

I. PUBLISHED AUTHOR SURVEY

LYN COTE

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I write contemporary romance, romantic suspense and historical romance. I've written for Love Inspired, Tyndale, Hachette, and Avon Inspire (HarperCollins).

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Amish is still strong.

Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? Sexual sin by Christians seems to be a no-no for most houses. I did write one seduction scene but that was in a Women's Fiction series for Hachette. Usually heroines can't sin sexually.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? Drop by my website <http://www.BooksbyLynCote.com> and click the How to Be Published Page. I list several good writing books. Gail Martin's How to Write a Christian Romance is excellent.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Read a lot of inspirational fiction. Find what you write best and want to write and focus on that. Attend conferences and network online through Faith, Hope & Love inspirational chapter of RWA and [ACFW.com](http://www.ACFW.com). For a list of inspirational publishers and what they are seeking, go to: <http://booksbylyncote.com/SWBS/christian-book-publishers>

5. Does a writer need an agent to submit to the house(s) you write for? If the answer is no, would you recommend that a writer have an agent anyway, or not? To submit to most trade houses, you need an agent.

<http://www.BooksbyLynCote.com>

2011 releases:

Daddy in the Making April Love Inspired

Building a Family Oct Love Inspired

LISA WINGATE

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

Bethany House -- Contemporary Romantic Suspense, Contemporary Women's Fiction

NAL Penguin Putnam -- Inspirational Fiction in the Praise division. Contemporary Women's fiction (although I have many male readers, this is where the books are usually marketed.)

2. Do you see strong/growing trends? in the inspirational market?? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

I am published in ABA and CBA. I increasingly see crossover in these two publishing sectors. I was one of the first ABA authors to write inspirational fiction and publishers were wondering where they would place my books in the catalogs and bookstores. Now, many publishers have inspirational fiction. I also see that CBA publishers are branching out into new areas of the market with mysteries and more contemporaries and more mainstream type novels.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

I think there is room for a variety and range of inspirational writers. For myself, I'm trying to appeal to readers who wouldn't necessarily pick up Christian Fiction as we traditionally think about it. I'm wanting readers who are looking for a great story, want clean language, don't want to finish a book feeling down and sad, and who might open their hearts to a kinder, gentler world. I keep the message organic to the story, meaning that my characters don't preach to each other, they lead by example and we see God doing a work in them through the story line. Many readers tell me that they like to pass my books along to someone they know who would respond to the inspiration message. I love hearing that. I wouldn't say, necessarily, that this is the way for all writers to go, but it's a niche that I'm committed to and I hear from fans who like this approach.

I enjoy hearing from fans and I think that readers of inspirational fiction particularly want to have contact with authors. I'd advise writers in the genre to develop a following by speaking to groups of all kinds including book clubs, using social media, having a good website, consider blogging, entering contests, joining writers organizations and informal critique groups, and responding to email and guestbook entries.

It is rewarding being a writer of inspirational works because you get messages of appreciation and are validated when readers say that the book help sooth a hurt or inspire them to make a change, or was the perfect thing to share with a sister or friend. Of course it's a dilemma -- shall I spend more time writing those books they ask for, or more time answering the emails that ask for more books?

5. Is it necessary to have an agent if one submits to the house(s) that you write for? If it isn't required, do you recommend that one have an agent anyway?

I think both publishers require an agent, but haven't actually looked that up any time recently. Penguin Putnam did when I first submitted about 12 years ago. I met a Bethany House editor through an author friend after I had been published for several years and I already had an agent. After corresponding several times, and when my schedule cleared up some, I decided to enter the CBA market.

New writers can easily look in the Writers Market to find out any publisher's requirement. Agent, paper manuscript or electronic, double spaced... all those issues should be examined before sending in a manuscript.

In my view, if you are submitting fiction, you need an agent to get it looked at. Even with an agent, first time authors may wait a long time for a response, so why not cut the time down if you can?

Of course, if you have a personal contact (friend of a friend type thing) who has agreed to look at your work, you could strike while the iron is hot and send the work without an agent. Another exception might be if you attended a conference and made a pitch to an editor there and were invited to send a manuscript, you could just go ahead without an agent at that point. If you are ever lucky enough to get an invite, be sure to mark the envelope or electronic submission as "solicited material" so it doesn't end up on the slush pile.

I think having an agent to negotiate contracts, field paperwork, and, in general help deal with issues has been very valuable and I wouldn't want to enter into a contract without one. If you are going to want an agent at that point, why not get one early on and have help in submitting a manuscript? That's my take, anyway!

Now, getting a agent is another issue. Here's my best advice on that. Look for books that are in the same genre as yours, have a similar tone, and might appeal to a similar fan base. Find out the agents who deal with those authors. Consider those agents. Ask author friends who are having success about their agent. Another hint is to attend conferences such as ACFW and go to agent sessions or make appointments with agents and check them out.

www.lisawingate.com (also on Facebook and Twitter)

My Youtube channel has inspirational videos and excerpts from some of my speeches.

Larkspur Cove, (Bethany House, February 2011)

Dandelion Summer (NAL Penguin Putnam, July 5, 2011)

Fiction That's Good for the Soul

Blogging at www.SouthernBelleView.com Join us on the porch!

JAMES L. RUBART

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I write for B&H Fiction. My stories don't fit neatly within a genre, but the closest description for ROOMS, BOOK OF DAYS, and THE CHAIR (Sept. '11) would probably be supernatural suspense

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Yes, because the books are getting better and better. The stories in CBA are getting better, the craft is getting better. Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? It depends on the publishing house. While one house won't touch a subject, another will.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? The First Five Pages, Writing Fiction for Dummies, Plot and Structure, Writing The Breakout Novel

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they

want to break into inspirational market? Same thing as breaking into any market. Study the craft, study the craft, study the craft. Approach it like you're training to be a brain surgeon. That's the level of commitment and serious study it will take.

5. Is it necessary to have an agent if one submits to the house(s) that you write for? If it isn't required, do you recommend that one have an agent anyway? My first agent and I parted ways last fall and I gave serious consideration to being my own agent. Having my own advertising agency I have been an agent for my clients for years so I know the business world really well. But in the end I realized I simply don't know enough about the publishing industry to do an excellent job as a literary agent. That's a long answer to a short question. Put more succinctly, yes! Authors should get an agent. Plus the reality is, most houses prefer working with agents and without one it's extremely difficult to get an audience with a publishing house for pre-published writers. The exception is if a writer meets an editor at a conference and is asked to submit their manuscript. Bottom line? Get an agent. The good ones earn their 15%.

ROOMS- RT Book Reviews Inspirational Book of the Year "Suspenseful ... compelling ..." Publishers Weekly
BOOK OF DAYS- "Rubart has created a page-turner" Publishers Weekly 4 1/2 stars from RT Book Reviews
<http://www.jimrubart.com/>

HANNAH ALEXANDER

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

I write historical romantic suspense for Summerside/Guideposts and romantic medical suspense and historical for Love Inspired Suspense and Love Inspired Historical

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? Romance is always strong, and I think I've seen every single topic explored in inspirational fiction.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? Anything by James Scott Bell, Randy Ingermanson...there are others but those are good ones.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Be a Christian. Read the type of book you want to write. Ask booksellers what they sell the best, but write what you're drawn to read.

www.hannahalexander.com

2011 releases: The Wedding Kiss
Silent Night, Deadly Night

JUDITH MILLER

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

I write for Bethany House Publishers, and I write historical

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

Right now historicals and Amish are popular, but generally the pendulum swings after several years. I don't think there are topics that can not be dealt with in the inspirational market, but I do believe there are certain ways one must address sensitive topics. For instance, while I wouldn't detail an actual rape scene in a book, I could address the occurrence and aftermath of such an incident.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

I recommend Plot & Structure by James Scott Bell, and Stein on Writing by Sol Stein

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

Get as much feedback as possible through a critique group and attend workshops and conferences to hone your skills. Once you're certain your manuscript is polished and the very best you can write, set up an appointment with an editor at one of the Christian writers' conferences and present a professional synopsis and one-sheet—and be prepared to give a compelling pitch.

5. Is it necessary to have an agent if one submits to the house(s) that you write for? No, it isn't a necessity with Bethany House.

www.judithmccoymiller.com

2011 releases: A Bond Never Broken and To Have and To Hold (co-authored with Tracie Peterson)

DEBORAH RANEY

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

Howard/Simon & Schuster (women's fiction, which they label suspense, believe it or not!) and Summerside Press (romance).

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

Trends seem to follow the ABA by a few years (ie. We're now seeing Christian vampire fiction since Twilight). As for topics, I don't think there's anything that can't be explored, as long as the conclusion is biblical or "inconclusive." Controversial topics that have been written about in CBA fiction include homosexuality, pornography, infidelity, child abuse, addictions of all kinds, etc.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

Anything by James Scott Bell, Jeff Gerke's Plot Versus Character, The Complete Idiot's Guide to Writing Christian Fiction (Ron Benrey), Gail Gaymer Martin's Writing the Christian Romance.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

If you are a Christian, it will be difficult not to add spiritual threads to your plot. If you are not a Christian, you may well be one by the time you do the research required to write a believable, organic-to-the-story Christian spiritual thread. ;)

5. Agents? I can only think of 1 or 2 houses that allow unagented submissions, unless the author submits by invitation from a conference, etc. Howard and Summerside Press both require submissions via an agent. If an author is able to get a contract offer without an agent, I recommend that the first thing they do before signing the contract, is obtain an agent! (And that will be an easy task once they have a contract in hand.) With so many CBA houses now being imprints of larger New York houses, a new author desperately needs the guidance of a good agent.

www.deborahraney.com

2011 releases: Forever After, a Hanover Falls novel from Howard/Simon & Schuster

DENISE HUNTER

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

Thomas Nelson, romance

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

Historical romance and Amish are currently experiencing strong sales. I think Christian readers are seeking settings and situations that include close-knit communities. As far as topics, I can't think of any that are forbidden. However, controversial topics are a harder sell for a newer novelist.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

4. 5. Is it necessary to have an agent if one submits to the house(s) that you write for? If it isn't required, do you recommend that one have an agent anyway?

Yes, an agent is necessary at Thomas Nelson, unless the story is pitched at a conference (such as the ACFW conference) and requested. Yes, I recommend an agent. Very few publishers accept unagented mss. and a good agent is more than just a foot in the door.

www.DeniseHunterBooks.com

2011 releases: "A Cowboy's Touch" (First novel in the Big Sky series)

JULIE LESSMAN

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I write historical romance for Baker Books, Revell Publishing Company
2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Yes, I see inspirational romance broadening its reach among young women with a more passionate approach to romance that is able to better address the temptations encountered in today's amoral society. Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? In Inspirational romance, although we can now write love scenes between married couples in the bedroom, any type of graphic depiction is not acceptable and rightfully so, such as French kissing, petting or the actual sexual act.
3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? I swear by Donald Maas's Writing the Breakout Novel, an excellent book that helps you up the stakes in your novel.
4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

Here's my 8-point list as to what I did:

- a. Join ACFW (American Christian Fiction Writers) and FHL (Faith, Hope & Love, RWA's Christian chapter);
- b. take a fiction-writing class/attend a writing seminar/conference;
- c. join a critique group;
- d. study writing books such as Self-Editing for Fiction Writers by Renni Browne and Dave King or Writing the Breakout Novel by Donald Maas;
- e. enter contests for invaluable feedback, growth, confidence, networking opportunities and to get your name out there;
- f. frequent websites/blogs that deal with writing, such as The Seekers, a group blog I belong to that promotes and educates writers on the road to publication;
- g. go for an agent first, publisher second;
- h. pray your heart out and put it in God's hands.

5. Does a writer need an agent to submit to the house(s) you write for? If the answer is no, would you recommend that a writer have an agent anyway, or not? Yes!

2011 releases: A Heart Revealed, September 2011
 "Passion with a Purpose" Daughters of Boston Series
 A Passion Most Pure — ACFW Debut Book of the Year / Holt Medallion Award of Merit
 A Passion Redeemed — Inspirational Reader's Choice Finalist
 A Passion Denied — Borders Best of 2009 So Far: Your Favorite Fiction
 Winds of Change Series
 A Hope Undaunted — Booklist's Top 10 Inspirational Fiction 2010
www.julielessman.com and <http://seekerville.blogspot.com/>

MARY CONNEALY

1. What house do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? Bethany House Publishing-Historical romance
2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? Historical romance is really hot right now. When I sold my first one I was told it was almost a dead genre. So any trend is probably temporary.
3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? I recommend aspiring writers...well all writers...hang around my group blog Seekerville. <http://www.seekerville.net/> we have nearly four years of blog posts on writing skills.
4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Read Inspirational fiction to get an idea of what the publishers are looking for and take all the pictures of shirtless men off your current website.
5. Agents: It is required that you have an agent to submit to my publisher unless they find you through a writing contest or meet you at a conference. And whether a publisher requires one or not, I recommend an aspiring author have one. I also recommend an aspiring author have unlimited free time, a hide like a rhino to survive the rejections and a million dollars in the bank.

Romantic Comedy with Cowboys

<http://www.maryconnealy.com/>; <http://mconnealy.blogspot.com/>
<http://seekerville.blogspot.com/>;
<http://www.petticoatsandpistols.com/>

Sharpshooter in Petticoats; Lassoed in Texas Trilogy; Deep Trouble

VICKIE MCDONOUGH

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I've written for Barbour Publishing, and am working on a book for Moody Publishers, and next year I will have a series out published by Guideposts Books. Of the 28 books and novellas that I've sold, all but two of them have been historical romance.
2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Amish is still going strong, and historicals are holding their own. Contemporaries are always popular among readers, but mysteries and chick lit are not doing well. Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? I don't think so. That used to be the case, but publishers are printing more edgy topics and stories to reach more readers.
3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? I have many books on writing, but have only read a few of them all the way through. I don't learn well from books and prefer learning in a

classroom setting, which is why I try to attend several conferences each year. Two of the books I've used the most are not specifically geared toward the Christian market but are excellent books. Goals, Motivation, and Conflict by Debra Dixon is a fabulous book for a beginning writer. She teaches about the importance of your characters having a goal, a strong motivation for wanting that goal, and conflicts that keep the character from reaching the goal. Another great one for developing characters is Heroes and Heroines, Sixteen Master Archetypes. James Scott Bell has some excellent books on writing, too. There are many others but these are the ones I'm most familiar with.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Read tons of books in the genre you want to write. Join a writer's group like ACFW or a local one, where you can improve your craft and make friends who can encourage you in the hard times. And write, and write, and write. Always strive to improve your craft and educate yourself about the inspirational market.

5. Agents: Barbour Publishing has traditionally been one of the few Christian publishers that would accept manuscripts from unagented writers. Love Inspired is another one. Unfortunately, most publishers do require you to have an agent before submitting. One way to get around this is to attend a conference that has editor appointments, such as the ACFW conference. If the editor requests to see your full manuscript, then you can send it to them even though you don't have an agent.

Awarding-winning author of the Texas Boardinghouse Brides series
www.vickiemcdonough.com

DIANA LESIRE BRANDMEYER

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? Barbour-- contemporary and historical and Concordia Publishing House--nonfiction

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? What I have found important is to identify your learning style. I could never understand the Hero's Journey while others like Camy Tang connected right away. For me My Book Therapy-Susan Warren and Rachel Hauck and Deep and Wide by Susan Warren opened the whole world of writing last year.-- and I was already published. Now I've picked up Scene Engineering by Larry Brooks and finding it a great companion to the other books.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? NETWORK with other writers. Do not sit in your cave and write thinking you don't need anyone to get published. When people know you they think about you when projects become available.

5. Agents: I don't think you need one for Heartsong Presents. I'm not really sure. I'm glad I have an agent, Tamela Hancock Murray at Hartline Agency. She's been a huge help in navigating the contracts and is knowledgeable about things I wouldn't have considered. I didn't know while I may not be able to get a bigger advance the publisher might be willing to offer more free advance copies or bookmarks. She's also been able to tell me about publishing opportunities I didn't know were out there.

Having an agent is great, but don't let it stop you from submitting if you don't have one. If you're offered a contract you can get an agent.

www.dianabrandmeyer.com blog www.pencildancer.com
2011 releases: We're Not Blended, We're Pureed: A Survivor's Guide and Wyoming Weddings (Barbour 3-in-1)

SANDRA ROBBINS

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

Love Inspired Suspense—Romantic Suspense
Barbour Publishing—Historical Romance

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? A few years ago nobody was buying historical romance. Now it is one of the most popular genres..Different publishing houses have different expectations, but it is still difficult to deal with premarital sex in CBA.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? For writers of mystery and suspense, I recommend Lee Lofland's Police Procedure and Investigation. I also like Stephen King's On Writing and The Moral Premise by Stanley Williams.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Go to conferences where you will meet and hear inspirational authors, editors and agents. Join a critique group of inspirational writers and read books by inspirational writers in the genre you write.

Sandra Robbins
<http://sandrarobbins.net>

2011 releases:
Blues Along the River, June 2011—Barbour Publishing
Dangerous Reunion, July 2011—Love Inspired Suspense
Alabama Brides, October 2011—Barbour Publishing

LENA NELSON DOOLEY

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

My latest book release was Love Finds You in Golden, New Mexico, with Summerside Press. Right now I'm two three-book

contracts with Charisma House/Realms (formerly Strang) for two different historical romantic series.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? The market for inspirational fiction has been growing at a rapid rate for the last 15 years or so. During the current economic climate, publishing houses are being more careful about what they buy, but fiction titles are being picked up every month. As to the topics, I believe this changes across the lines. Some publishers have certain topics they won't touch, but then someone else will be looking for something like that. So I say, write the book of your heart.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? Getting Into Character by Brandilyn Collins, Plot and Structure by James Scott Bell. I got really bogged down trying to read the Donald Maas book that everyone raved about.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? First, center in on the Lord. Then, connect with other authors at meetings, conferences, in critique groups, but don't forget to stay centered in the Lord. He'll never lead you astray.

5. Is it necessary to have an agent if one submits to the house(s) that you write for? If it isn't required, do you recommend that one have an agent anyway? More and more houses are buying through agents. I do believe that Charisma House, and maybe Summerside, will accept unagented submissions, but I highly recommend an agent to help you navigate through the intricacies of publishing. My agent did obtain the deals both with Summerside and Charisma House, and I value her as an important member of my team.

<http://lenanelsondooley.blogspot.com>

Maggie's Journey, book one of my McKenna's Daughters series

JUDY DUARTE

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

I write inspirational women's fiction for Kensington.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

The inspirational market is growing, and I believe that's because people are looking for wholesome, faith-based reads. The various publishers have some strict guidelines to follow, but I do think edgier more realistic reads are becoming more common--although not in terms of being graphic.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

My favorite craft books are: *GMC: Goal, Motivation, and Conflict* by Debra Dixon and *How to Write a Damn Good Novel* by James N. Frey. I recently attended an all-day workshop by Dr. Stanley D. Williams. His book, *The Moral Premise*, has now moved into my top three.

4. Is an agent required for the house(s) you write for? If not, do you recommend one anyway?

I'm not sure if an agent is required to sell to Kensington, although it's probably recommended. I think having a *good* agent is very important in this business. But I also believe the old writers' adage: No agent is better than a bad agent. So do your homework. Read agent blogs, sit in on agent panels, and keep your ears open for information that will help you choose the best person to help you sell your work.

5. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

Read the inspirational novels out there. Study the market, as well as the craft of writing fiction. As a side note, you'll probably find that breaking into any market will require a lot of work, but God doesn't put a dream in someone's heart without also giving them the power to make that dream come true.

www.JudyDuarte.com

Christmas on Nutcracker Court Kensington Trade, 10/2011
Entertaining Angels, Mass market reissue Kensington, 1/2011

LENORA WORTH

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? Love Inspired, romance, romantic suspense.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? I think the Christian market is allowing for more edgy, grittier books now. When I started close to fifteen years ago, we had to tread lightly. Now things have softened a bit. Of course, still no heavy love scenes although I just read one where the hero and heroine slept together but it caused major consequences for both. But I do believe tough realistic trends are allowed more these days.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? Anything by James Scott Bell, the old standard "Christian Writers Market" by Sally Stuart.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Read as many Christian fiction books as you can. Read across the board--romance, romantic suspense, historicals, thrillers--anything by both men and women. You'll learn a lot by just reading different books.

And attend conference geared toward inspirational fiction. That will help a lot.

5. Is it necessary to have an agent if one submits to the house(s) that you write for? If it isn't required, do you recommend that one have an agent anyway? It is not necessary to have an agent for Love Inspired. I have an agent, but you don't necessarily have to have one. It's just better for negotiations at times.

www.lenoraworth.com

2011 releases:

Body of Evidence

Hometown Princess

The Doctor's Family

Superromances: Because of Jane & A Southern Reunion

CARRIE TURANSKY

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I write for Love Inspired and Barbour Publishing, contemporary and historical inspirational romance, novels and novellas.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? The continued growth of Amish and historical romance.

Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? You can deal with most any topic as long as it's done tastefully and has a point being included in the story.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? Self-Editing for the Fiction Writer by Browne and King, Plot and Structure by James Bell, The Snowflake Pro computer program by Randy Ingermanson, The Break Out Novel by Donald Mass, A Novel Idea, by multiple authors, Writing the Christian Romance by Gail Martin, Books by Susan May Warren.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? My best advice would be to join American Christian Fiction Writers and take advantage of their online classes, critique groups, and conference. Attending their annual conference is very worthwhile so that you can learn about the CBA market and meet the agents and editors represented there.

5. Barbour now requires an agent. I am not sure about Love Inspired. I think you can still send a query there even without an agent. But it is tough to get in the door anywhere without an agent. But meeting an editor at a conference is another way to connect and make a positive impression even without an agent.

Carrie Turansky

www.carrieturansky.com

SURRENDERED HEARTS, E-Book 4/11

A MAN TO TRUST, Love Inspired 3/12

SEEKING HIS LOVE, Love Inspired 10/10

CAMY TANG

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I write humorous contemporary romance and humorous romantic suspense for Zondervan (owned by HarperCollins). I write romantic suspense for Love Inspired (Harlequin). I also write cozy mysteries for Guideposts.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? I see people turning more and more to inspirational fiction especially during this recession. People want an escape that makes them feel good, and inspirational fiction does that. Plus a book is more hours of enjoyment than a movie, for the same price or cheaper.

I've seen almost every topic covered in inspirational fiction, which is fantastic. Not all Christians want to read about hard topics, but those who do will find these topics addressed in inspirational fiction. Those who say they haven't seen it just haven't known where to look. A good place is FictionFinder.com, where you can search for Christian fiction by topic and issue.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? The two books I go to over and over again are:

1) Techniques of the Selling Writer by Dwight Swain--This book taught me the fundamentals of solid commercial writing. If you're more into literary fiction, this book will seem formulaic, but his principles are spot on for creating a strong emotional tie to your reader that doesn't let them go. If Swain is hard for you to read, you can also get almost the same information from Jack Bickham's Scene and Structure.

2) 45 Master Characters by Victoria Lynn Schmidt--Since I'm a psychology major, I like it when writing books address how to create psychologically cohesive characters. This book is great because it plugs into how we're wired psychologically and how we relate to characters because of that, but she also emphasizes that you use archetypes as a jumping off point and want to turn archetypes on their heads to create a truly unique yet relatable character for your novel.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Read the publisher(s) and line(s) you're targeting. People assume all inspirational fiction is alike and all publishers have the same audience, and they don't. Each house's sales and marketing team focuses on a certain reader demographic and their books reflect that focus. The Love Inspired reader demographic is different from the Zondervan reader demographic, although there is some overlap, and so my books for each house are slightly different. There is no way you can know what a house's reader demographic is unless you read the books from that house and see the trends in the stories, writing style, atmosphere, and level of conservativeness.

5. Is it necessary to have an agent if one submits to the house(s) that you write for? If it isn't required, do you recommend that one have an agent anyway?

It is not necessary to have an agent for Love Inspired, but you do need an agent for Zondervan or Guideposts, unless you pitch to an editor from those houses at a conference. However, it was best for me to get an agent because my agent does the things I don't want to have to deal with, plus she gives me valuable career advice. It depends on what you want to do as a writer. If you like having the control over your contract negotiations, then you can simply pitch to editors at conferences to get your work in front of them. But if you want to be able to target houses that don't go to conferences or if you don't want to have to deal with all that business-related stuff, then go about trying to find an agent.

<http://www.camytang.com/>

Protection for Hire, Zondervan November 2011

GINA WELBORN

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

Barbour, January 2012, historical romance

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? Regency, Biblical-Era, and Colonial are, from what I can tell, the strongest growing sub-genres. Topic that can't be dealt with? Politics. LOL. :-) The inspy market is so much more open to all sorts of topics, but as with anything, what matters is the telling. What's important is for the author to study the market and what specific publishers are publishing. Of course, there are some sub-genres that will be harder to sell, such as medieval, sci-fiction, paranormal, chick-lit, cozy mysteries.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? What matters more is the author finding a book she connects with. If the first one doesn't, then try another. Keep trying! Don't assume because one book bored you or didn't make sense or stressed you out, then all writing books will. And what book didn't resonate one year may resonate a year or three down the road.

Who the book is marketed to (say, the inspy writer) matters far less than does this book teach craft. The best writing books I've read have not been written by or target to Christian writers.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Join writing groups and frequent writing blogs to get to know fellow writers, especially published ones, and learn from them. I'm a member of a small group of Christian authors who write European-set fiction. We aren't just fellow writers. We're family. You want to break in? Find a family to connect with. Just know that it will take time to develop relationships. Oh, and try not to be a Cousin Eddie.

5. Is it necessary to have an agent if one submits to the house(s) that you write for? If it isn't required, do you recommend that one have an agent anyway?

Unless you are submitting to Love Inspired or a small press, then hooking an agent is a wise idea. Many CBA publishers won't even look at a manuscript unless you have an agent . . . or find a shortcut through the contest route. Another benefit is an agent knows best where to submit your manuscript, can offer editing suggestions, and has opportunities with other authors to hook you up in joint projects such as anthologies. You *might* think your work is ready for an editor. A reputable agent *knows* when it's ready.

RWA-FHL Touched by Love co-coordinator

be light. be love. believe.

www.ginawelborn.blogspot.com

www.inkwellinspirations.blogspot.com

HIGHLAND CROSSINGS ~ January 2012 ~ Barbour Publishing

RAQUEL BYRNES

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I write romantic suspense for White Rose Publishing. They purchased my 3-book series. Book 1 in the Shades of Hope series, Purple Knot, comes out later this year.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market?? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? I see a lot growth in all the genres, specifically romance. I don't think a topic is taboo, but must be dealt with sensitively and without causing others to stumble.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? Writing the Breakout Novel by Donald Maass is my favorite followed by Hooked by Les Edgerton.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Hone your craft. All the conferences and queries in the world won't get you anywhere unless you work at it.

[:http://nitewriter6.blogspot.com/](http://nitewriter6.blogspot.com/)

2011 releases: [Purple Knot](#), [Ruby Dawn](#) [Bayou Blue](#)

LINDA GOODNIGHT

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

I currently write for Love Inspired contemporary but I'm also published in historical with other houses.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

Inspirational fiction is growing like crazy and there are so many wonderful opportunities for many different voices and plots. If

there is a trend toward in any one type, I'm unaware, though Amish and big historical romances continue to be popular.

The only topic I have not seen is the delicate and controversial subject of homosexuality in a Christian. That would probably be dicey to write and get published no matter how it's handled.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

I studied the works of Vogler and Jack Bickham more than any other books. Other good sources are Deb Dixon's Goal, Motivation, and Conflict and Vanessa Grant's Writing a Romance. I've never studied any inspy specific sources.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

Beyond the all-essential prayer for God's direction, remember that breaking into any writing market takes discipline, persistence and a willingness to learn and grow and take constructive criticism. Most of us don't make it overnight.

Linda Goodnight

www.lindagoodnight.com

2011 releases:

A PLACE TO BELONG

THE NANNY'S HOMECOMING

THE CHRISTMAS CHILD

RITA Award winning author

STEPHANIE GRACE WHITSON

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

I write historical fiction for Bethany House and Barbour.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

I think any topic can be dealt with, but the way it is dealt with in inspirational fiction will include consequences for sin and will usually involve a "light hand" that isn't graphic when it comes to how a problem is described. We should also remember that "issue-driven" fiction is not generally what our readers are seeking when they come to our stories.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

I recommend Self-Editing for Fiction Writers by Browne & King for new writers, especially those who wonder why they aren't getting accepted by agents.

I personally return to the old standard Stein on Writing by Sol Stein repeatedly.

I also recommend James Scott Bell's Plot and Structure and Revision and Self-Editing as well as Fiction Writing for Dummies by Randall Ingermanson and The Idiot's Guide to Writing Christian Fiction by Ron Benrey.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

Pray. Never give up. Get an agent. Keep writing. Pray. Get an agent. Never give up. Keep writing. Repeat as long as it takes.

www.stephaniewhitson.com

www.footnotesfromhistory.blogspot.com

SANDRA ORCHARD

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? Love Inspired Suspense

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Yes, historical romance is exploding. Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? With some publishers, but it seems that more and more publishers are popping up who are willing to tackle issues or edgy writing that would've been completely avoided even five years ago.

My publisher/editor has definite ideas of what LIS readers expect and will tolerate, and as a new author, although I've tried to push the boundaries, I've been yanked back. They don't want to create too much controversy. And definitely no yucky images. Their readers want to enjoy an exciting, emotionally satisfying read, and LI doesn't want to get in trouble with any segment of the CBA—hence, no drinking, dancing, etc. in Christian hero and heroine.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? Sol Stein on Writing. Self-Editing for Fiction Writers, Inside Out & Deep and Wide by Susan May Warren, Writing the Breakout Novel Workbook by Donald Maass. Scene & Structure by Jack Bickham, On Writing Romance by Michaels, Writing Christian Romance by Gail Martin,

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? #1, Read NEW releases (ideally by new authors) in the genre you're targeting. The market expectations have changed a lot in the past decade and a half. Some of your favorite authors head hopped like crazy back in the 80s and 90s, for example, and because they have a following, may still do that. A new writer is not going to be able to get away with it. #2 Join ACFW ☺

Your name: Sandra Orchard

Website: www.SandraOrchard.com

2011 releases: Deep Cover (September LIS)

KATHLEEN Y'BARBO

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I am published in historical romance, contemporary romance, and nonfiction. I currently write historical romance for Waterbrook and contemporary romance for Love Inspired. In the past, I've also written for Barbour. In all, I have 40 published novels with 3 more contracted to release in 2012.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? Because God deals with all our "junk" I don't see a topic that cannot be addressed. The key is how the topic is addressed. There will never be a place in the inspirational market where sin can be glorified but books that call it what it is and show the consequences are going to sell. Some things may have to happen "off stage" so as not to leave images in the readers' minds but there's a fine line there. Ultimately editors are going to publish what the market wants.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? For plot, I like Save the Cat (Blake Snyder). James Scott Bell and Brandilyn Collins have

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Get your marching orders from God first! Pray. Seek His guidance on what message He's sending you out with. Then, write the book! All the way to the end, not just the first few chapters! So many get caught up in the planning or the editing or whatever that they don't finish the book.

Kathleen Turner
Writing as Kathleen Y'Barbo
www.kathleenybarbo.com
<http://twitter.com/KathleenYBarbo>

IN STORES NOW:

The Confidential Life of Eugenia Cooper -recipient of 4.5 Stars from Romantic Times Magazine!-2010 RITA FINALIST! 2010 ACFW CAROL FINALIST!

Anna Finch and the Hired Gun - June 2010-recipient of 4 Stars from Romantic Times Magazine!

COMING SOON: The Inconvenient Marriage of Charlotte Beck -- June 2011

LOIS RICHER

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I write for Love Inspired, Tyndale and Barbour. I'm published in contemporary and also romantic suspense.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? James Scott Bell has a fantastic book on plot that I love.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Research the market, read as much as you can and see if you can identify your niche. Go to conferences and pay attention to not only the speakers but also what people are talking about outside the sessions. If you get an opportunity, talk to an editor or sit in on an editorial session. Learn, learn, learn. Don't expect things to happen overnight--although they might! But be prepared if they don't. Hang onto your job. Go to part time if you must, but make sure you have an income that will take care of your needs--at least until you're established as a writer. This takes a lot of the pressure off and though you have to carve out time to write, it teaches you discipline. Most of all write. Write! That's the way to gain the best experience and there is no substitute for it.

Lois Richer

www.loisricher.com

Love For All Seasons series from Love Inspired

THE HOLIDAY NANNY - Dec. '10

A BABY BY EASTER - Aprl '11

A FAMILY FOR SUMMER - July '11

VICTORIA BYLIN

What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

I've written 7 books for Steeple Hill Love Inspired Historicals. All seven stories are westerns.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

A few years ago Americana and western-set books practically disappeared from the mainstream shelves. They found a home in Inspirational and that trend is going strong. I've also seen a trend toward stories with a lighter spiritual message. I'm guessing that mainstream readers who wanted a sweeter story gravitated to the inspirational market. While they want the romance, they're less interested in the spiritual journey.

Re: controversial topics : My reading suggests that there are no taboo subjects in the inspirational market, but there are taboo ways of telling the story. New authors are wise to study publisher guidelines read current books to gauge each publisher's preferences. What works for one publisher won't necessarily work at another.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

I'm a huge fan of Jack Bickham's "38 Most Common Fiction Writing Mistakes." Excellent for beginners! Donald Maass is wonderful. And early on, I found Ann Lamott's "Bird by Bird" very inspiring.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

Write big. Don't limit God. Study the craft. Take chances. Write because you believe in your story, not because you want to get published. Every book has one reader: the author. I wrote a book that never sold. It was a valuable experience. Sold or not, the story served a purpose in my life and the lives of others. So go for it! Write because you love it and because your faith honors God.

5. Does a writer need an agent to submit to the house(s) you write for? If the answer is no, would you recommend that a writer have an agent anyway, or not? Harlequin Love Inspired doesn't require an agent. I have representation and I'm glad I do. My agent does more than make sales. She offers career advice and insight into the overall market.

Victoria Bylin

www.victoriabylin.com

The Outlaw's Return, LIH, Feb 2011 & Marrying The Major, LIH, Oct 2011

LINDA FORD

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I write for Harlequin Love Inspired Historicals and Barbour Heartsong Presents in historical romance.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? I see the inspiration market gaining ground. I think forbidden topics depend on the publisher. Each has likes and dislikes.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? There are so many excellent resource books I can't recommend any particular one but suggest an aspiring author read as many as possible and take as many on-line courses as she/he can handle.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Read widely. Write, write, write. Do not try and catch the latest trend, instead, write what suits your voice and you find that out by writing.

www.lindaford.org

2011 releases: Dakota Father (Jan. 2011), Prairie Cowboy (Mar.), Klondike Medicine Woman (May), Season of Bounty, novella in Thanksgiving collection--Once Upon a Thanksgiving (Oct.)

ADINA SENFT

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

I write for Hachette FaithWords and really enjoy working with them. Their art department is amazing and they always pay on time © I did a six-book YA series from 2008-2010 with them (the All About Us series) and am now writing a trilogy of Amish women's fiction for them that centers around three women

making a quilt together. Instructions for readers to make the quilt at home are included in the back!

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

The biggies right now are Amish fiction and historicals, but spec fic is slowly but surely gaining a hold, I think. Young adult fiction is a very underserved market dominated by only three or four names. Christian teens need lots of choice here, so they don't have to be inundated by the Twilights of the world. I don't think there's any topic that a Christian writer can't deal with--because the Spirit deals with every aspect of human nature. There are things we need to exercise care with, of course, like swearing, sex, and violence--but those aren't topics. They're window dressing. You can get as honest and gritty as you need to in your stories and know that somewhere out there, it may touch a reader's heart.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

James Scott Bell's PLOT AND STRUCTURE is really good. And John Truby's ANATOMY OF STORY changed my whole writing process. I always thought I was plot impaired, but this book cured me. I wrote my last novel with his principles in mind and it really made a difference.

5. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Keep it real. Write with honesty, passion, and good craft, and you'll succeed.

Shelley Bates writing as Adina Senft

<http://www.adinasenft.com>

2011 releases:

The Wounded Heart, September 2011

The Hidden Life, June 2012

The Tempted Soul, Spring 2013

LOUISE M. GOUGE

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I'm currently writing for Harlequin's Love Inspired Historical line.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? I think any topic can be dealt with if done with care. Christians are not all the same, and not all CBA publishers have the same guidelines. I think each writer should write his/her dream story, then trust the Lord to see it to publication.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? I like Writing for Dummies by Randy Ingermanson.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? First, be sure your faith

is authentic. Next, submit your dreams and desires to the Lord. Let Him direct your path. He'll show you what contests to enter, what agents to query, and what publishers to approach. Then He'll open the "right" door in His perfect time. It's not a I to say He may be teaching you patience. Decide whether you want to be published at all costs or live God's will for your life. Don't look around at what everyone else is doing. Keep your eyes on Him.

5. Does a writer need an agent to submit to the house(s) you write for? If the answer is no, would you recommend that a writer have an agent anyway, or not?

No, an agent isn't necessary to write for Harlequin. If you plan to write for another house, you'll probably need an agent.

<http://blog.Louisemgouge.com>

2011 releases:

At the Captain's Command, Love Inspired Historical, April 2011 - RT 4-Star Review

The Gentleman Takes a Bride, in The Wedding Season, LIH, June 2011 - RT 4-Star Review

The Captain's Lady, Love Inspired Historical, March 2010 - RT 4-Star Review

MISSY TIPPENS

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

Love Inspired, Contemporary romance

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

The writing books I recommend are useful across all genres and are for inspirational and secular.

--Goal, Motivation & Conflict, Debra Dixon

--The Story Within Guidebook, Alicia Rasley

--The Hero's 2 Journeys, Michael Hauge and Chris Vogler (DVD's)

--Prescription for Plotting, Carolyn Greene

--The Moral Premise: Harnessing Virtue and Vice for Box Office Success, Stanley D. Williams

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

Read the books! Read widely in all the genres to find where you think your writing would fit. Find out which publishers are doing the type books you'd love to write. Then go for it! :)

www.missytippens.com

A Family for Faith, April 2011 from Love Inspired

A House Full of Hope, Feb. 2012

A Forever Christmas, Finalist--Gayle Wilson Award of Excellence

His Forever Love, Finalist--Booksellers' Best Award

JANE MYERS PERRINE

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I've been published in both historical and contemporary with Love Inspired. Presently, I'm writing contemporary for FaithWords.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

I'm not sure there are topics which can't be addressed. Even incest in the past has been written about as well as reformed prostitutes and alcoholism and how they have influenced the lives of the characters. However, a main character who participates in any of these at the present time wouldn't fly.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? I don't use writing books but learn through reading the work of others.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? An inspirational novel is not a secular novel with the addition of the heroine's singing in the choir. The faith element cannot be an add-on.

The change in the main characters due to faith is a major thread in an inspirational novel, woven through the entire novel.

5. Agents? Yes, an agent is required for FaithWords. But even at LI, I had an agent who both took care of the financial end so I didn't have to but also worked as a buffer between me and an editor. My agents have been able to ask questions I would have felt uncomfortable with and to translate "editor speak".

Tales from Butternut Creek from FaithWords/Center Street Hachette Book Group

The Welcome Committee of Butternut Creek April, 2012

The Matchmakers of Butternut Creek Fall, 2012

The Wedding Planners of Butternut Creek 2013

janemyersperrine.com

CATHY RICHMOND

1. Thomas Nelson, historical romance.

2. As someone said about Julie Lessman's books, this is not your mother's inspirational romance. The writing has improved, the preaching is gone, and difficult topics are handled with skill.

3. I recommend Alicia Rasley's books, articles, and workbooks (rasley.com). They are not directed specifically toward the inspirational market, but their advice is excellent.

4. Read the inspirational market. The award winners, the Christy's, and the Carol's, and the inspirational category of the Ritas, are great places to start.

CatherineRichmond.com

2011 releases: Spring for Susannah, coming in June

TERRI REED

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I write only for Love Inspired, mostly the suspense line with an occasional romance.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? I don't follow trends-so don't know. Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? I don't think there are taboo topics if handled correctly. Inspirational readers tend to not want the graphic details opting rather for the emotional and spiritual impact.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? My favorite-must-have writing books are Dwight Swains' Techniques of the Selling Writer, Chris Voglers' The Writer's Journey, Jack Bickem's Scene and Sequel, Blake Snyder's Save the Cat, and Michael Hauge's Writing Screenplays that Sell. These books aren't geared specifically toward the inspirational genre, but the basic of telling a story is universal.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? READ, READ and READ from all the different publishing houses. Study novels that speak to you. Make sure your own faith is real and personal because if it isn't it will come across in the pages.

2011 releases: The Innocent Witness-on sale 7/11
www.loveinspiredauthors.com
<http://ladiesofsuspense.blogspot.com/>
<http://craftieladiesofromance.blogspot.com/>

LACY WILLIAMS

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

Love Inspired-my first novel will be published with Love Inspired Historical in August.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? I think most of the houses are moving further into realistic storylines. I think readers have cried out for stories that are true to life--and Christians deal with all kinds of situations, from drugs to depression to being betrayed by someone you love. I think publishers are listening and are more willing to allow realistic storylines. Not that they're 100% there yet, but from what I've been reading we're getting there.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? I have been reading The Art and Craft of Writing Christian Fiction by Jeff Gerke lately, and it is great. My all time favorite is Donald Maass's The Breakout Novel Workbook. You just can't beat the exercises in it to really bring your story to life.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

Don't ever give up. Grab on to the pieces of encouragement you'll receive--even from a trusted critique partner or a contest judge--and hold onto those. I still have a book signed by Margaret Daley where she signed it "I know you'll be published one day". I looked at it a lot, especially when I was discouraged--because I needed someone to believe in me. Find that person or persons and believe what they're telling you.

5. Is it necessary to have an agent if one submits to the house(s) that you write for? If it isn't required, do you recommend that one have an agent anyway? Love Inspired accepted unagented submissions--I signed with my agent at the same time I signed my contract with LIH, because I wanted the "protection" of having someone who would go to bat for me if there is anything that comes up. I think the Love Inspired contracts are pretty much boilerplate, so it's not necessary, for me it was just a matter of what I felt comfortable with.

<http://www.lacywilliams.net>

2011 releases: Marrying Miss Marshal (August 2011) from LIH

SHANNON TAYLOR VANNATTER

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? Barbour/Heartsong Presents Contemporary Romance

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? Historical romance and Amish seems to rule right now, but contemporaries are always popular. It depends on the publisher. Some publishers are willing to explore deeper, darker topics.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer? If you can only afford one book: Techniques of the Selling Writer by Dwight V. Swain. For inspirational romance: Writing the Christian Romance by Gail Gaymer Martin.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

Join ACFW and attend their conferences. I attended local writers' meetings and conferences for four years before ACFW got me to a publishable level in the inspirational market.

shannonvannatter.com

2011 releases: White Pearls – Jan 2011

Rodeo Dust – Oct 2011

DIANE BURKE

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

I write for Love Inspired Romantic Suspense Books.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

I think the inspirational market is growing in leaps and bounds and will continue to do so. People are looking for entertaining fiction filled with emotion written about characters with a christian world view.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

I think every author needs to read Goal, Motivation, Conflict by Debra Dixon from Gryphon Books. There are many other really good ones out there but escape my memory at the moment. Other than that, the best teachers in my humble opinion are other authors books. Read, read, read and then read some more. Analyze the books. Why does one hold a special place on your keeper shelf and another you'd like to throw at a wall. How do the stories pull you into the lives of the characters? Make you care---or not care.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

First decide whether you want to write single titles or category fiction. Once you have made that decision then read, read, read everything published in the last six months that would fit that bill. And, most of all, understand the writer's guidelines for the publisher you are targeting.

5. Does a writer need an agent to submit to the house(s) you write for? If the answer is no, would you recommend that a writer have an agent anyway, or not?

I think an agent is essential if you wish to write single title, mainstream fiction. I haven't seen the value yet of having an agent for category books.

Diane Burke

Website: None yet but present on Facebook, Twitter and blogspot.

Blog: dianeburke.blogspot.com:

Double Identity, March 2011

Midnight Caller, March 2010

Love Inspired Romantic Suspense

ANNE K. ALBERT

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

I write a romantic suspense series for Vanilla Heart Publishing. I also write a mystery series as well.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market?

I think the inspirational market is growing, mainly because some readers prefer a sweeter, less graphic read. I've had a number of readers who until picking up my book had not considered the genre, thank me for not including sex scenes! It was such a relief, they said, not to have to skip over those pages. When I explain

that all of my books are 'sweet' they tell me they'll definitely read my next book.

Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

I am sure there are certain topics some readers in every genre would rather not deal with. For me I focus on what I feel comfortable writing. That's my primary goal. I want to provide a sweet, entertaining read. I'll leave the 'heavier' topics to other, more experienced (and perhaps gutsier) authors.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

'Techniques of the Selling Writer' by Dwight V. Swain should be on every author's home bookshelf regardless of genre. 'Writing the Christian Romance' by Gail Gaymer Martin is a must have for anyone interested in the inspirational market. 'On Writing' by Stephen King is a fun read. It's also the only Stephen King book I've read!

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

Read and re-read the guidelines. Offer exactly what is requested. If an editor asks for a 55K manuscript, don't submit one with 75K words. If she wants the manuscript in 12 pt Times New Roman, but you like Georgia 16pt better, remember this is not about you! It's about the editor. These are her likes and dislikes. Give her what she wants. Ignoring the guidelines is a huge waste of time-yours and hers.

Think of it this way. If you love milk chocolate and you shout it to the world that you love milk chocolate, and then someone gives you jelly beans and you hate jelly beans, you're disappointed, right? So too will the editor! She wanted 55k and you tossed 75K her way. Without even realizing it, she's not happy about your submission, and this is before she even reads a single word of your manuscript! Don't give anyone, (agent, editor or reader) an excuse to reject your work. Show that you can deliver the goods.

Most importantly, of course, is to finish the manuscript before you query. Then, start writing the next book.

5. Does a writer need an agent to submit to the house(s) you write for? If the answer is no, would you recommend that a writer have an agent anyway, or not?

Vanilla Heart Publishing does not require an author to have an agent. Do I have one? No. Would I recommend getting one? Less than a year ago I was myself querying agents. Back then, I would likely have said an agent is a definite asset to an author. Now that I'm published, I'm not as convinced one is necessary.

It's an exciting time to be an author. One has so many more choices than just a few years ago. There is a surge in e-book sales and it is becoming commonplace for authors to self-publish.

However, I think it really depends on the individual. If she thinks she'll benefit by having an agent, then she likely will. Go with

<http://www.AnneKAlbert.com>

<http://anne-k-albert.blogspot.com>

<http://piedmont-island-trilogy.blogspot.com>

<http://muriel-reeves-mysteries.blogspot.com>

2011 releases: Protecting Hope, August release

MARY MOORE

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

I write for Love Inspired Historical line.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

I believe the inspirational market is growing for two reasons. First, writers are addressing up-to-the-minute topics in ways inspirational fiction didn't really address before. If you wanted a book on one current subject, you would probably look immediately for non-fiction, and for important advice and direction, that's where you should go. But now you can pick up fiction and identify with the story line or characters and be reminded that you're not alone in facing so many issues that are relevant today. A story that touches you, as well as inspires you, is showing up more and more in today's inspirational fiction. I have only published one book, so I only know the Love Inspired guidelines, but I know there are subjects that might not appeal to them based on their market base. But I think it depends on the publishing house, as well as the author's audience. Again, with so many current issues being addressed these days, you are likely to find fictional stories with almost any topic, you would just need to find the authors that write maybe a little more edgy and the publishing houses that you see putting those stories out there.

3. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

In my opinion, the reason the inspirational market is expanding is because of the way writers are now reaching hearts as well as the imagination. I know I like them best when they have a great message interwoven into an awesome story. If you want to write in this genre, that's what you need, fresh, well-told stories that also make you think and maybe identify with your own life experiences. If it has touched your life, it has touched others, so combine that kind of message with really great writing.

marymooreauthor.vpweb.com

The Aristocrat's Lady, coming September 2011

KELI GWYN

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

My debut novel, an inspirational historical romance, will be released by Barbour Publishing on July 1, 2012.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

Bonnet fiction continues strong, and I see books with humor doing well. Publishers seem more open to a variety of periods and settings in historicals.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

4. Is an agent required for the house(s) you write for?

Barbour recently announced that they are no longer taking submissions unless they come through an agent or from an author with a previous Barbour contract.

6. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

I believe one has to have a personal relationship with Christ to write for the inspirational market. I'm a member of RWA and have heard frustrated non-believing writers say they think they'll make a few changes, take out the love scenes, and aim for the inspirational market because breaking in there seems easier. Since I see the faith elements of a story as an integral part of the plot and characters, I don't believe it's something that can simply be tacked on but instead is woven into the very fabric of the story.

Keli Gwyn

2011 releases: none

Debut Author with Barbour Publishing

<http://www.keligwyn.com>, Blog ~

<http://keligwyn.wordpress.com>

RWotJ Blog ~

<http://romancewritersonthejourney.wordpress.com>

SUSAN SLEEMAN

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published?

I write for Barbour Publishing for their Hometown Mysteries, a contemporary cozy mystery line. I also write for Love Inspired in the suspense line with contemporary romantic suspense books.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction?

Romance continues to be king of the market. Especially Amish romance. But the inspirational market is like the ABA, trends come and go. If you're looking to write toward a trend, by the time you write a book and it's published, the trend may well have come and gone.

I think any topic can be dealt with, it's in the way it's presented that makes a difference. An inspirational reader wants to see characters struggle with real world problems, but they want to see this with a Christian filter.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

Any writing books by James Scott Bell are wonderful. Donald Maass's books *The Fire in Fiction* and *How to Write the Breakout Novel* are both excellent.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market?

Know what you want to write and study the published works in that area. I love writing suspense, any type of it. In fact, I created a website just for Christian suspense, www.thesuspensezone.com to let others know about books in the genre. But I decided that

Love Inspired would be the line I would target for my books because they actively sign unpublished authors and they don't require an agent for submission. First I found their guidelines on their website then I read, read, read Love Inspired Suspense books to get a feel for the line. To see the pacing, the points of view, the structure of the novels, the character struggles and conflict. Reading what you want to write is an important step many people fail to take and then they wonder why their books are rejected by a publisher who doesn't publish anything remotely like their manuscript.

www.susansleeman.com

HIGH STAKES INHERITANCE, Love Inspired Suspense
NIPPED IN THE BUD, Barbour Publishing, now available
BEHIND THE BADGE, Love Inspired Suspense, 6/11
THE CHRISTMAS WITNESS, Love Inspired Suspense, 12/11

CHARLOTTE CARTER

After authoring 40 secular romance novels, the transition to inspirational books required a new learning curve for me. My heroine, who entertained hospitalized children with sleight of hand, had to learn to be a ventriloquist because card games aren't allowed. After all those years of learning to build sexual tension, kisses are now just, well, kisses. The hero is not allowed to swear under his breath; apparently inspirational readers know what he is saying. Based on my editor's deletions, characters can't say 'in heaven's name,' 'it's a miracle,' or that a character is 'heaven sent.' The good news is that a love story is still a love story.

Charlotte Carter

Books that leave you smiling -from Love Inspired

Big Sky Reunion, 4/19/2011

Big Sky Family, 11/2011

Finalist Book Buyers Best Contest

www.CharlotteCarter.com

ROGER BRUNER

1. I write for Barbour Publishing. Young Adult novels.

2. I get the impression that Young Adult is a growing market. Although there are things the CBA in general doesn't go for, each publisher has his/her own rules about what can or can't be dealt with. I've noticed that a Christian publisher--I forget which one--doesn't have any problem with Christian characters drinking, and that bothers me personally.

3. I would especially recommend both of Jeff Gerke's writing books, but especially the first one. Also Ron Benrey's. And anything by James Scott Bell and Donald Maas.

4. My big advice for someone wanting to break into the inspirational writing market: Be sure of your motivation. Remember that Christian publishers are just as picky about wanting excellent writing as secular presses; they have to treat their businesses as businesses if they want to remain in business. Nobody is going to publish a poorly written book just because the premise is good, and no one is going to listen to an author who insists God actually wrote the book and should remain

unchanged because of that. If the writer has no prior professional writing experience, he or she should learn to write REALLY WELL before worrying about getting published. And even the inspirational writer should recognize that he or she is not likely to make a living writing.

RogerBruner.com

Found in Translation (Barbour, January 2011)

Lost in Dreams (Barbour, August 2011)

VIRGINIA SMITH

1. What house(s) do you write for, and in what aspect of the inspirational genre (historical, contemporary, suspense and so on) are you published? I've written for Kregel, Love Inspired Suspense, Revell, Zondervan, and Harvest House. I'm currently under contract with Harvest House for my 18th and 19th published novels (historical romance) and with Love Inspired for a 3-book romantic suspense series.

2. Do you see strong/growing trends in the inspirational market? Are there topics that can't be dealt with in inspirational fiction? The huge demand for "bonnet fiction" in the past few years seems to still be in full swing, though I think it might wane a little in the coming year. I think we might see a bigger demand for contemporary books, and for traditional historical romance.

I don't think there are any topics that can't be dealt with, but I do think there are some very strict constraints for an inspirational in the manner in which we handle some issues. Also, each publisher has their own guidelines, so some won't touch controversial issues. The wise writer knows all the houses, and the preferred content and style of each.

3. Do you recommend any particular writing books, and especially, those geared to the inspirational writer?

I love *Self Editing for Fiction Writers*. And I think Gail Gaymer Martin's *Writing the Christian Romance* is also very good.

4. What would be your best advice to someone who says they want to break into inspirational market? Read widely, especially the genre in which you write. Get involved in a critique group of other people who write for the inspirational market. And finally, bathe everything you do in prayer.

5. Does a writer need an agent to submit to the house(s) you write for? If the answer is no, would you recommend that a writer have an agent anyway, or not? You do need an agent for several of the houses I've written for. You don't need one for Love Inspired, and no, I don't recommend that you have one anyway. Go to conferences and meet the editors, pitch your book, then follow the guidelines and submit your best work. Once you get your foot in the door and the editors like your work, future contracts will come.

www.virginiasmith.org

Deadly Game (Love Inspired Suspense, Feb 2011),

Lost Melody by Lori Copeland and Virginia Smith (Zondervan, October 2011)

ROXANNE RUSTAND

1. I write inspirational romance and romantic suspense for Harlequin's Love Inspired and Love Inspired Suspense lines.
2. As you think about your favorite inspirational authors and the books you've loved the most, what qualities make them special and memorable? Strong writing, beautiful imagery, complex characterization with captivating character arcs, and a book so well plotted that one just can't put it down are some of the qualities that draw me in.
3. Trends? I don't read speculative Christian fiction, but I'm glad it is available now for those who enjoy it. I'm intrigued by the growth of paranormal elements--who would have guessed that we'd have Amish vampire fiction, for instance? Inspirational fiction can run the spectrum of genres, depending on which house you write for.
4. Favorite organizations are ACFW and RWA--both offer a wealth of information for the aspiring (and published) inspirational author. I was blown away by the quality of what ACFW offers when I started making the switch from secular to inspirational fiction and can't recommend it highly enough!
5. The ACFW and RWA annual conferences are worth every penny. Online classes--anything by Alicia Rasley and Margie Lawson will be superb, ACFW offers free monthly online courses to its members. What a deal! And the archives include past topics, so that's a wealth of information right there.

As for books: anything by James Scott Bell on writing. Writing the Breakout Novel, by Donald Maass, Teach Yourself Screenwriting by Frensham (not just for screenwriting!), Type Talk by Kroeger and Thuesen, The Complete Writer's Guide to Heroes and Heroines by Cowden, Lafever & Vidars, Story Structure Architect by Schmidt, Story, by McKee, and Plotto by William Wallace Cook (it's hard to find--and you need to be sure the Instruction Booklet is tucked inside the book.)

II. ASPIRING AUTHORS/READERS SURVEY**JENNA VICTORIA**

1. What type of inspirational fiction do you like to read the most? I prefer to read inspirational suspense - contemporary. Followed next by historical romance.
2. As you think about your favorite inspirational authors and the books you've loved the most, what qualities make them special and memorable? What book stands out the most? I believe the qualities that make books stand out are deep, deep characterizations -- and behavior by a character that makes sense and fits the story. All too often heroes and heroines are not too well thought out or act in ways that aren't true to their character. I think Francine River's "Redeeming Love" is outstanding.
3. Are there any new trends you'd like to see in inspirational fiction? Perhaps a touch more "realism" in the books. Some of the fiction I see on the shelves is too sugar-coated, or has a pat answer to the problems raised. I do understand that inspirational fiction readers enjoy a certain formula -- but some of the books can be a tad unrealistic.
4. As an aspiring author, have you found any organizations that have been especially helpful? Yes, absolutely -- Faith, Hope & Love (the online inspirational RWA chapter), and ACFW (American Christian Fiction Writers - the ACFW critique loops).
5. What about conferences, online classes, or books? Any that you would especially recommend? I highly recommend Margie Lawson's "Defeating Self-Defeating Behaviors" course, and any of her EDITS classes. (<http://www.margielawson.com>)

Mary Buckham has a great class in synopsis writing. (<http://www.marybuckham.com>)

Each month, the ACFW features a free e-course for members that is very helpful. (<http://www.acfw.com>)

Local Christian writer's groups often have one or two-day conferences (<http://www.writehisanswer.com/philadelphia/>)

5. What do you feel is the best writing advice you've received thus far? Sit in the chair and write. No excuses!

DEBBIE ARCHER

1. What type of inspirational fiction do you like to read the most? Romantic Comedy and YA Fiction. I'd love to read CBA middle grade fiction '(to book chat for my public school students - many ask for it), but there's not a lot out there.
2. As you think about your favorite inspirational authors and the books you've loved the most, what qualities make them special and memorable? What book stands out the most? Love Jenny

Jones' books. They are well-written, savvy, and fast-paced. The message is always clear - lean on God in whatever instance you find yourself and you're GOING to make it through. Can't pick a fave of Jenny's. Love them all whether YA or women's fiction. Sharlene is another. She is gifted in her ability to weave multiple characters and conflicts.

3. Are there any new trends you'd like to see in inspirational fiction? YA written in different formats (journal entries, free-verse, interviews) as well as subject matter that the young adults will be relieved AND surprised to see in a Christian book. They need to know that Christian kids go through the same trials as every other kid, but they also need to see how Christian kids deal with those issues. A lot of teens are floundering ... not because they are drug kids or abused kids, but because they don't have a foundation of faith modeled for them. The latest poles show that teens are reading more now than ever before ... and they're searching. They need strong stories and we need to provide those.

4. As an aspiring author, have you found any organizations that have been especially helpful? ACFW, Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, ALA - American Library Association, and IRA - International Reading Association.

5. What about conferences, online classes, or books? Any that you would especially recommend? I attend our International Reading Association Conference every year. It offers invaluable insight into my field as well as trends that I need to keep abreast of as a writer. Can't wait for our ACFW conference. This will be my first!

As for books: I just finished Paper Lightening by Darcy Pattison. It's phenomenal. In my teaching career I've never come across a book that is as helpful to ME as a writer as it is to MY STUDENTS as writers. Rather than a 2" thick manual, it's a simple 106 page adventure made up of quirky and fun steps and activities that lead the writer through an entire draft of a book. This is one that will not be placed more than two feet away from me on my desk - ever. It's that good.

6. What do you feel is the best writing advice you've received thus far? 1. Pray before each writing session and 2. PYTICAW - Put Your Tucus in Chair and Write!

NANCY CONNALLY

1. What type of inspirational fiction do you like to read the most? American historical, post-Civil War -- then contemporary, small town Texas (like Lisa Wingate)

2. As you think about your favorite inspirational authors and the books you've loved the most, what qualities make them special and memorable? What book stands out the most?

First and foremost -- even before a realistic plot -- strong, believable characters. Then a different way of approaching the story, without cliches and, hopefully, with some twists or approaches that make me lean back and mull over a thought or

reread a particular description. Also characters who live their faith but don't hit other people over the head with it :-)

My "new" favorites are Karen Witemeyer and Victoria Bylin. Karen for the humor and beautifully defined characters, as well as historical accuracy. Victoria for the same and also some very different plots.

I'd be hard-put to pick a single stand-out book. Of Karen's two books, I'd say the first one "Tailor Made Bride." I liked the heroine and hero, the humor, and the multi-level (hence very interesting) plot. Of Victoria's, probably "Wyoming Lawman." Her depiction of a loving father especially won me over, but I also appreciated the way the romance was portrayed. There is also a confrontation scene (between the hero and some lawbreakers) toward the end of the book that took my breath with its honesty. That is the kind of writing I like :-)

3. Are there any new trends you'd like to see in inspirational fiction?

Marketing-wise: If it weren't for a friend who, years ago, loaned me a western inspirational from Bethany House (the three-part Sam Keaton/Legends of Laramie series by Sigmund Brouwer) I wouldn't have started reading inspirational. When inspirational is only on Christian bookstore shelves, or only in the "inspirational" category in other bookstores, it's basically "preaching to the choir." :-) I believe authors like Lisa Wingate could (and for all I know she may) easily appeal to a wide audience that doesn't consider inspirational fiction when they are looking for books. Which I guess is my way of saying I would like to see inspirational fiction more readily available in the general market where it can reach readers like I was.

Book-wise: I would like to see even more of the light-hearted humor, characters who are faith-driven but not perfect, and the inspirational message woven in so skillfully it doesn't call attention to itself. I like the idea of the characters being approachable and then leading by example :-)

4. As an aspiring author, have you found any organizations that have been especially helpful?

Yes. Romance Writers of America (RWA) and Women Writing the West. Within RWA, my local chapter (North Texas RWA) and the online Hearts Through History chapter especially. If someone doesn't have a local RWA chapter, I strongly encourage her/him to join an online chapter that fits her/his interests. One of the best things that can happen to a writer is to find other writers who understand, who share information and experiences, who encourage learning, and who support and encourage.

Through RWA (primarily) I was able to take online courses that helped tremendously. I also took some online writing courses through an organization called ed2go, which is available through local colleges and universities (more info at ed2go.com).

5. What about conferences, online classes, or books? Any that you would especially recommend?

Self-Editing for Fiction Writers: How to Edit Yourself into Print -- by Renni Browne and Dave King (I wish I had a dime for

every time I've recommended this book LOL)
The 38 Most Common Fiction Writing Mistakes (And How to Avoid Them) -- by Jack M. Bickham

Scene and Structure -- by Jack M. Bickham
(Bickham readily acknowledges that without the guidance of Dwight V. Swain he would not have had a career as a novelist. Anything Swain wrote on writing is well worth reading.)

Conflict, Action & Suspense -- by William Noble
GMC: Goal, Motivation & Conflict -- by Debra Dixon

The Romance Writer's Handbook -- How to Write Romantic Fiction & Get it Published -- by Rebecca Vinyard (This is a good, concise book that doesn't go into great detail but is immensely helpful -- especially for folks with limited time.)

First Draft in 30 Days -- by Karen S. Wiesner
(As with all things, a writer should take what s/he can use from this book and not worry about the rest. As I read it, I realized I was doing a lot of this in my head. I followed most of her approach, though, and am delighted with having a three-ring binder filled with written material I can refer back to when memory fails me.)

Also, an excellent book is Bird by Bird -- by Anne Lamott. It is one of the most inspirational, insightful books about writing I've read. My copy is heavily highlighted :-) HOWEVER it may not be suited to very conservative writers.

6. What do you feel is the best writing advice you've received thus far? Read, write, learn -- repeat, repeat, repeat -- and don't give up.

PRESLAYSA WILLIAMS

What type of inspirational fiction do you like to read the most?

I like reading Amish fiction, biblical fiction, women's fiction and contemporary romances.

2. As you think about your favorite inspirational authors and the books you've loved the most, what qualities make them special and memorable? What book stands out the most?

The ability to make me weep!! (Not just cry... WEEP!!)
My favorite inspirational authors keep me glued to the book and cause me to use up my Kleenex. After I read a powerful inspirational story, I feel like I've undergone a spiritual cleansing and that God touched my soul in some way.

Books that have done this for me are "Havah" by Tosca Lee, "A Thousand Tomorrows" by Karen Kingsbury and "Plain Proposal" by Beth Wiseman.

3. Are there any new trends you'd like to see in inspirational fiction? No. I just love a good tear jerking story that resonates truth.

4. As an aspiring author, have you found any organizations that have been especially helpful? RWA's Faith, Hope and Love chapter and the American Christian Fiction Writers.

5. What about conferences, online classes, or books? Any that you would especially recommend?

Harlequin Romance author Susan Meier has an excellent class called "Can this Manuscript Be Saved?" I've really learned a lot from her about how to simplify the revision process and meet an editor's requirements. I plan to take her class in August called "Journey Steps" which will discuss how to plot the rest of your story after you've determined the major turning points.

I also like the book "Self Editing for Fiction Writers." And I like "The War of Art" by Steven Pressfield for inspiration for the writing life. Another book I like is "Novel Shortcuts" by Laura Whitcomb. There's a section in there on scene outlining that keeps me from staring at a blank screen when I sit down to write. That method has helped me plug along with my stories.

I read an article about how Susan Mallery gives techniques from her workshop called "Write More, Write Better" (*unsure of exact title*) on how to reasonable increase your writing output without sacrificing quality. You basically figure out how many pages you write a day right now and increase it by half a page (125 words) every 4-6 weeks. You are also free to focus on deepening characterization, style etc. while you write without worry about filling up a quota. Following her advice has helped me produce quality words daily without burn out, angst or stress.

6. What do you feel is the best writing advice you've received thus far? "Write. Revise. Submit. Repeat." And "If you don't submit your work, you've decreased your chances of publication by 100 percent" (Both quotes from Love Inspired Author Tina Radcliffe)

"You can fix a bad page but you can't fix blank page" and "You have to push through even on the tough writing days because writing is like a muscle. You have to keep up the writing habit. If you break the habit, it'll be tough to write the next day." (Nora Roberts)

Preslaysa Williams (www.preslaysa.com)

CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS

For an excellent resource on major and small press inspirational publishing houses go to award winning author Lyn Cote's website: <http://booksbylyncote.com/SWBS/christian-book-publishers> Lyn updates the list regularly.

HARLEQUIN LOVE INSPIRED (Steeple Hill) New York office		
Executive Editor: Joan Marlow Golan		
Love Inspired	Love Inspired Suspense	Love Inspired Historical
Sr. Editor in Charge Melissa Endlich ↓ Senior Editor Tina James ↓ Assoc Editor Emily Rodmell ↓ Editorial Assistant Rachel Burkot 55,000-60.000 words "Heartwarming inspirational romance"	Sr. Editor in Charge Tina James ↓ Senior Editor Melissa Endlich ↓ Assoc Editor Emily Rodmell ↓ Editorial Assistant Elizabeth Mazur 55,000-60.000 words "Riveting inspirational romance"	Sr. Editor in Charge Tina James ↓ Senior Editor Melissa Endlich ↓ Assoc Editor Emily Rodmell ↓ Editorial Assistant Elizabeth Mazur 70,000-75,000 words "Captivating historical romance: love and faith through the ages"
For Love Inspired writing guidelines go to http://www.harlequin.com/articlepage.html?articleId=538&chapter=0 (or just look at the bottom of the eHarlequin.com main screen and click on "writing guidelines")		

**Survey handout compiled by
Roxanne Rustand
*Adventure, suspense, faith and romance***

Website: www.roxannerustand.com
 e-mail: roxannerstand@yahoo.com
 e-newsletter: <http://roxannerustand.com/newsletter-signup>
 Blog: <http://roxannerustand.blogspot.com> (The All Creatures Great and Small Place, where authors and readers can blog about their pets)

Current releases:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 11/10 Christmas at Shadow Creek, Aspen Creek Crossroads #1 | Love Inspired |
| 4/11 Murder at Granite Falls, Big Sky Secrets #4 | Love Inspired Suspense |
| 6/11 Second Chance Dad, Aspen Creek Crossroads #2 | Love Inspired |
| 8/11 Home at Blackberry Hill, | Harlequin Heartwarming Collection |
| 10/11 A Home in Hill Country, | Harlequin Heartwarming Collection |
| 11/11 The Loner's Thanksgiving Wish | Love Inspired (6-author Rocky Mountain Heirs series) |
| 12/11 Duty to Protect, Big Sky Secrets #5 | Love Inspired Suspense |