

I'm Gonna Be an Author

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What is an Author?

- A writer is not an author
- An author must be PUBLISHED



Write a Good Book!

- Learn the basics
- Have a solid story arc
- Write interesting characters
- Learn the mechanics:
 - Spelling
 - Punctuation
 - Chapter construction
- Take a class



Get Feedback

- From your writing class
- From a critique partner or writing group
- From a trusted friend
- Let a few others read your manuscript BEFORE you submit it



Write a Great Book Proposal

- Read a book or go online for templates
- Tell the agent/publisher what makes your book different
- Describe your marketing strategy
- Describe your target audience



Conferences

- Great networking opportunities
- Meet agents, editors, publishers
- Become an "expert" and do presentations
- Get name recognition
- Collect names and email addresses
- Opportunities for learning



Finding a Literary Agent

- Ask other published authors
- Check out Writers' Digest and other online sites
- Check Predators & Editors before sending the letter
- Choose an agent who represents your genre of book



Write a Great Query Letter

- The 25 most important words you'll ever write
- Get the agent/editor's attention
- Tell the whole story, but leave them wanting the details



Before Sending the Query

- **Check their submission guidelines and FOLLOW THEM!**
- Make sure your manuscript is as error-free as possible
- Be sure to send everything they ask for, but nothing else
- Be prepared to WAIT



Small Press vs Large Press

- Small Press:
 - More individual attention
 - Less publisher investment
 - May or may not have good editors
 - Some are newer and hungry for books
 - Consider the e-book publishers
 - Pay royalties, but probably not advances



Small Press vs Large Press

- Large Press
 - More industry awareness
 - May invest more time and money in you
 - Probably have distribution to bookstores
 - Usually have good editors
 - MUCH harder to get signed with
 - Pay advances and royalties



"Vanity Press" vs Self-publishing

- "Vanity Press"
 - Get a few copies for family and friends
 - Charge quite a bit
 - No distribution, online or otherwise unless you pay a great deal
 - Okay if you already have a built-in market or for gifts



Self-publishing vs "Vanity Press"

- Self-publishing is really Subsidy Publishing
 - You help pay some of the costs of getting your book into print
 - You decide when it gets published and how it will look
 - "Menu" of options including editing and marketing
 - Your book is in print



Non-profit Affiliation

- Donate a portion of the proceeds to a non-profit
- Note it on your cover
- You get additional publicity
- They get additional revenue
- Win-win situation



Marketing

- BE PREPARED TO DO YOUR OWN!
 - Create a website
 - If your publisher has a site and offers it, get a page on their site
 - Start a blog
 - Join publishing groups / organizations
 - Send press releases and press kits



Don't Give Up!

- No matter how much work it is
- No matter what it takes
- Even if you get discouraged
- NOTHING beats holding that first book in your hands for the first time!

