

Writing and Self-Publishing Fiction Worksheet

This is the worksheet for April's seminar, which you can find in audio and transcript forms at: www.writershuddle.com/seminars/apr2014.

This month, Ellie di Julio and I had a wide-ranging discussion about writing and self-publishing fiction. I've pulled out some of the key points here, and have included useful links for further reading at the end.

Shifting Viewpoints in a Novel

Ellie's novel *The Transmigration of Cora Riley* uses first-person, then third person, then a different first-person narrator. This began as a bit of an experiment. Ellie's had some feedback from readers who dislike first-person narratives – which seems to be quite a common dislike.

On the other hand, first person has the advantage of making it easy to stick with one character's viewpoint (you can accidentally slip when using third person limited).

Deciding to Indie-Publish

Publishing your book yourself is quicker than seeking a traditional deal, and it allows you full control. Once you've indie-published, though, regular publishers are unlikely to look at your work unless you can show it's sold really well.

It's also good for writers who want to produce a trilogy or series, as (a) this is a good way to market your books and (b) publishers will usually only sign one book from you initially.

Advice for SF/F Writers

If you're writing science fiction or fantasy, read widely – and include older works too. Don't worry about being unduly influenced. There are only a

handful of basic plots, and there's nothing wrong with using an idea or taking inspiration from something you've read.

Promoting Novels

You need to try a lot of things and see what works for you. Ellie's experience of paid promotion wasn't great; it's better to stick with grassroots support. Don't forget about the offline world – e.g. doing talks, handing out business cards. People are more likely to buy your book if they have the sense they know you.

The New Legitimacy of Fanfiction

With Kindle Worlds (Amazon publishing fanfiction from selected authors, in selected worlds) and mainstream successes like *Fifty Shades of Grey*, fanfiction has gained a new legitimacy. We both agreed that, as authors, we'd find it a huge compliment rather than a threat if someone wrote fanfiction based on our novels.

Useful Links:

[Ellie Di Julio](#) (Ellie's website)

[Ellie's contact page](#) (with links to her social media profiles)

[Self-Publishing Podcast](#) (Jonny B. Truant, Sean Platt, David W. Wright)

[How I tripled my writing productivity](#) (blog post)

[Deconstruction: Lessons learned from paying for book promotion](#) (blog post)

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