

Title:

The WAR Cycle for Writers

Word Count:

788

Summary:

Having realistic expectations as to your book sales and how to gradually infiltrate the market.

Keywords:

book sales, marketing books, self-publishing, Internet radio shows.

Article Body:

Copyright 2006 Black Butterfly Press

In one of his acts, comedian Chris Rock tells a joke where he calls a certain class of men, "Low-expectation-having folks." (Of course, that's not the word he used.) At any rate, he had a valid point about people not expecting enough from life. Granted, we've been taught that it is a sin to aim too low. And although I don't think a person can ever aim too high, I do believe a person can suffer from having unrealistically high expectations as to what the returns should be on an endeavor.

To illustrate the point, as a social worker, one of the first trainings I ever attended was about the world of abnormal childrearing. The WAR cycle, it was called. Simply put, at the crux of most child abuse, it was found that the parent had unrealistic expectations as to the stages of child development. This included expecting children to be potty trained at six months, to not get into things at age two and to even sleep all night as a newborn. Subsequently, in a fit of rage, a parent would inappropriately "physically discipline" (abuse) a child. Sad to say, many of these children wound up in the hospital, or worse, for these normal developmental milestones.

As a writer, I'm always looking for comparisons in life lessons, so let's apply this to being a writer. This is what I've come up with. I am beginning to see a similar syndrome, for some writers, whether self-published or not.

I call this syndrome The "WAR cycle" for writers. In other words, "The World Of Absent Realism." When we are writing, we are often absent from reality. And by no means should we give up our imagination, since it is the source of our

writing. But let's face it. When it comes to pushing our books, we have to be "Keeping it Real." As writers, we are dreamers.

Okay, we've written the All American Novel. Even so, our biggest dream is to be published. We can already see the red carpet rolled out with stretch limousines and six-seven figure checks rolling in as soon as the ink dries. We're fulfilled with the writing in itself, but if we by chance luck up and get published, we expect the world to beat a path to our door after we've accomplished this feat.

Unfortunately, when things don't take off right away, we abuse our child, our dream, by either giving up too soon or blaming our publisher or our agent. To use a metaphor, we want to plant a seed and see a tree the next day. Like the abusive parent, we want to accelerate the development process necessary to getting known as a writer.

What made me realize this is a friend (who is self-published) went to a literary retreat and came home amazed at the number of disgruntled writers she met. Even when they had four or five books with traditional publishers, they alleged they had not been paid since their advance. In my friend's case, at the end of the day, not only did she and another self-published writer sell the most books, they got paid. The other writers could not collect any money until their royalty payment. Perhaps both self-published and traditionally published writers can take lessons from these two literary entrepreneurs' "hustle." The main thing is to avoid the WAR Trap.

How to Avoid the War Trap

Remember, it can take 20 times exposure before a person recognizes or buys a book. In direct marketing, only 10% of the people contacted will be buyers. The 20/80% rule also applies to book buyers. Try to write more than one book and develop repeat customers. Remember it can take 100 no's to get to a yes. Don't spend all the book advance and then not have enough to go on a book tour. Try to negotiate more for marketing. If you live near a book store, why aren't you scheduling booksignings on a regular basis? If you can't do a physical tour, why not do a virtual tour? Give up the fantasy that you get rich with one book. (If you do, fine, but it's a rarity.) Empower yourself by getting a web page. Stop being afraid of sharing, which leads to networking. There is no shortage when you come from a position of abundance. Make use of print on demand. Write e-books. Use e-mail and save postage. Use Free advertisement on the Internet through book reviews, interviews, and e-zines. Start a newsletter. Write articles to help promote your books. Post on message boards. Do Internet Radio Show Interviews. Develop ways to market your book off-line and on-line such as through the Publisher's Marketing Association, Cushcity.com's coop advertising.

MTBN.NET PLR Library

Category: Writing_Speaking File: The_WAR_Cycle_for_Writers_utf8.txt

Text and Word PLR Article Packs available at PLRImporter.Com