss this opportunity to learn all about editing. Come with questions, leave with answers!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Oct 10, 7pm @ THE HEIGHTS:**  
**Successes and Failures**  
a group conversation among authors, hosted by Jo Lena Johnson  
[stlouispublishers.org/event-3066895](http://stlouispublishers.org/event-3066895)

**Oct 19, 7pm @ Medici MediaSpace:**  
**Legendary Planet's Candle Game**  
[medicistl.com/events](http://medicistl.com/events)

**Oct 26, 7pm @ The Book House:**  
**Legendary Planet's Candle Game**  
[bookhousestl.com](http://bookhousestl.com)

**Nov 14,\* 7pm @ THE HEIGHTS:**  
**All About Editing**  
with Karen Tucker & Andrew Doty  
**\*ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING**  
[stlouispublishers.org/event-3062581](http://stlouispublishers.org/event-3062581)

**Dec 12,\* 7pm @ THE HEIGHTS:**  
**Polish Your Pitch:**  
One-Minute Book Marketing Challenge, with Bob Baker  
[stlouispublishers.org/event-3014215](http://stlouispublishers.org/event-3014215)

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meant to tell your story, you would not have that deep-seated thing in the pit of your stomach churning, burning, ready to be expressed. Some people will not care about what you have to say – “everyone” is not your audience. That’s okay. If you have 100 people who wholeheartedly support you and what you are sharing, along with a plan of action which includes speaking, appearances, and educating people on your topic, not just selling your book, you’re on your way to success.

Through mistakes and failures, growth prevails, when you keep going. That’s one of the reasons I joined the SLPA years ago – because I was clueless about a lot of things and found an experienced group of published authors who shared their experiences and expertise. Though my journey hasn’t been easy, I was encouraged by these leaders and learned some expensive and valuable

lessons. Hopefully, we’ll be able to save you time, effort and mistakes.

You can’t do it all and neither should you try, especially if you want the book to be considered library- or bookstore-placement-ready. Here’s a few tips:

**Lower Risks of Mistakes:** Work with a book coach/book shepherd even if you are self-publishing, which will help you build a solid foundation and strategic plan. They can give you guidance, perspective, and expertise about all aspects of your project, saving you a lot of guesswork, time, and possible mistakes.

Have your manuscript edited by a professional.

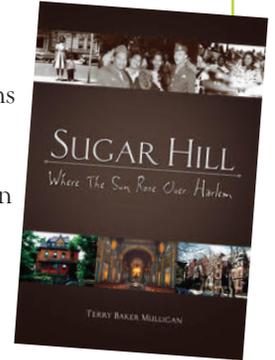
Have your interior and covers designed by experienced (book) graphic designers (Some designers do book design or graphic design, some do both.)

Look at your book as an investment rather than a cash cow; you may or may not make a profit on book sales alone.

## THE BOOK CORNER

# Sugar Hill, Where the Sun Rose Over Harlem

by Terry Baker Mulligan



Using Harlem’s cultural institutions and memorable characters as her backdrop, Mulligan writes joyously about weathering adolescence while history unfolds around her. This feel-good story resonates with humor and warmth as she chronicles her life among evangelists, curly-haired doo wop boys, Willie Mays, Thurgood Marshall, and other Harlem celebrities. This book is a living document of mid 20<sup>th</sup>-century Harlem with appeal for all America. Read more at [terrybakermulligan.com](http://terrybakermulligan.com).

## Official Notice



The Annual SLPA Member Meeting will be held on November 14, 2018. Members in good standing are encouraged to attend and vote to elect the 2019 board members. Karen Tucker and Andrew Doty will lead the evening’s presentation, and ballots will be collected at the end of the meeting. Board candidates will be announced soon via email.

To submit a nomination, contact the SLPA President, Warren Martin, at [president@stlouispublishers.org](mailto:president@stlouispublishers.org).

## How to Publish Your Own Book: What You Need to Know

a St. Louis Community College Continuing Education Course  
from the St. Louis Publishers Association



Learn more at

[stlouispublishers.org/event-3047930](http://stlouispublishers.org/event-3047930)

## Meetings on the Second Wednesday of the Month

Richmond Heights Community  
Center (THE HEIGHTS)  
The Argus Room • 8001 Dale Ave.  
Richmond Heights, MO, 63117  
(Child care available at THE HEIGHTS)

Doors open for networking at 6:30pm  
Program begins at 7pm

The meeting concludes around 8:30pm  
Networking until 9pm

Regular meetings are free to members  
Membership \$60 per year  
Guests: \$10 at the door



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