



Director's Desk: Advocating Fairness with IBPA's Industry Standards Checklist for a Professionally Published Book

by Angela Bole, CEO, Independent Book Publishers Association

This article was published in the July 2017 *IBPA Independent magazine*. Reprinted with permission.

IBPA has been championing independent publishers big and small, self and otherwise, since 1983. That's over 30 years of advocating for indie voices in the traditional publishing industry. Over this time, we've seen a thing or two.

Recent changes in the publishing industry have created enormous opportunities for self-published authors. It's now possible to produce a professional quality book outside of the Big Five conglomerates. Unfortunately, this opportunity has come at the cost of a deepening divide between how traditionally published and self-published authors are treated. Too often, IBPA has noticed a bias against self-published authors, independent publishers, and hybrid presses when it comes to choosing titles or authors for review consideration, book award contests, association memberships, and inclusion on independent bookstore shelves.

**7 pm, June 8
via Zoom**

There is no reason for this bias. While it's true that not all books are created equal, when they are, it's important that the industry treats them as such.

That's why IBPA's Advocacy Committee recently published an [Industry Standards Checklist for a Professionally Published Book](#)—a two-page document developed to support independent publishers and self-published authors, but also to urge an industry in flux to acknowledge that books ought to be judged on their substance rather than their business model.

If used appropriately, the checklist gives both authors and book industry professionals an at-a-glance method by which to gauge the professional presentation of a book. The goal is that the checklist becomes a future guide that reviewers, contests, membership

Continued on page 2.

Join us on June 8 for "How IBPA Can Help You Publish Like a Professional", featuring Christopher Locke, author and IBPA Director of Membership & Membership Services.

*Christopher assists the 4,100+ members of IBPA as they travel along their publishing journeys and oversees the [IBPA NetGalley program](#). As an author, Christopher has published two novels so far in his YA trilogy, *The Enlightenment Adventures*.*



Visit him at christopher-locke.com.

ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS:

Sign-up is free. You can join from your smartphone, computer or tablet. If it's your first time, follow the prompts and allow it to access your camera and microphone. Click on this link for the meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/86782144399>. Meeting ID is 867 8214 4399. Password is 668448.

Wherever Books are Sold: A Guide to Forming Lasting Partnerships with Independent Bookstores

by Emily Hall Schroen

Join the St. Louis Publishers Association on July 13th for "Wherever Books are Sold: A Guide to Forming Lasting Partnerships with Independent Bookstores," featuring Emily Hall Schroen, owner of Main Street Books in St. Charles, Missouri.

You've written a book. You've gone through the publishing process. You have your new book in your hands, and now you want to see it on bookstore shelves. How can you achieve this goal? Drawing on nearly a decade of experience in the bookselling industry, Emily Hall Schroen will walk authors through the process of reaching out to independent bookstores who may be interested in stocking your book. Emily will give an overview of indie bookstore operations, including an explanation of how most indies decide which titles to bring into the store and where their stock comes from. She will also provide insight about how to decide if a store is right for your book, the best ways to approach buyers

or managers, and tips for successful book signings.

Main Street Books is an independent bookstore in the heart of Historic St. Charles and has been serving the community for 29 years. They host multiple book signings a month, the majority of which feature local authors. You can visit them online at mainstreetbooks.indielite.org and follow them on social media: **Facebook:** [Main Street Books St Charles, MO](#); **Twitter:** [@mainstreetbooks](#); **Instagram:** [@mainstreetbooksstcharles](#)



Emily Hall Schroen

Emily Hall Schroen is the owner of Main Street Books in St. Charles, MO. She holds a BA in English from Truman State University and sits on the board of the Midwest Independent Booksellers Association. She lives in St. Charles with her husband and two budgies in a house overflowing with books.

UPCOMING EVENTS

via ZOOM

June 8, 7– 8:30pm
How IBPA Can Help You Publish Like a Professional with [Christopher Locke](#)

<https://zoom.us/j/86782144399>

July 13, 7– 8:30pm
Wherever Books are Sold: A Guide to Forming Lasting Partnerships with Independent Bookstores with [Emily Hall Schroen](#)
<https://zoom.us/j/86782144399>

July 16, 9am –12pm
How to Sell Books by the Truckload!

Featuring [Penny Sansieveri](#)
Details on Page 2

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associations, and bookstores turn to when deciding which authors merit consideration.

You can download the checklist [here](#).

During **BookExpo in June 2017**, I had the privilege of discussing the checklist with other industry organizations. I met with the American Booksellers Association, the Authors Guild, *Publishers Weekly*, *Foreword Reviews*, and many more. I'm glad to say the reception was warm. Those industry professionals paying attention know they're missing quality books by using gatekeeping tactics attached to business models; they just haven't figured out how to consider these books without opening the floodgate to unprofessionally produced content, as well. They seemed to appreciate that the checklist is a needed first step toward figuring this all out.

IBPA's Call to Action

Today's independent publishers and self-published authors represent a diverse

array of voices and backgrounds, often speaking about specialized issues that are marginalized by larger presses, often because their books are being judged on the business model and not on what matters, which is the content of the books. Just as publishers, self or otherwise, are responsible for producing books that adhere to industry standards, the book industry as a whole is responsible for creating an environment that allows for equal evaluation of all published works.

You can join IBPA in its pledge to help reduce bias against independently published books by signing on in support our *Industry Standards Checklist for a Professionally Published Book*. Please visit ibpa-online.org/standard-checklist for more information.

Just before Angela Bole became IBPA's Chief Executive Officer, she was Deputy Executive Director of the Book Industry Study Group, Inc. (BISG), which fosters conversation and consensus across all sectors of the book business. Before that, Angela served for two years as BISG's Associate Director and two years as its Marketing and Communications Manager.

KUDOS CORNER

SLPA Member Carin Fahr Shulusky

Carin Fahr Shulusky has continued

her passion for writing since her retirement as a marketing executive.

She released her first novel *In the Middle*, on her 70th birthday (previously featured in the [SLPA April 2021 newsletter](#)).

Since then, Carin has been a contributing author in the #1 International Best Seller anthology *Living My tRuth: Personal Reflections on the Impact of the RBG Legacy*.

Her most recent release is *Finding Light in a Lost Year*, a novel exploring how a broken family navigated the covid-19 pandemic. You can learn more about it in her May 23, 2022, podcast interview on [Quiet Fury Books](#).

For more information visit:
carinshulusky.com.



SPECIAL BOOK MARKETING WORKSHOP

How to Sell Books by the Truckload
PLUS: Bookstagrammers, Influencers and more!

Saturday, July 16, 2022 • 9am–12 pm
ZOOM → DETAILS AT: stlouispublishers.org

Penny Sansevieri
CEO, Author Marketing Experts

 ST. LOUIS PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

“Write what should not be forgotten.”

—Isabel Allende



LAST MONTH'S RECAP

Walk, Trot, Run: An Author's Journey from Novice Writer to a Multi-book Publishing Contract

by Debbie Burns

Special thanks to **Debbie Burns, best-selling author of the critically acclaimed Rescue Me series**, for sharing the details of her journey to publication. Find her at authordebbieburns.com.

Every author's journey is unique. Consistency and resilience is vital. If you are serious about getting your story out to the world, start writing! Whether you're a *planner* (story ideas, outline, etc.) or a *pants-er* (writing stories as they come to you, i.e. “by the seat of your pants”), get your words on the page then work to make them the very best version for your readers.

- Take advantage of writing contests, conferences, and organizations such as writers groups to sharpen your skills.
- Tips for landing an agent: pay attention to feedback (revise again as needed), keep trying new things (critique groups, conferences, contests), and read books in your genre to stay updated on what's popular and selling now (readers preferences change over time).

Considerations for traditional publishing: authors do not have the final say about the title, cover artwork, or release date for their books; authors are expected to self-promote their books; although royalties are paid according to contract terms, typically authors receive payments on pre-orders to bookstores, but will also have deductions for returned copies.



Debbie Burns



Meetings on the second Wednesday of every month

In-person gatherings are suspended due to COVID-19 restrictions.
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
stlouispublishers.org/benefits

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