

The Advanced Fiction Writing E-zine

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Circulation: 32132 writers, each of them creating a Heartbreaking Work of Staggering Genius.

"Fiction Writing = Organizing + Creating + Marketing"

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- 1) Welcome to the Advanced Fiction Writing E-zine!

Those of you who have joined in the past month (more than 200 of you signed up in August), welcome to my e-zine!

You should be on this list only if you signed up for it on my web site. If you no longer wish to hear from me, don't be shy -- there's a link at the bottom of this e-mail that will put you out of your misery.

If you need to change your e-mail address, there's a different link at the bottom to let you update my system.

If you missed a back issue, remember that all previous issues are archived on my web site at:
<http://www.AdvancedFictionWriting.com/ezine>

What's in this issue:

The successful novelist needs good organization, good craft, and good marketing. In this issue, we'll talk about each of these in turn.

* You can't plan effectively if you're paralyzed by your fear of the future. This month I use math to defang the two biggest fears that I'm hearing from my novelist friends. How can math fix our fears? Find out in my organizing column, "A Tale of Two Terrors."

* Fiction is about people in conflict. When you add new people groups to your Storyworld, strange things can happen. Want to see an example? Read my craft column, "Why People Groups Matter."

* It's hard to improve your marketing if you can't measure it. But measuring marketing is "impossible," isn't it? That's what your marketing director says, anyway. Is she right or is she wrong? Check out my marketing column, "Measuring Your Marketing."

Are you reading my blog? Join the fun here:
<http://www.AdvancedFictionWriting.com/blog>

2) Organizing: A Tale of Two Terrors

The publishing world is currently going through a massive upheaval. My author friends often express the two things they find most terrifying this way:

* "What if everybody decides to become a novelist? Then our excellent writing will be lost in a sea of lousy books!"

* "What if all the publishers go bankrupt? Then we won't have anybody to market our work and we'll all go broke!"

Neither of these scenarios holds any terror for me. The reason is because I did the math to see what would happen. The math says this:

* The good writers will see a small drop in income if "everybody" starts writing, but the good writers won't go broke.

* The good writers will see a large boost in income if all the publishers go bankrupt.

If the math is right, then this is fantastic news -- for good writers. If the math is right, then writers with good craft can confidently plan for the future, secure in the knowledge that their careers are not going to hell in a handbasket.

But is the math right? Why do I believe the math is right?

The math is based on the well-known fact that free markets tend to be horribly unfair. Consumers reward the best products by buying loads of them. They punish

the worst products by buying hardly any of them.

An Italian economist named Vilfredo Pareto observed in 1906 that the wealthiest 20% of the population in Italy owned 80% of the property. (This is the famous "80/20 rule.")

Pareto distilled this basic idea into something that mathematicians now call the "Pareto distribution." It's a theoretical description of how free markets pass out rewards.

The usual Pareto distribution works like this, when we apply it to authors:

First, assign every author a rank, starting with #1 for the top earner, #2 for the second best earner, and so on. (Amazon uses a similar scheme to rank books.)

The Pareto distribution says that the #2 performer earns only half as much as the #1 performer. The #3 performer gets only one third as much as the #1 performer. It continues like that all the way down. Whoever is in the #1,000,000 slot gets one millionth the reward of the #1 guy.

Let me emphasize that the Pareto distribution is theoretical. Real free markets follow it only approximately, not exactly. Even so, it's a useful way to estimate how the pie is distributed.

To do the calculation for the world of fiction writing, we need to estimate how much revenue is coming through to authors and we need to estimate how many authors there are.

These numbers are hard to get exactly, but we'll estimate that the global market for English-language fiction is about \$10 billion. That's very roughly the total amount of money that comes to traditional publishers in payment for novels published in English.

We'll estimate that after all expenses are paid, 10% of

that revenue actually flows through to authors. This is a rough estimate, but I doubt the actual percentage is less than 5% or more than 20%.

This leaves a total pie of \$1 billion to be distributed to all novelists who write in English. How many of them are there? This is also hard to estimate, but let's guess there are 100,000. (Amazon US lists millions of books. Probably half of those are novels. Many novelists have written numerous books.)

If there is \$1 billion in revenue and there are 100,000 novelists, then the average revenue per novelist is \$10,000 per year.

I emphasize that this is an average. It's the amount each novelist would get if the money were divided up evenly.

But as I already said, in a free market, the money is never divided up evenly. That pesky Pareto distribution says that the highest-earning authors get most of the money. The lowest-earning authors get very little.

What does the Pareto distribution predict that the highest-earning author and the "typical" author will earn? And how good do you have to be to earn the average?

The results may shock you. According to the Pareto distribution:

The #1 author earns \$82 million per year.

The #100 author earns \$820,000 per year.

The #1000 author earns \$82,000 per year. (This writer is in the top 1% of all authors.)

The #10,000 author earns \$8,200 per year. (This writer is in the top 10% of all authors!)

The "typical" author (we'll define this to be the person ranked #50,000 out of the 100,000 authors) earns

only \$1640 per year.

The top 20% of the authors take home more than 86% of the total revenue.

In order to earn the average income of \$10,000 per year, you have to be in the top 8% of all authors.

Let me say it again. The Pareto distribution is only an approximation to reality, but it's a pretty good approximation.

It tells us that a very few authors do really well, and most authors do pretty badly.

Let's do a reality check on these numbers.

The highest pay for an author varies from year to year, but in a typical year, the top author earns several tens of millions of dollars. Occasionally there are reports of an author topping \$100 million for a year. So our estimate of \$82 million isn't bad.

If you ask a typical midlist author what they're earning, it's generally a few tens of thousands of dollars per year. They're above our estimate for the annual average of \$10k.

If you ask a debut novelist what they're earning for their first novel, it's typically in the range of \$1k to \$10k -- which is under our estimate for the annual average.

If you're working with small presses, then your earnings are typically less. If you publish a book less often than once per year, then your average earnings are less.

So the estimates I've given based on the Pareto distribution are reasonable. They're not exact, but they're in the ballpark, which is all we can ask of an estimate.

What we're really interested in is how things might change under the two scary scenarios I listed at the start of this article. Let's look at each of these in turn:

What does the Pareto distribution say will happen if the market becomes flooded with hordes of "lousy self-published novels?"

As long as we have a free market for fiction, the best authors will still do well. Let's look at a worst case scenario -- suppose that 1 billion people on the planet are all self-publishing fiction and they're all competing for that same \$1 billion in author revenue.

In this scenario, the average author income now becomes \$1 per year, so this does seem catastrophic. But it's not that bad for the really good writers. The Pareto distribution tells us roughly what to expect:

The #1 author in the world earns \$47 million per year.

The #100 author earns \$470,000 per year.

The #1000 author earns \$47,000 per year.

The top 20% of all authors will earn 92% of all the money.

The moral here is that the really excellent authors will still do very well, even if there's a flood of horrible books.

What does the Pareto distribution say will happen if all the publishers go bankrupt and there's nobody to market our books for us?

The fact is that story will always be in fashion because people need story. They'll continue buying it from whoever is willing to produce it. If all the publishers vanish tomorrow, any author is still free to self-publish. There will still be \$10 billion worth of demand for story. Who will get that \$10 billion?

The Pareto distribution again tells us roughly what to expect. (We'll assume in this calculation that there are 100,000 authors competing for the money. The results don't change drastically for the top earners, no matter how many authors are competing.)

The #1 author earns \$820 million per year.

The #100 author earns \$8.2 million per year.

The #1000 author earns \$820,000 per year. (This writer is in the top 1% of all authors.)

The #10,000 author earns \$82,000 per year. (This writer is in the top 10% of all authors)

As you can see, all that happens is that the 90% of the money that previously went to publishers and agents is now being funneled directly to authors.

That's a catastrophe for the publishers and agents, of course, but it's fantastic news for the authors. They're now all earning ten times as much as before.

I don't believe that either of these "terrifying" scenarios are likely. My main goal here is to help us all plan for our future by looking at what might happen in these worst-case scenarios.

If the market were flooded with horrible writing, the best writers will still do very well.

If all the publishers disappear, writers will on average do much better.

The moral here is to work at your craft and marketing, because the top earners are going to be those who excel at craft and marketing. The sky is not falling for writers.

The math says to stop worrying and get busy writing.

3) Creating: Why People Groups Matter

When you're developing the Storyworld for your novel, part of your task is defining the set of people groups.

In the simplest case, you have only one people group.

In extreme cases, you have many people groups. THE LORD OF THE RINGS is an obvious example, with its Men, Hobbits, Dwarves, Elves, Wizards, Ents, Orcs, Wargs, Huorns, Trolls, Balrogs, etc. This made room for all sorts of alliances, animosities, truces, non-aggression pacts, and betrayals.

I've recently read a series of novels, VAMPIRE ACADEMY, by Richelle Mead, which demonstrates the power of people groups for enabling a great story.

I'm not a big reader of vampire novels, but my understanding is that there are two basic people groups in a vampire novel, the humans and the vampires.

The TWILIGHT series made things more interesting by adding in a third people group, the werewolves, sworn enemies of the vampires. The combination of two powerful and opposing paranormal people groups added a lot of new directions for the plot.

VAMPIRE ACADEMY has no werewolves, but it uses four people groups, making the Storyworld even more interesting. Here's a recap of all four:

* Humans are generally unaware of the existence of vampires, with a couple of exceptions. "Feeders" are humans who voluntarily let vampires suck their blood because they like it -- vampire venom releases powerful endorphins that give the feeders a high. "Alchemists" are a small secret society of humans who cooperate with

the vampires to keep their existence a secret from the rest of humanity.

* Moroi are "good" vampires. They don't want to harm humans but they do need a daily feeding of human blood or they get weak. Moroi only drink blood from cooperative feeders and they don't kill humans.

Moroi are generally tall and slim and beautiful. Moroi women look like supermodels and Moroi men look like movie stars. Moroi are not very strong physically and generally don't do well in athletics.

All Moroi have magical powers, which come in four different types, Earth, Air, Fire, and Water. There is a fifth very mysterious and very rare type known as Spirit which few Moroi know about. As a Moroi matures into adulthood, he or she becomes adept in one of these types of magic and can use it at will.

The Moroi are ruled by a King or Queen, chosen from one of the twelve royal families of Moroi. Many Moroi are religious, with the most common faith being Russian Orthodox. However, many Moroi are agnostic or atheist. They all get along fairly well and religion doesn't play a major role in the story.

* Dhampirs are "half vampires" -- born from one human and one Moroi parent. In previous centuries, this sort of "interbreeding" was allowed, but it's now strongly frowned on.

However, dhampirs continue to be born to dhampir-Moroi couples. (You might imagine that this ought to result in children who are 3/4 vampire, but through an unexplained quirk of the DNA, these offspring are genetically the same as any other dhampir.)

Dhampirs have no need to feed on human blood and they have no fangs. They can much more easily pass for humans than Moroi can.

Note that "dhampir" is not capitalized but "Moroi" is.

This reflects the fact that dhampirs are second-class citizens. Dhampirs are unable to produce offspring with other dhampirs, so they need Moroi in order to continue their race. Because of this, dhampirs have taken it on themselves to be the bodyguards for the Moroi.

Dhampirs are well-suited to be bodyguards. They are very much stronger and faster than either Moroi or humans, and they are natural fighters. Dhampirs generally love Moroi and don't find it a burden to protect them. That's good, because Moroi have a powerful and deadly enemy . . .

* Strigoi are "evil" vampires. They are not born, they're made, in one of two ways.

The less common way to become a Strigoi is for a Moroi to intentionally kill a human while feeding on his blood. This is so evil that it destroys the Moroi's soul. However, it also gives him immortality and extreme physical strength and speed -- much more even than a dhampir.

Few Moroi would ever choose to become a Strigoi. The problem is that Strigoi hate the Moroi and want nothing more than to "awaken" them with a bite that drains all their blood. This process converts a Moroi (against his will) into a Strigoi. Of course, this is terribly unfair, but a lot of things in life are unfair.

The same process can convert a dhampir into a Strigoi, but dhampirs are much better able to defend themselves than Moroi are.

Since Strigoi are immensely powerful and fast, they would quickly convert all the Moroi on the planet into Strigoi if it weren't for the dhampirs, who are sworn to protect the Moroi.

What can a dhampir do to fend off a Strigoi? After all, the Strigoi are immortal. The answer is that Strigoi can be killed in three very specific ways: by beheading them, by burning them, and by stabbing them through the heart with a silver stake.

Traditional vampires can't tolerate the sun. In VAMPIRE ACADEMY, this changes. Dhampirs are not affected by sunlight at all. Moroi feel weakened by the sun, but they can survive sunlight without actually dying. Sunlight causes massive damage to Strigoi, and so does any wound inflicted with a silver stake.

Neither dhampirs nor Strigoi are able to do magic. Only Moroi can do magic, and this could help level the field. However, Moroi traditionally have thought it beneath them to use magic to fight. This is now changing as the Strigoi threat increases. Some Moroi believe they should learn to defend themselves. Most Moroi resist this idea.

VAMPIRE ACADEMY is a young-adult novel set at a training school for young Moroi and dhampirs. The Moroi are being trained to take their place in Moroi society (which may include blending in to human society). The dhampirs are being trained to protect their Moroi masters from the Strigoi.

All six VAMPIRE ACADEMY novels are set in a single school year and the summer that follows it.

The heroine of the story is Rose Hathaway, a young dhampir woman in her final year of school. Rose's best friend is a Moroi, Princess Lissa Dragomir, the only remaining survivor in the royal Dragomir family.

Rose wants to be Lissa's guardian when they graduate from high school, but there's a problem. The two girls have recently returned to school after running away from Moroi society and enjoying two years of heady freedom. Now they're behind, and Rose won't be anyone's guardian unless she can catch up.

Which means she needs extra tutoring. The tutor assigned her is a new Russian dhampir named Dimitri Belikov. He's young and exceptionally strong and quick, and already has six Strigoi kills to his credit. Dimitri is a badass guardian, and he takes no guff from

anyone, least of all from twerpy know-it-all Rose.

Rose has a seriously bad attitude, and she wouldn't pay much attention to Dimitri except that she has to catch up in order to be assigned as guardian for her bosom buddy Lissa. And also because Dimitri is inconveniently hot and Rose has a major crush on him.

That's the Storyworld for VAMPIRE ACADEMY, and it makes possible a strong set of characters and a complex and exciting storyline. There's plenty of romance (fair warning: there's quite a lot of hanky-panky) and plenty of high-intensity fighting.

There are also numerous secondary characters, with a full range of high school crushes, boyfriend-girlfriend drama, petty jealousy, and popularity battles.

I don't want to say either too much or too little about the story arc of the six-book series, but I'll add this. Suppose that one of your friends was made a Strigoi unwillingly. Now that friend has no soul and has become completely evil. The friend remembers you, but he or she no longer has any love for you and only wants to kill you -- or else "awaken" you as a Strigoi.

What should you do? Given the Storyworld I've described, the moral thing would be to track down that friend and . . . kill him or her. It would be hard. It would be horrible. But if you genuinely cared about that friend, you'd have to do it.

Friends don't leave friends as Strigoi.

Of course, none of this could happen in an ordinary Storyworld. Adding new people groups to the Storyworld gives you the chance to create new complexities in characters, relationships, and plots.

If you liked the TWILIGHT series, you might like the VAMPIRE ACADEMY series. If you hated TWILIGHT because Bella was boring, you might very well love VAMPIRE ACADEMY because Rose and Lissa are both very live

wires.

In case you want to know more about the VAMPIRE ACADEMY series, I'm including a link below to the first book in the series on Amazon. Before you buy anything, PLEASE read the editorial reviews, paying special note to the phrases "vulgar language," "steamy sex," and "mature readers." If those are showstoppers for you, then this series is not for you.

<http://www.AdvancedFictionWriting.com/blinks/va.php>

Standard disclosure: This link includes my Amazon associates code.

4) Marketing: Measuring Your Marketing

Marketing your work is crucial in today's publishing environment. If you aren't out there marketing yourself, then your publisher probably won't be either.

You might take a cynical attitude and decide to do a lousy job marketing, just to get your publisher to do something.

Or you might take a naive attitude and blindly throw yourself into marketing without asking whether what you're doing actually works.

But I believe that if you're going to market yourself, you should do your best to do it well.

That means that you need to measure what you're doing. If you don't measure anything, then you have no way of knowing whether you're doing a good job or a bad one.

How do you measure your marketing?

Marketing has three major steps:

- * Attract
- * Engage
- * Convert

I owe these terms to Michael Alvear's recent book MAKE A KILLING ON KINDLE. However, he uses these words in a slightly different way than I do.

Michael is talking in his book about short-term marketing. This is marketing where the attraction, engagement, and conversion phases all happen on the same day. Somebody is attracted to your Amazon page, is engaged by your product description, and buys the book. This typically happens in a few minutes.

Short-term marketing is fine, but I believe that long-term marketing earns you more money in the long run. Long-term marketing for an author means that you attract new potential readers, engage them in a long-term relationship, and then sell them every book that you ever publish during your long career. It may take months or years from the time you attract your audience to the day they finally buy a book.

Here is how I define these terms for long-term marketing:

"Attract" means that you somehow get the attention of your target audience, at least for an instant.

"Engage" means that you actually interest your target audience in what you have to say, enough so that they give you permission to continue the conversation.

"Convert" means that you make a sale to your target audience.

You must attract before you can engage. You must engage before you convert.

Let's look at a few examples of each of these steps and see which of them we can measure and which we can't.

Some examples of the attraction phase:

- * Somebody visits your web site. You can measure this by looking at your web site statistics. The numbers to look at are the "page views" and the "visitors". (Only amateurs look at "hits", which are not a meaningful statistic.)

- * Somebody visits an entry in your blog. You can measure this by looking at your blog statistics. Again, you care about page views and visitors.

- * Somebody receives a forwarded copy of your email newsletter. I don't know of any way to measure this.

- * Somebody views your Facebook fan page. You can measure this using Facebook Insights. The number to look at is the Total Tab Views.

- * Somebody sees a retweet of something you posted on Twitter or hears about your Twitter name in some other way. I don't know how to measure this.

In each of these examples, somehow or other, a member of your target audience was exposed to your ideas. It may have lasted a few seconds. It may have lasted hours. Many of those exposures had no result.

The ones you care about are those that led to engagement and eventually to conversion.

As I noted earlier, you can either think short-term or long-term. In short-term marketing, the engagement and conversion either happen right away or they don't happen at all. Let's look at some examples of that first, and then we'll look at some examples of long-term engagement and conversion.

Some examples of short-term engagement/conversion:

- * Somebody who has never heard of you reads an article on your web site or blog and finds it so interesting and useful that they get interested in you and your writing. They notice an ad for your books on your page,

click through to the product description, and buy a book.

* Somebody who has never heard of you sees a post on Facebook or Twitter about your book, clicks the link to the product description, and buys the book.

In either of these cases, if you want to measure the process, you need to be able to measure clicks to the product description and then measure sales.

You can measure clicks by using link-shortener tools that include statistics. For example, bit.ly or is.gd. Then you can look at the statistics to see how many people actually clicked the link and when.

You can measure sales by signing up as an affiliate for the various online retailers. Then your link to their sales pages can include your affiliate code. You'll get a report of all sales made, so you'll know if all those clicks are actually selling anything. As a bonus, you'll earn money for each sale.

There is nothing wrong with short-term marketing, but it's basically a one-shot deal. You either make the sale or you don't. Making the sale has a low probability. If you don't, you've lost the potential customer and may never make a sale to her.

This is why long-term marketing is important. It gives you more time to engage your target audience and build a relationship before making a sale.

Some examples of the engagement phase in long-term marketing:

* Somebody reads an article on your web site and finds it so useful and interesting that they subscribe to your email newsletter. You can measure this by looking at your new email subscriptions.

* Somebody reads an article on your blog and finds it so useful and interesting that they subscribe to the

RSS feed on your blog. You can measure this by looking at your new blog subscriptions.

* Somebody reads a forwarded copy of your email newsletter and comes to your web site. I don't know of any way to measure this.

* Somebody Likes your Facebook fan page. You can measure this by looking at your new Likes.

* Somebody finds your Twitter feed interesting enough that they follow you on Twitter. You can measure this by looking at your new Twitter followers.

Some examples of the conversion phase in long-term marketing:

* A potential customer has been following you for some time. They may have been subscribing to your email newsletter, reading your blog, following you on Facebook or Twitter. One day, you mention one of your books and this person decides to check it out. They click through the link to your product description and buy the book.

* A potential customer has been following you for some time. You have a new book that is launching and you've created a number of incentives for anyone who buys during your launch period. You send out a notification via email, your blog, your Facebook fan page, or Twitter. Your potential customers know you, know that they want your book, and want the incentives, so they click through to the sales page and buy it.

You can measure the clicks and the sales exactly as I described above for short-term marketing.

Notice that with long-term marketing, you have many chances to make a sale. For as long as your potential customer stays engaged with you, you have an opportunity to keep selling. You should not abuse this by being a pest, nor should you waste the opportunity completely. Find the right balance.

Why should you measure your marketing efforts?

Because when you measure your marketing, you know if it's working. And when you make a change, you can tell if you've improved things or disimproved them.

If you don't measure your marketing, then you're flying blind.

Knowledge is power. Marketing measurements give you marketing power. You know the drill -- with great power comes great responsibility, so be a good citizen.

5) What's New At AdvancedFictionWriting.com

I spent almost three weeks in August at writing conferences, including two weeks in New Zealand. That was great fun, but I'm now back home and hard at work again.

I'm currently working on a new edition of my novel DOUBLE VISION, to be released in e-book format. I'm also revamping my personal web site.

My book, WRITING FICTION FOR DUMMIES, has been selling well since it began shipping more than two years ago. For the last year, it's been the hottest selling fiction-writing book in the Kindle store. You can find out all about WRITING FICTION FOR DUMMIES here:
<http://www.AdvancedFictionWriting.com/info/wffd>

If you've already bought the book and like it, I'd be delighted if you wrote an Amazon review. Thanks to those of you who already have! I appreciate you!

I've also been gratified at the response to my flagship

software product, "Snowflake Pro," which makes it fast, easy, and fun to work through the steps of my wildly popular Snowflake method for designing a novel. You can find out more about Snowflake Pro at:
<http://www.SnowflakeProSoftware.com>

I normally teach at four to six writing conferences per year. In 2012, I've now taught at four conferences and that's all the teaching I'll do this year.

I expect to also attend the ACFW conference in Dallas in September (where I will take a few 15-minute mentoring appointments) and the Novelists, Inc. conference in New York in October (where I will just be enjoying the workshops and hanging out with writers).

Why don't I teach at more conferences? Because teaching is an incredibly demanding blood sport and it sucks a huge amount of energy out of my tiny brain. I prefer to put my absolute best into a few locations than to muddle through at many.

If you'd like me to teach at your conference in 2013 or beyond, email me to find out how outrageously expensive I am. Please be aware that I'm cutting back on my teaching in 2013 to give me a chance to tackle some long-standing projects.

If you'd just like to hear me teach, I have a number of recordings and e-books that are outrageously cheap. Details here:
<http://www.AdvancedFictionWriting.com/info>

6) Randy Recommends . . .

I don't take paid ads for this e-zine. I do, however, recommend people I like.

I'm a huge fan of Margie Lawson's courses, both the ones she teaches in person and the ones she sells on her web site at
<http://www.MargieLawson.com>

Margie is a psychologist who applies what she knows about human psychology to writing fiction. I believe her material is brilliant. Check her out on her web site!

I've also become a fan of Thomas Umstattd's terrific uncommon-sense thoughts on internet marketing. You can read Thomas's blog at:
<http://www.AuthorMedia.com/blog>

Thomas and his team are especially skilled at helping authors create a powerful web site using WordPress blogs. I am a huge fan of this approach, since it gives the most bang for the buck in an author site. Find out more about this at:
<http://www.AuthorMedia.com>

I'm watching Thomas's latest venture with interest: The BestSeller Society. I don't know enough to have an opinion on it yet, but wanted to mention it because Thomas is a bright guy who usually has smart things to say. More info on it here:
<http://www.bestsellersociety.com>

Please be aware that in this section I ONLY recommend folks who have never asked me to do so. Tragically, this means that if you ask me to list you here, I will be forced to say no.

7) Jim Bell's Weekend Seminars

My good friend Jim Bell is doing a series of weekend seminars this summer in Austin, Nashville, and Cincinnati.

You may recognize him as the author of the best-selling book PLOT & STRUCTURE, one of the very best books on how to write fiction. Or you may remember that Jim is the former fiction columnist for Writer's Digest.

I have known Jim for many years and I have a high level of trust in his ability to deliver the goods.

Jim is the guy who first taught me Three-Act Structure years ago, and he's a terrific speaker and teacher. I've learned a lot from him.

Jim asked if he could buy an ad in my e-zine for his seminars. I don't accept paid ads, but Jim is a great guy who contributes a lot to the writing community.

So I offered to give Jim a free mention here on one condition:

I asked Jim to give readers of my e-zine a discount.

He agreed to give you all a \$30 discount. The normal price of one of these 2-day seminars is \$399. You can get it for \$369 with the discount code ADVEZ.

What do you get for that \$369? Here's the writeup Jim sent me:

Two power packed days to take your fiction writing to the next level . . . and beyond. For both traditional and self-published writers. Lunch is included both days.

Among the things you'll learn:

* The Most Important Thing Every Successful Novel Must Do . . . and How to Do It

- * Mastering the Seven Critical Success Factors of Fiction
- * The Emotion Quotient for Grabbing Readers and Not Letting them Go
- * Plotting With Perfect Structure, Every Time -- Never Write a Weak Story Again
- * Thematic Unity, What Most Writers Want But Can't Figure Out. We'll Figure.
- * Creating Characters That "Jump Off the Page"
- * How to Write Scenes With No Dull Parts
- * The 8 Essentials and 12 Tools of Great Dialogue
- * The Secrets of Making Readers Turn the Pages
- * Creating a Compelling Voice and Style

Plus: interactive exercises that will add depth and appeal to your current project.

You can get more info and sign up for one of these weekend seminars at the following web pages. (If you sign up, use the promo code ADVEZ to get the \$30 discount.)

Austin, June 16 & 17

Too late to sign up for this one! It's done.

Nashville, August 11 & 12

Too late to sign up for this one too!

Cincinnati, September 15 & 16

<http://jsbcincinnati.eventbrite.com/>

Have fun!

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