

An aerial photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, there is a large, light-colored sandy dune. Behind it, a prominent red rock ridge runs horizontally across the middle of the frame. The background consists of a vast, flat, light-colored desert floor extending to the horizon under a clear blue sky.

Say What? Learning the Lingo

Cracking the Code (and secrets) of the Writing and
Publishing Industry

There's always a learning curve...

- New Writer or the First Time Conferee has to learn two things
 - The jargon or industry lingo
 - The craft

Critique Groups



- A good rule of thumb should be three layers of writers
- Beginning writers to learn
- Seasoned writers (lightly published) to learn and teach
- Mentor Writers (honing their teaching skills for conference) to teach, guide and direct.

What do you look for in a critique group?

- 1) Encouragement not badgering
- 2) Kindness
- 3) Teaching
- 4) Guidance
- 5) A group that matures, morphs, grows

Critique Group Lingo – Most Common

- RUE – Resist the Urge to Explain
- GWS – Goes without saying
- POV – Point of View
- MOO – My own opinion
- WIP – Work in progress
- MS – manuscript
- TTW- Tighten the writing

- **WIP – Work in Progress** - A writer's current piece of work.
- **MS – Manuscript** - Simply an abbreviation for manuscript.
- **TTW – Tighten the Writing** - This is the place in the WIP that could be trimmed and tightened. Perhaps there's some RUE there. (Are you catching on now?)
- **FW – Filter Words** - Words such as that, thought, felt, just, realized. Hone the craft and learn to rephrase and leave them out, or offer deep point of view.
- **Antagonist** - The person or force that is against the hero or main character of a story: A.K.A. The Bad Guy.
- **Protagonist** – The good guy – your hero in the story.
- **Foreshadowing** - A technique that gives a subtle hint of an important event that will occur later in the story.
- **Backstory** - Everything that happened before your story begins.
- **Cliché** - A word or phrase that has become trite through repetition.
- **Conflict** - The reason your hero can't have what he wants.

Business Thoughts

- Present yourself in a professional way.
- Cute is not professional. You want to be taken seriously
- Begin with your email. Then your answering machine or message on your phone.
- Make your email address with your name, even if you have to add a number along with it, i.e.
- cindysproles2010@.....
- Agents, editors and publishers need to find you

Business Cards, Website & Social Media

- Business cards should be professional not fluffy. Your business card does not sell your work. Save your money for marketing after you get a contract.
- If you can add a small photo of yourself it helps the
- editor, agent, or publisher remember you.

- Email address
- URL
- Physical address/phone (This is a personal decision)

One Sheet

- One sheet is only ONE SHEET
- Contains genre, word count, status of manuscript
- Elevator pitch (Think “back of book” text”
- Author photo
- Bio
- Personal or agent contact information
- The debate these days is do you really need one? Call it your cheat sheet.



Mercy's Rain

An Appalachian Novel
By Cindy K. Sproles

Diana Flegal – Hartline Literary Agency
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Optional Title: Unforgiving Mercy ***Word Count:** 85,000 ***Manuscript status:** Complete
***Genre:** Historical Fiction/Appalachian

Married and widowed at thirteen, a mother and childless by fifteen, Mercy Roller spent her life under the authority of her abusive father, the Pastor. The Pastor rules both her family and the community around Wadalow Mountain, Tennessee. Not a single person seems capable of standing up to the man who calls his sinful actions “righteous,” that is, until Mercy takes matters into her own hands.

Kicked out of her home by her grieving mother Mercy finds her way to the other side of the mountain where she slowly learns that true righteousness has nothing evil about – and that there might be room for her own stained and shattered soul to find shelter, and even love.

An unforgettable story, Mercy's Rain transports readers to nineteenth-century Appalachia, revealing the thorny path from bitterness to forgiveness.

Cindy K. Sproles is the cofounder of Christian Devotions Ministries. She is the author of one non-fiction book, *He Said, She Said: Cultivating a Life of Passion* and is a popular speaker for women's conferences and a teacher at writers conferences across the U. S. Cindy is the editor of ChristianDevotions.us, a regular contributor to Common Ground Christian News, and CBN.com. Cindy has a B.A. in Business and Journalism. She lives in the mountains of East Tennessee with her family.



Industry Lingo

- **Agent** - An agent is that intermediary person whose job it is to sell, contract, and protect the rights of their writers. Agents used to be optional. Not anymore. In recent years, agents have become the gatekeepers for publishers, filtering out weaker writing and only submitting strong and vibrant manuscripts. Most agents contract writers at 15% of the royalties of a contracted book.
- **Shop** - Shopping a manuscript is when the agent searches out and submits manuscripts to the appropriate publishing houses.
- **Editor** - A general term for someone who looks at manuscripts. The wide assortment of Editors includes: Acquisition Editors, Copy Editors, Managing Editors, and Senior Editors. These individuals most generally work for publishers,

- **Publisher or House** -The company who purchases the manuscripts and publishes them.
- **Traditional or Royalty Publisher** - This company takes a risk and absorbs the expense of publishing a book. In years past, publishers offered an advance for work before it was actually sold. In today's economy, advances are becoming a thing of the past. There are still publishers who offer them, but the trend is moving those advances to the established authors with a good track record of sales. As a rule, the publisher will offer the author an advance and a percentage of each book
- sold at regular price.
- **Vanity Publisher or Self-Publishing Company** - This is where the author assumes the risk and expense of publishing a book. Plain and simple: If you, the author, PAY a company any money what-so-ever, you are self-publishing.
- **Subsidy or Partnership Publishing** - These are companies who share the cost of publishing a book with the author. These companies may require you to purchase a certain amount of books after publication. But again, when you pay money to a publisher...you are self-publishing. Despite the fact subsidy companies will say they are not self-publishers, they are walking the gray line and in essence, are. If YOU pay, you are publishing your book at your own expense.

- **POD - Print on Demand** - POD or Print on Demand. A method of printing using digital technology to print books which allows publishers to print small runs (as small as one book) rather than using traditional offset printing methods.
- **E-book Publisher** - These companies format and make a book available in an online digital format. Any publisher can provide this service for their contracted books.
- **Indie Publishers** – These are the independent, self-publishers. There was a time the small presses were titled Indie publishers but when the market of self-publishing exploded open small presses had to be recognized appropriately.
- **Small Publishers** – Small publishers are growing in number. A large majority contract out the publishing portions of the book to independent individuals i.e. private book cover designers, interior designers. They operate on the same order as a large publisher – paying royalties. Authors do NOT pay small publishers to publish their books.
- **Arm In the Market** – This is the reach a publisher has into the retail market. The larger houses reach deeper into brick and mortar stores where small publishers are primarily on-line and in all distributor catalogues.

- **Pub Board or Committee** - These are the committees within the publishing house who come together and decide what manuscripts will receive contracts. This is a compilation of acquisitions editors, marketing, sales, and finance groups.
- **Elevator Pitch** - A short, 60-90 second speech. Think back to a book text. Generally this is what the reader will see that draws them in and makes them want to read your book.
- **Query Letter** - Letter submitted with a book pitch. Editors will read these first to see if the manuscript fits into their genre, need, and criteria.
- **Cover Letter** - Letter submitted along with a manuscript with a brief introduction of the author, a 25-50 word blurb about the manuscript, and contact information of the agent.
- **Proposal** - Contains the 25, 50 and/or 100 word book blurb, marketing comparisons, synopsis, bio, one sheet, author's intentions of marketing, and first fifty pages of the manuscript. A proposal is a look at the author and the manuscript as a package.
- **Author Bio/Writing History** - The author's credentials, credits, and photo.
- **Synopsis** - Found in both fiction and non-fiction (according to publisher request) but primarily for fiction manuscripts

- **Marketing Plan** - What the author can/will do to sell the book.
- **Comparable Works** - Other works similar to the author's that will help publishers see where the WIP will fit.
- **Target Audience** - The group of readers the WIP will interest.
- **Endorsements** – Short blurbs from reputable authors, readers, or industry players who have read the WIP and can state the WIP is well written and interesting.
- **Word Count** – Number of words in the manuscript.
- **Hook** - One sentence in fifteen words or less. This is not your synopsis. Your tag line or hook needs to be that one line that grabs the reader and makes them say, “Wow, I want to read that book.” A good tag line will draw the reader in quickly, make them curious, and get them to ask, “Why should I read this and more so, why should I care?”
- **Pitch** - The 60-90 second statement that summarizes the WIP to publishers and agents.
- **Platform** -The group of people the author reaches through speaking, previous writing, or through organizations.
- **Genre** - The type of story.

Genres

- Romance
- Fantasy
- Mystery/Suspense
- Romantic Suspense
- Literary
- Speculative Fiction
- Novella
- Young Adult or YA (13-18)
- Children's
- Chick Lit – not much market anymore
- Western
- Science Fiction
- Historical Women's Fiction
- Contemporary
- Southern Fiction
- Appalachian Fiction
- New Adult (18-30)
- Humor
- Graphic Novel
- Folklore
- Horror
- Biography & autobiography
- Textbook
- Mythology

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