

# 2022 NWG Conference Class Descriptions

*Thursday*  
*1:30 pm*

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## The World is Your Oyster (Kindle Select vs. Wide) – Heather Eager

No one will ever have the answer to the never-ending KU vs Wide debate. But whichever you choose for your ebooks and audiobooks, wide is a mindset that everyone should adopt. Learn what wide opportunities are available for authors, including everything from libraries and translations to phone apps and gaming rights.

Heather Eager (writing as Kat Bellemore) is the author of the Borrowing Amor small town romance series. Deciding to have New Mexico as the setting for the series was an easy choice, considering its amazing sunsets, blue skies and tasty green chile. That, and she currently lives there with her husband and two cute kids. They hope to one day add a dog to the family, but for now, the native animals of the desert will have to do. Though, Kat wouldn't mind ridding the world of scorpions and centipedes. They're just mean. You can visit Kat at [www.kat-bellemore.com](http://www.kat-bellemore.com).

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## Creating Characters Your Readers Know – Rachel Trusty

Learn how to channel the difficulties in your life, and struggles you've overcome, to create a character your reader knows! Make people feel as if you've had a glimpse into their hearts and homes. Put the messy parts of you to use in your stories.

Creating characters that reflect actual human thoughts and emotions is Rachel's favorite part of writing. Rachel wrote very little until her senior year of high school, when she realized that she could fill a sheet of paper with her own words. Then pretend and imaginary that lived inside her head could finally come out! Her first book was published in June 2017 when Rachel was only 18 years old. Exploring the world around her, learning about cultures and places, people watching, and taking long drives brings new inspiration to her every day.

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## The #ABCs of Online Pitching Events – Miranda Darrow

This presentation offers a behind the scenes look at online contests and how to craft a pitch that will get liked from a participating editor in the #RevPit online revision contest. The highlights include: 1. What are online pitch events 2. Four components of effective pitches: a. Hashtags b. Catchy Mash-Ups c. Pithy descriptions d. Targeting your audience 3. Miranda's Three-Ps approach to pitches 4. A calendar of recurring and upcoming pitch events, both on Twitter and other online platforms 5. A behind the scenes look at online pitch events from the perspective of a #RevPit editor, including what the organizers or gatekeepers may be looking for 6. Some online events for writers not ready for pitching, including critique partner pairing events

Miranda Darrow is an editor and story sleuth who digs deep into manuscripts to uncover the best version of the story. Miranda is a board member and contributing editor with the #RevPit online editing contest. She's also a member of the Editorial Freelancers Association, the Professional Editors Network, and a frequent presenter to writing groups. She specializes in fiction and creative non-fiction (including memoir). Her logic skills honed as an attorney are an asset in detecting and remedying timeline issues, plot inconsistencies, as well as pacing and story arc concerns.

2:30 pm

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## Writing Characters with Disabilities – Lynn Parsons

In this class you will learn how to write them realistically. Discover the characteristics of many disabilities, how to find sensitivity readers, and how to avoid offending your readers from someone who has been a special education teacher, and diagnoses learning disabilities.

Lynn Parsons has 3 published nonfiction books, including both traditional and self-published. She has retired and has too many interests to list. Dr. Parsons is currently learning to write fiction, enjoying time with her grandchildren, and traveling as much as she can.

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## How to Use TikTok to Raise Your Book Sales – Anne-Marie Meyer

Come learn how to use the social media platform that is changing author's careers.

Anne-Marie is a USA Today Bestselling Author of sweet and clean romance. She is a six figure a year author and mother of 5.

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## Behind CSI: Forensic Science in Fiction – Melissa Kreikemeier

CSI, NCIS, Criminal Minds and other crime dramas on TV are entertaining but not always accurate. This workshop will help crime writers understand the most common misconceptions in forensic science so that they can write great stories that people will love. This workshop will cover the most common forensic science questions asked by writers, focusing on how crime shows get it wrong, how long it takes to get results back, crime scenes, crime lab set-up and personnel, and small-town settings

Melissa Kreikemeier is a freelance editor and forensic science educator. She guides crime fiction authors in the use of forensic science in their books through her editing services and courses. Prior to becoming an editor, Melissa worked as a forensic scientist for 7 years in a state crime lab. She then moved overseas in 2014 to teach science. After repatriating to the USA in 2017, she began her editing career, specializing in scientific content and crime fiction/romance. She also started her website, Flowers & Forensics, which provides helpful content for fiction writers.

3:30 pm

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## Tame Your Inner Saboteur (Life Coaching) – Rachel Mohr

Break free of limiting beliefs and self-judgements getting in the way of your success and happiness. In this interactive class, attendees participate in a creative exercise that brings a fresh awareness to how they may be sabotaging themselves and providing - for many - a novel way of looking at themselves and how their mind works. The insight gained in this class helps attendees see both how their inner critics and judges operate and how they impact their lives so that they can begin turning down the volume of these Inner Saboteurs and move out of the land of self-sabotage.

Honored with #3 on Yahoo Finance's "Top 10 Life Coaches Who Will Elevate Your Life in 2021", Rachel Mohr helps female high-achievers and people pleasers step out of overwhelm and exhaustion and into the bright lives they're meant to live. Rachel is working on her first novel wherein her character uses Rachel's trainings as an ICF Positive Intelligence and NLP Coach and Certified Clinical Anxiety Treatment Professional. In addition to coaching, speaking and writing, Rachel loves spending time with her husband and two kids, hip-hop dancing, eating dark chocolate or Mexican food and curling up with a good book.

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## The Business of Writing: 7 Steps to Treating Your Writing Like a Business – Brandy Prettyman

Whether writing as a hobby or as a career, all writers should be treating their writing with the seriousness it deserves. Are you equipped to run your writing like a business? It is an important skill for writers at all points of their writing journey to develop. Join Brandy Prettyman with the 7 steps to ensure you are ready to make the transition from hobby to business! We will cover topics that range from business entities, taxes, tracking expenses and more!

Brandy L Prettyman is a writer, singer, painter, mother, Army veteran, and coffee snob. A professional jack-of-all-trades, Brandy has earned a Bachelor in Business Administration and spent the last decade (maybe it's longer, but let's not make this awkward) writing poetry and working on a debut novel. Brandy lives and works from home in Papillion, Nebraska, and like to spend her spare time traveling the world with her trusty four-legged sidekick Mary Puppins. Most days she can be found drinking a large latte at her writing desk, frantically writing her thoughts down in verse before they disappear.

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## The Basics of Indie Publishing – Victorine E. Lieske

You've decided to indie publish your book. Great! But what are the first steps? Indie publishing can be quite lucrative, but it can also be overwhelming. With so many options, it can be difficult to figure out what is most important. This class will break down what you'll need to do in easy, actionable steps that are prioritized so you know what must be done, and what can be done if you have the time. We'll also discuss best practices to give your book its best chance.

Victorine self-published her first book, *Not What She Seems*, in April of 2010. In March of 2011, *Not What She Seems* began its 6 week run on The New York Times best-selling eBook list. By May 2011 she had sold over 100,000 copies. Victorine's first romantic comedy novel hit the USA Today Bestselling books list in January 2015. Victorine and her husband live in Nebraska with their four children and two cats. She loves all things romance and watches *While You Were Sleeping* about once every six months. When she's not writing, she's designing book covers for authors or making something with her extensive yarn collection.

4:30 pm

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## The Unputdownable Page: How to Create Stories Your Reader Cannot Put Down –

Jennifer Nielson

Unputdownable probably isn't a word, but it should be, and it should apply to your writing. Come find out how it's done!

Jennifer Nielsen lives in the mountains of Northern Utah with her family and a cat that hallucinates. She is the New York Times Bestselling Author of the Ascendance Series, Traitor Game Series, and other fantasy novels, and the historical novels including A NIGHT DIVIDED, WORDS ON FIRE, and her newest release, LINES OF COURAGE, among others. She loves old books, great movies, and dark chocolate, though not necessarily in that order.

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## Bring Order to Your Series with Plottr – Heather Justesen

Trying to keep track of character data for a large series can be a major pain, but plotting software can seriously help you keep track of it all. In this class you'll learn how to use Plottr to track characters' info, create tags and groups to make them easier to search, build your own templates to simplify timelines and your favorite character bible characteristics, and more.

Heather Justesen has published nearly 40 titles in the romance and mystery genres and has sold over 200,000 books. She's currently studying for her MFA in creative writing at UMKC.

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## Writing in Deep POV – Amey Zeigler

How do you focus in on your character's sensibilities? How can I deepen my character's POV? In this class you will learn techniques to help you cut away the fat on your manuscripts to get closer to the feelings, thoughts and motivations of your characters for a riveting read.

Amey Zeigler is an award-winning author of romantic comedies and mysteries. Her laugh-out-loud Rom-Com, *The Swiss Mishap*, won third place in the Book Buyer's Best for Contemporary Romance. Her ten years of theater training in college and high school inspired her to narrate her own books. She spins stories with humor, charm, and heart, often with a dash of action and adventure. When she's not writing, she is teasing her three kids, globe-trotting with her husband (for book research of course!), or trying new things.

*Friday*  
*9:00 am*

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## Writing Strong Supporting Characters of the Four-Legged Variety – Jackie Wallick

Learn how to write furry supporting characters that come alive on the page and steal the hearts of your readers. Animals provide great opportunities to move the plot forward, break tension, set the tone of a scene or an entire story, and showcase personalities, strengths, and flaws of your human characters.

Jackie Wallick grew up in northeast Nebraska. She spent ten years in Alaska before settling in Omaha. She's a full-time writer of sweet contemporary romance under the pen name Jacqueline Winters and has published 19 books. Her most popular Sunset Ridge series is coined the "Moose Books" by her readers. She's an animal lover and enjoys creating memorable furry-four legged characters who steal the show.

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## So, You Want to Write a Strong Heroine - Michelle Pennington

There's no doubt the world is hungry for more strong female characters. So why is it that so many storytellers struggle to create them? In this class we'll study examples from pop culture that got it right, and examples that got it wrong, as we analyze how to use backstory, conflict, goals, and characterization to create heroines that are truly strong.

Michelle Pennington is a USA Today Bestselling author of clean Young Adult, Contemporary, Regency, and Fantasy Romance as well as Romantic Comedy. The genre might change, but her characters will always be falling in love. She also writes on Kindle Vella as Luna Lee. When she's not writing she spends her time quoting movies with her husband and making messes faster than her four kids. She used to have a lot of hobbies, but now she's mostly just addicted to k-dramas.

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## Editing Samples 101: Red Flags for Indie Authors - Melissa Kreikemeier

One of the key deciding factors for an indie author when hiring an editor should be the editing sample. You've gotten the samples back from your prospective editors, but now what? What should you look for in the editing sample? What are the red flags? This workshop will discuss the top 10 red flags that indie authors should be aware of when evaluating editing samples and how to pick the best editor for them.

Melissa Kreikemeier is a freelance editor and forensic science educator. She guides crime fiction authors in the use of forensic science in their books through her editing services and courses.

10:00 am

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## Writing Villains Your Readers Will Love to Hate (2-hour Master class) - Jennifer Nielson

A great villain will define the story, mold the hero's journey, and attract readers in droves. Come to this class prepared to evaluate your current projects and to create new villains your readers will love to hate.

Jennifer Nielsen lives in the mountains of Northern Utah with her family and a cat that hallucinates. She is the New York Times Bestselling Author of the Ascendance Series, Traitor Game Series, and other fantasy novels, and the historical novels including A NIGHT DIVIDED, WORDS ON FIRE, and her newest release, LINES OF COURAGE, among others. She loves old books, great movies, and dark chocolate, though not necessarily in that order.

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## Writing Stylistically for a Younger Audience - Tamara Hart Heiner

Writing stylistically for a younger audience: setting, dialogue, show vs tell; it's different for kids books! How to change your style to match the genre.

Tamara is the author of several children's book series, including the Cassandra Jones series and Guardian Angel Academy. She Gets inspiration from the four creatures she created from her own DNA who spend their days causing chaos.

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## The Art of Wise Cracks, Banter, Humorous Retorts, and Smart Assery in Dialogue - Katherine Wielechowski

In this class, we will be looking at what makes natural, funny dialogue and how best to utilize sarcasm and banter to give characters personality.

Katherine has dabbled in many genres including historical fiction, fantasy, romance, nonfiction, paranormal, and action. She has a wide range of interests and experiences that she enjoys sharing with anybody who will sit still long enough to listen.

11:00 am

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## Writing Villains Your Readers Will Love to Hate (2<sup>nd</sup> Half) - Jennifer Nielson

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### Introduction to Poetry - Charlene Pierce

Poetry provides an opportunity for us to tell our stories in a way that engages the reader intimately. In this workshop, we will learn the tools of the trade for writing poetry. We will discuss what makes a poem a poem. You will leave this workshop with ideas and the framework to write your own poetry.

Charlene Pierce has published poetry and prose in several anthologies and literary journals. She loves to inspire others through the many writing groups she's involved in and workshops she leads. She is the President of the Nebraska Poetry Society and earned her BFA from UNO. She invites you to connect with her on social media @CharWithAPen.

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### Newsletters from Scratch - Cindy Gunderson

Have you heard people say over and over again that you need an author newsletter, but you aren't sure where to start? Not too long ago, I was in this exact same position - starting completely from scratch and feeling quite overwhelmed. Come and learn some simple ideas and find fantastic resources to begin building your newsletter in an authentic, stress-free way.

Cindy Gunderson is best known for her award-winning and best-selling series, the Tier Trilogy. She has written nine full-length novels, as well as an art appreciation series for children under the pen name Cindy Prince.

1:30 pm

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## Building Conflict that Captivates - Lacy Anderson

A story is nothing without conflict. As much as we hate to put our beloved characters through hard times, it's those hard times that keep our readers glued to the page. In this class we'll explore different ways to build conflict into your works and keep the reader captivated by your story. For pantsers and plotters alike!

Jocelynn Fitch isn't a billionaire in disguise, an ancient vampire in line for the crown, or a rock star looking for love - but she does love to write about them under her pen name Lacy Andersen. A graduate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha with an MFA in writing, she currently lives in South Dakota in the US with her loving husband, two precious kids, and two furry pups. Supplying happily-ever-afters is her passion.

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## Behind the Scenes Drama - Lisa Swinton

If you've ever seen a movie, been to the theater, or a concert, then you know the real drama is offstage. What the audience sees is a small fraction of what's really going on. Go behind the scenes to up the setting and the tension between your characters. Music, theater, film, and TV can be used across most genres to add depth to your novel and give your characters a different outlet for their emotions and backstory. Learn how in this class.

Award-winning author Lisa Swinton loves romance, travel, Disney, Jane Austen, and tidying up, not necessarily in that order. When she's not writing and being a mom, you might find her singing on stage.

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## Nonfiction Writing - Lynn Parsons

Discover your areas of expertise, learn if there is a need for your subject, and learn the process for writing a nonfiction book.

Lynn Parsons has 3 published nonfiction books, including both traditional and self-published. She has retired and has too many interests to list. Dr. Parsons is currently learning to write fiction, enjoying time with her grandchildren, and traveling as much as she can.

2:30 pm

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### Fix the Sagging Middle - Johann Twiss

If you want to learn how to fix your sagging middle, (And I'm not talking about those extra pounds you put on during the holidays. We won't be doing any hot yoga), then this is the class for you. Discover proven tips and tricks to get your story back on track, excite you as a writer, and most importantly turn your readers into insomniacs as they stay up way past their bedtime turning pages into the wee hours of the night. We'll discuss 14 different types of chapter-ending hooks and other techniques to help you keep your story churning forward through that saggy and soggy middle.

Johan Twiss is passionate about writing clean science fiction and fantasy stories. He has nine published works, including his award-winning novel, *4 Years Trapped in My Mind Palace*, and the *I Am Sleepless* series. Johan doubles as an audiobook narrator is the recipient of the Lonestar.Ink Rising Star Award and was a finalist in the Screencraft Cinematic Book Competition. Learn more at [www.johantwiss.com](http://www.johantwiss.com).

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### Know Your Weaponry: Blades! - Katherine Wielechowski

From the beginning of time, humans have utilized stabby sticks of death to hunt, protect, and kill. When humans learned how to manipulate metal, blades were soon the primary weapon across the world. This class will look at a few of the many types of blades from different cultures across various time periods throughout history. Writers of most historical fiction subgenres will find this information useful to add accuracy and authenticity to their stories.

Katherine has dabbled in many genres including historical fiction, fantasy, romance, nonfiction, paranormal, and action. She has a wide range of interests and experiences that she enjoys sharing with anybody who will sit still long enough to listen.

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### Scrivener LIVE! - Danyelle Ferguson

Join author Danyelle Ferguson for this live demo of the awesomeness of plotting and writing in Scrivener. From creation to exporting your novel for beta readers, we'll walk through it all.

Danyelle Ferguson is the award-winning author of the *Crystal Creek* sweet romance novels. She loves stories that feature strong women conquering difficult challenges and who find love along the way. When she's away from her laptop, Danyelle enjoys dancing in the kitchen with her family, all things pink, and is obsessed with pretty pens. Follow her online for IRL goofiness, cat photobombs, and writing life updates.

3:30 pm

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## The Lies Characters Tell Themselves - Lisa Catmull & Rachel Mohr

Make your characters more relatable and realistic using the research-backed patterns of thinking, feeling, and reacting for each of the 10 most common “Saboteurs” or ways that humans get “hijacked” and throw themselves into the land of self-sabotage.

Based on Shirzad Chamine’s bestselling book *Positive Intelligence*, you’ll learn the thought patterns and characteristics of Judge, Avoider, Controller, Hyper-Achiever, Hyper-Rational, Hyper-Vigilant, Pleaser, Restless, Stickler, and Victim.

Learn how the lies form, the impact they have, and how people justify these lies to themselves. With the specific lies each saboteur tells, you’ll have all the ammunition you need to sink your character.

Honored with #3 on Yahoo Finance’s “Top 10 Life Coaches Who Will Elevate Your Life in 2021”, Rachel Mohr helps female high-achievers and people pleasers step out of overwhelm and exhaustion and into the bright lives they’re meant to live.

Lisa H. Catmull is a contemporary and historical romance author. She’s lived in seven states, four countries, and moved almost forty times. She enjoys traveling, but her favorite journeys are in books.

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## Lighten Up Francis! Silencing Your Inner Critic - Sarah Madelin

Writing is one of the most vulnerable creative endeavors, and allowing your words to spill out onto paper can amplify the negative voice in your head. This class explores different ways to lovingly--or not--tell your inner critic to stuff a sock in it. From tackling writer's block to moving past even a chronic fear of failure, this feel-good class will help you conquer your self-doubt so you can pursue your purpose as an author.

Sarah Madelin writes contemporary women's fiction and romantic comedy novels that blend humor, heart, and romance. Her characters are learning to own their journeys and embrace love--for their families, their communities, their partners, and themselves. She devoted a decade to running a custom stationery boutique, so she's also enthusiastic about entrepreneurship and design. In addition to writing, she works as an editor and interview coach for healthcare professionals, and is deeply committed to helping people on all paths achieve their dreams. Sarah lives in Colorado with her husband, twin kiddos, and a ridiculous number of pets.

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## Emotional Connections in Romance - Victorine Lieske

Writing romance can be tricky. You must make your reader believe that your characters are falling in love. It doesn't work just to show surface attraction. Your characters must make an emotional connection in the midst of the internal conflict that plagues them. In this class we will explore how to do this so your reader will swoon when your characters finally decide that love conquers all.

Victorine self-published her first book, *Not What She Seems*, in April of 2010. In March of 2011, *Not What She Seems* began its 6 week run on The New York Times best selling eBook list. By May 2011 she had sold over 100,000 copies. Victorine's first romantic comedy novel hit the USA Today Bestselling books list in January 2015. Victorine and her husband live in Nebraska with their four children and two cats. She loves all things romance and watches *While You Were Sleeping* about once every six months. When she's not writing, she's designing book covers for authors or making something with her extensive yarn collection.

*Saturday*  
*9:00 am*

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### **Creativity as a Skill - Rachel Trusty**

Creativity is a skill that we can use when we choose to, instead of depending on inspiration to strike. That never means sacrificing creativity. Learn how to trust your creativity and stop waiting for the muse!

Creating characters that reflect actual human thoughts and emotions is Rachel's favorite part of writing. Rachel wrote very little until her senior year of high school, when she realized that she could fill a sheet of paper with her own words. Then pretend and imaginary that lived inside her head could finally come out! Her first book was published in June 2017 when Rachel was only 18 years old. Exploring the world around her, learning about cultures and places, people watching, and taking long drives brings new inspiration to her every day.

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### **How to Mess Everything Up; And Then Try Again - Cindy Gunderson**

Have you ever felt stuck in your writing ambitions or anxious that you've made too many mistakes to be successful? I promise that you don't have to be and you haven't. Come learn how to use these mistakes and barriers to your benefit as you pull yourself back up for another shot.

Cindy Gunderson is best known for her award-winning and best-selling series, the Tier Trilogy. She has written nine full-length novels, as well as an art appreciation series for children under the pen name Cindy Prince.

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### **DIY Book Narration (2-Hour Master Class) - Johann Twiss**

Have you ever thought about narrating your own book, but you're not sure where to start? In this class we will talk about the equipment you'll need to start, narration tips and warmups, how to edit your narration, how to use ACX and other distribution channels, along with a list of sites and videos to learn more about audio book narration.

Johan Twiss is passionate about writing clean science fiction and fantasy stories. He has nine published works, including his award-winning novel, 4 Years Trapped in My Mind Palace, and the I Am Sleepless series. Johan doubles as an audiobook narrator is the recipient of the Lonestar.Ink Rising Star Award and was a finalist in the Screencraft Cinematic Book Competition. Learn more at [www.johantwiss.com](http://www.johantwiss.com).

10:00 am

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### Mess with Their Heads (psychological wounds) - Lisa Catmull

You know your character needs psychological wounds, but what are they? I'll pair some of the most common thinking errors with some basic personality types, based on the Clifton Strengths. Mix and match and mess with your character! Give them some serious baggage to overcome.

Lisa H. Catmull is a contemporary and historical romance author. She's lived in seven states, four countries, and moved almost forty times. She enjoys traveling, but her favorite journeys are in books.

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### Plotting a Series Without Going Insane - Danyelle Ferguson

Readers L-O-V-E to dive into an awesome series. Three, six, or more books later and authors just want to pull their hair out! This class will cover the importance of setting & cast of characters, connecting book plots, and keeping all the details straight.

Danyelle Ferguson is the award-winning author of the Crystal Creek sweet romance novels. She loves stories that feature strong women conquering difficult challenges and who find love along the way. When she's away from her laptop, Danyelle enjoys dancing in the kitchen with her family, all things pink, and is obsessed with pretty pens. Follow her online for IRL goofiness, cat photobombs, and writing life updates.

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### DIY Book Narration (2<sup>nd</sup> Half) - Johann Twiss

11:00 am

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## Layered Stories: Going deeper with your plots, characters, and theme (Best for intermediate writers, but all levels can join) - Jennifer Nielson

If you feel your stories lack depth or “heart,” these are the techniques for mining every literary moment for the most that it can provide.

Jennifer Nielsen lives in the mountains of Northern Utah with her family and a cat that hallucinates. She is the New York Times Bestselling Author of the Ascendance Series, Traitor Game Series, and other fantasy novels, and the historical novels including A NIGHT DIVIDED, WORDS ON FIRE, and her newest release, LINES OF COURAGE, among others. She loves old books, great movies, and dark chocolate, though not necessarily in that order.

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## Writing Blurbs, Taglines, and Ad Copy to Sell Your Books - Anne-Marie Meyer

You have a book your readers want to read, they just don't know it yet. Come learn how to market your book that grabs your reader and causes them to push the "Buy Now" button.

Anne-Marie is a USA Today Bestselling Author of sweet and clean romance. She is a six figure a year author and mother of 5.

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## The Recipe for Perfect Romance - Lisa Swinton

Start with a strong loveable heroine and a book boyfriend swoon worthy hero. Add chemistry, connection, and quirky secondary characters. Mix in conflict, adhesion, and repulsion. Bake at 50,000 words. Frost with a tear jerking tear apart. Ice with HFA or HFN. Plate your perfect romance that will have your readers leaving rave reviews and craving the next serving of your sweet romance.

Award-winning author Lisa Swinton loves romance, travel, Disney, Jane Austen, and tidying up, not necessarily in that order. When she's not writing and being a mom, you might find her singing on stage.

2:00 pm

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## Is there a Gun in that Story? Don't Blow It! - Doreen Pfof

Chekov famously counseled that if a gun appears in Act One, it had better go off in Act Two. But a writer who wants to avoid mistakes needs more advice than that: From the nomenclature, safety and handling of guns to an understanding of how firearms work. You can't learn it all in one session, but get the basics, plus pointers on how to acquire the knowledge you need. Taught by an experienced hunter/gun owner and hunter-safety instructor.

Doreen Pfof is author of *This River Beneath the Sky: A Year on the Platte* (University of Nebraska Press 2016) and a freelance writer and editor. She earned her Masters Degree in English with Creative Writing Emphasis at UNK and is currently pursuing a PhD at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

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## Simple Stylish Author Websites You Can Design Yourself - Sarah Madelin

A decade ago, as a new entrepreneur, I invested a huge chunk of my startup funds in hiring a designer to create my e-commerce website. It was beautiful, on-brand, and full of vulnerabilities. When it was hacked and I couldn't afford to fix it, I cut my losses and designed a new website myself. Over the years, I've channeled those self-taught skills into creating stylish web and e-commerce sites for authors, artists, and small businesses. In this class, we'll explore the easiest ways authors can design their own beautifully branded home on the web--no coding knowledge or design training needed! We'll take a look at branding for authors, cover the important pages authors need to include on their sites, review easy-to-use hosted website builders (including a great free option!), and explore how to source low-cost images that make it all come together. Authors should leave with a plan for how to brainstorm, design, and manage their own on-brand, low-hassle, inexpensive website.

Sarah Madelin writes contemporary women's fiction and romantic comedy novels that blend humor, heart, and romance. Her characters are learning to own their journeys and embrace love--for their families, their communities, their partners, and themselves. She devoted a decade to running a custom stationery boutique, so she's also enthusiastic about entrepreneurship and design. In addition to writing, she works as an editor and interview coach for healthcare professionals, and is deeply committed to helping people on all paths achieve their dreams. Sarah lives in Colorado with her husband, twin kiddos, and a ridiculous number of pets.

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## Kindle Vella Domination - Michelle Pennington

Amazon's new serial fiction platform is an exciting platform where you can share your stories in a whole new format and with new readers. This class will teach you how to write compelling episodic fiction, show you how to navigate the technical aspects and rules for publishing on the platform, and give you great tips and tricks for making your story a Kindle Vella success!

Michelle Pennington is a USA Today Bestselling author of clean Young Adult, Contemporary, Regency, and Fantasy Romance as well as Romantic Comedy. The genre might change, but her characters will always be falling in love. She also writes on Kindle Vella as Luna Lee. When she's not writing she spends her time quoting movies with her husband and making messes faster than her four kids. She used to have a lot of hobbies, but now she's mostly just addicted to k-dramas.

3:00 pm

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### Binge-watching to Improve Your Storytelling - Amey Zeigler

Movies and series are a great way to learn how to tell a story, but you can't just watch them to get the most out of your leisure time. In this class, you will learn how to watch movies and TV shows to improve your craft, you will see why binge-watching can be an effective tool for learning your craft, and how to make the most of your guilty pleasures by applying what you learn.

Amey Zeigler is an award-winning author of romantic comedies and mysteries. Her laugh-out-loud Rom-Com, *The Swiss Mishap*, won third place in the Book Buyer's Best for Contemporary Romance. Her ten years of theater training in college and high school inspired her to narrate her own books. She spins stories with humor, charm, and heart, often with a dash of action and adventure. When she's not writing, she is teasing her three kids, globe-trotting with her husband (for book research of course!), or trying new things.

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### Swag Boxes - Tamara Hart Heiner

Tamara is the author of several children's book series, including the Cassandra Jones series and Guardian Angel Academy. She Gets inspiration from the four creatures she created from her own DNA who spend their days causing chaos.

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### Turning Life Into Art: Memoir Writing - Margaret Lukas

Life is a quest, and memoir is a quest to touch something new in the mundane, often messiness, of living. This class will help participants produce writing that pushes beyond themselves and out into the world. The class will clarify the reach of memoir, its purpose and effect on the world; teach memoirists how to grab readers' immediate attention; and discuss excavating truth from the past.

Margaret Lucas has a BFA in writing from the University of Nebraska-Omaha, MFA from Rainier Writer's Workshop in Tacoma Washington. Taught for over a decade in Writer's Workshop, BFA program at the University of Nebraska-Omaha. A past contributor to NEBRASKAland Magazine. Current president of the Omaha branch of American Pen Women. Novels: *Farthest House*, (2015), *River People*, (2019), *The Broken Statue* 2021. Recipient of Nebraska Arts Council Fellowship Award, Winner of High Plains Book Award. "Yellow Bird," (short story) winner of several awards, produced as a "short," by Smiling Toad Productions in Canada, premiered at Cannes Film Festival.