

1



**Literary Querying:
The Art of Rejection**

**Week Three:
Contact with The Enemy**

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2

Week Three Goals

- Lots of Workshop
- Undeniable Presence
 - Get in the game
- Finding Battle
- Dealing with the wounds
- Success



3


Workshop



4

The Ivory Tower

- In a perfect world the work would speak for itself
- Readers would flock to it by instinct
- The author would need to do nothing but sit back and bask - the Hermit, writing another bestseller
 - No Marketing, No Social Media
 - Publishers would handle that
- Fame and glory!
- Can still happen, but...



5

Horse and Jockey

- Modern Gatekeepers consider the author's **Experience, Platform & Social Media Presence**
- Small presses especially
- **REQUIRED** for self-publishing
- Even big publishers will look
 - Big presence is good news
 - Do you bring an audience?
 - How else do some people get published!
- A strong jockey can ride a weak horse to victory



6

Platform



● **“A place from which to deliver a message.”**

- Who do you know?
- How can you communicate?
- Authors are public figures
 - Become accessible
 - Show you'll participate in messaging
- Networking
- Excellent Tool for Success

7

Access

● Now

- Agents
- Editors
- Publishers

● Later

- Readers
- Fans
- Stalkers



Include social media links in query

8



Author Internet Platform Starter Kit

● Website

- Home Base
- Professional

● Blog?

- Continuing Output

● Facebook

- Author Page

● Twitter?

- Collect Followers

● Amazon & Goodreads

- Make Reviews
- Get a page (when you can)

● Optional

- Pinterest
- Snapchat
- Instagram
- TikTok?

9

Considerations

- You are a public figure
- People are watching
- Present yourself professionally
- Be honest but **careful**
- Think hard about engaging in controversial topics
 - *Unless that's your brand*
- The internet doesn't forget
- Writing is a small community and people talk
- **Don't make it easy for them to say "No"**



10

Finding Battle

- Where to find targets to Query
- Agents
- Editors
- Publishers



11

A Word About Money

- **You will be rejected**
 - A lot
 - Can get desperate / easy prey
 - Battered Woman Syndrome/Stockholm Syndrome
- **NEVER PAY FOR CONSIDERATION***
 - Agents work for you
 - Scams:
 - Reading fees, "co-publishing," submission costs...
 - Contests?
 - Publishers that require a business plan?
- **Research before querying & AFTER request**



* Conferences (maybe)

12

Getting to Know You!

- Often it's not **WHAT** you know but **WHO** you know
 - Harper Lee & Truman Capote
 - Publisher's Nephew...
- Nothing beats a personal connection
- Get to know people
- **NETWORK!**
 - Isn't all querying just trying to network?

13

Conferences

- Pitch in person
- Learn stuff
- Meet other writers
- Compare notes
- Show up

80% of Success is Just Showing Up
-Wally Pfister

14

Places to Network

- **CONFERENCES**
- **Organizations**
 - The League of Utah Writers
 - HWA
 - Romance Writers
 - etc.
- Author Events
- Signings etc.
- Discussion Groups
- Facebook
- Goodreads
- **Everywhere!**

15

Networking Benefits

- **Definite Benefits:**
 - Learn to be a better writer
 - Learn to be a better marketer
 - Moral support
 - Opportunities
 - Fun
- **Possible Benefits:**
 - Top of the slush pile
 - Query by invitation
 - Agent by Association
 - Publication!

16

Resources: Paper

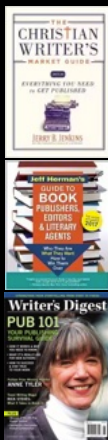
- **Writer's Market**
 - The Classic
 - Not just agents
 - *hint, hint*
 - Available by subscription
 - Yearly book
 - Buy used—old editions still work
 - *Might be damaged with writers' tears*



17

Other Books

- There are other books
- Some more specialized
- Can be useful
 - *Peruse library before buying*
- Periodicals
 - Insider info
 - Expensive
 - *Buy one, research, get out*
- *All have online presences that are useful*



18

Resources: Internet

19

Your Primary
Resource



Google

PublishersMarketplace

- www.publishersmarketplace.com
- Daily Reports
- Searchable database
- Member Pages
- Expensive: \$25/month
- Not everyone's on it



Alternatives

20

- Manuscript Wish List: www.manuscriptwishlist.com/
 - Genre search
- AgentQuery: <http://www.agentquery.com/>
- QueryTracker: <https://querytracker.net/>
 - Provides tracking
- PitMad: <http://www.brenda-drake.com/pitmad/>
- Duotrope: <https://duotrope.com/>
 - Now subscription
 - More markets than agents
- The **Submission** Grinder: <https://thegrinder.diabolicalplots.com>

Association Websites

21

- **Lists Recognized Publishers**
- **Mystery:**
<http://publishers.omnimystery.com/mystery-publishers.html>
- **Horror Writers Association:**
<http://horror.org/trying-new/>
- **Romance Writers of America:**
<https://www.rwa.org/p/cm/ld/fid=567>
- Others (Google is your friend!)

Warning Pages

- Once upon a time?
- Predators & Editors: <http://pred-ed.com/>
- Absolute Writer Water cooler: <http://absolutewrite.com/>
- Science Fiction & Fantasy Beware Page <http://www.sfgwa.org/other-resources/for-authors/writer-beware/>

Set Goals

- Give yourself a target and keep to it
 - Mine: 5 Queries Per Week
 - All the rejection I could handle
 - 100 Rejections Per Year
- Do it all at once, a recurring chore
 - What day?
 - Tuesdays & Wednesdays for me
 - Your mileage may vary
- Part of the job
- 2 more out for every written rejection!



Sending it Out

- **Do your Research**
 - What do they looking for?
 - How do they want it?
 - Any comp titles?
 - Personalize
 - Paper versus email?
- **The Email Query**
 - Awesome Letter
 - Writing sample
 - 1 page—3 chapters+
 - Synopsis?
 - Attachments?
 - Body of Email
 - Social Media Links
- **For Paper (rare)**
 - SASE
 - NO Staples/paper clips
 - If big, USPS BOOK RATE

Keep Track

- Note each of your queries
 - *Are you keeping to your goal?*
 - Motivation and validation - **YOU ARE TRYING!**
 - **Who, what, when, how**
 - **Response** (if any)
- Spreadsheet
- Folder
- Website (QueryTracker)

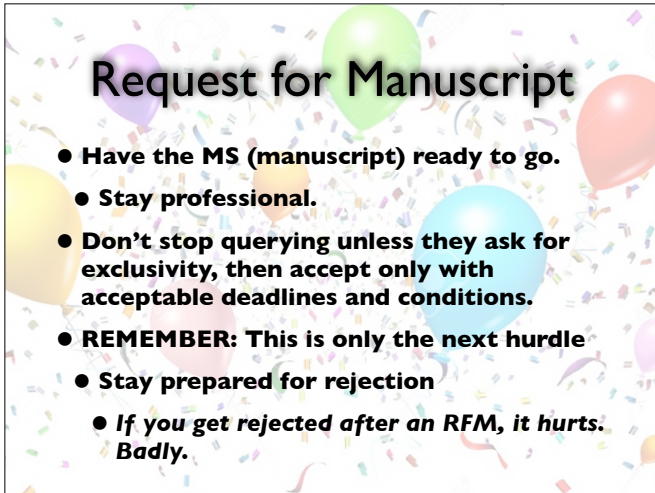


Multiple Submissions

- A rejection (answer) can take 8 weeks to 2 years
- If you ever get one at all
- Most of the time you'll never hear back
- Multiple submissions are required for survival
- Exceptions:
 - Don't query multiple agents in same agency
 - If they ask about multiple submission, you should tell them.
 - If they demand exclusive submission, make sure it's presented with a solid deadline you can accept.

Repeat Submission

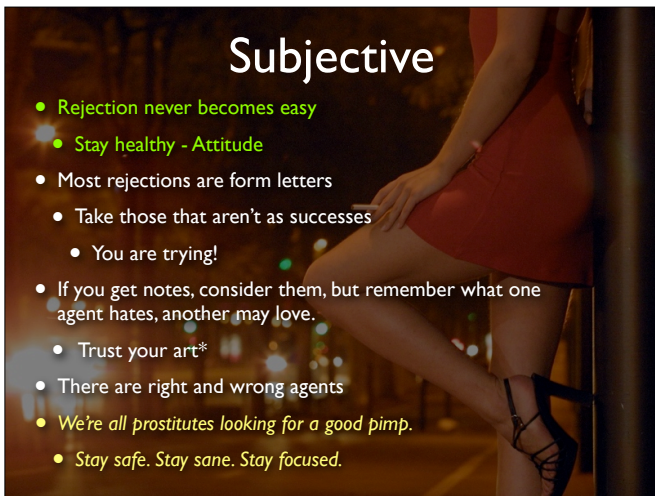
- If you get a no from an agent, feel free to query another agent in their agency
- If they didn't answer you and didn't tell you up front that silence is a "no" you may submit again.
 - Hopefully with improved letter
 - Things get lost.
- *Squeaky wheel gets the grease*



Request for Manuscript

- **Have the MS (manuscript) ready to go.**
- **Stay professional.**
- **Don't stop querying unless they ask for exclusivity, then accept only with acceptable deadlines and conditions.**
- **REMEMBER: This is only the next hurdle**
- **Stay prepared for rejection**
 - *If you get rejected after an RFM, it hurts. Badly.*

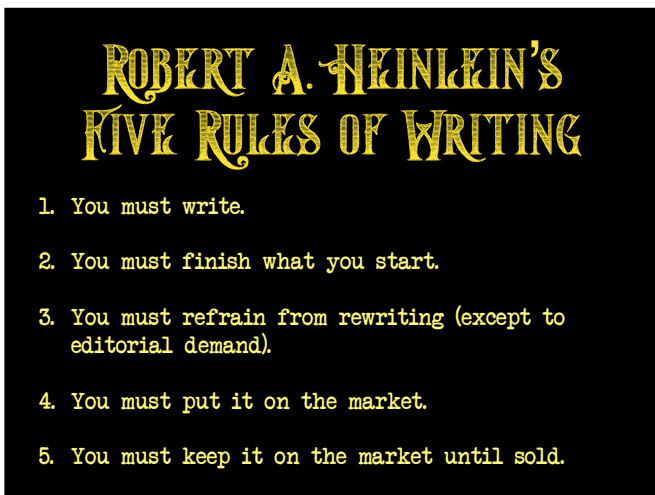
28



Subjective

- Rejection never becomes easy
- Stay healthy - Attitude
- Most rejections are form letters
 - Take those that aren't as successes
 - You are trying!
- If you get notes, consider them, but remember what one agent hates, another may love.
 - Trust your art*
- There are right and wrong agents
- *We're all prostitutes looking for a good pimp.*
- *Stay safe. Stay sane. Stay focused.*

29



ROBERT A. HEINLEIN'S FIVE RULES OF WRITING

1. You must write.
2. You must finish what you start.
3. You must refrain from rewriting (except to editorial demand).
4. You must put it on the market.
5. You must keep it on the market until sold.

30

What is Success?

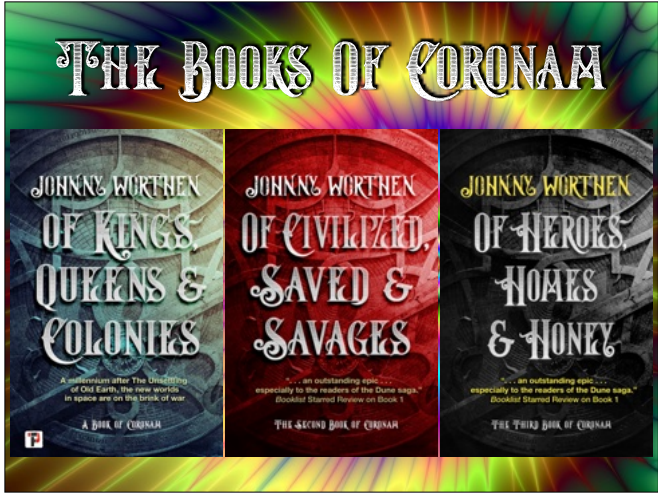
**YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO WORK,
BUT NEVER TO THE FRUITS OF THAT WORK**
— BHAGAVAD GITA

- Take your successes where you find them
- Writing and creating
- Sharing
- Trying and trying again

Good Luck!

Stay Connected

- Join my mailing list for a free book!
- On my web page
- www.johnnyworthen.com
- Do it.
- Do it now.
- See my Events Page



34



35
