

REFLECTIONS on our Published Books of 2009

Patricia L. Brooks, MAOM, speaker, author, publishing consultant

Brooks Goldmann Publishing, LLC www.blog.brooksgoldmannpublishing.com

THE INITIAL CONTACT:

Meeting our authors for the first time is usually serendipity through my knowing another woman writer or a contact from one of my speaking engagements. Some come from our website and many have my card when they call, given to them by a friend or found in a coffee shop. We immediately start talking about writing, usually sitting in a coffee shop. Our relationship is cemented.

Some of our potential clients share mutual acquaintances with us and know our coming together was meant to be. They seek us to help them independently publish their book. I write this reflection of 2009 as part of a greater plan for both their books and our time together. We help writers in various ways and are eager to give back to the community.

THE FIRST MEETING:

Our first meeting with the budding author is to discuss taking their manuscript or notes (if a ghostwriter is needed) through the independent publishing process and launch their work as a tangible book to enhance their goals and purpose. Most writers ask me to help in the post-marketing of the book too with a book review and media release. While being available to them early on with a peer review and commitments in our proposal and contract, we pledge to our author to continue with them long after the initial launch.

While answering the writer's inquiries into what needs to be done to make this all happen, and their determination to get the book out, we accept the challenge. To look at all the opportunities available in the many facets of publishing, we make this experience function exceptionally well by setting up a team and selecting the best vendors (ghostwriter, editor, designer, printer to name a few) for the client. All plans are in writing, including the proposal and contract with us and the contacted vendor.

THE INTERVIEW:

The writer relates their creative side by sharing their experiences as a professional or novice writer. They elaborate for us how they opted for a traditional career in life "to earn a living", but now want to be a writer first, and "to have a life" as a published author. Using a more avant-garde approach to their creative life today, they relate to us over and over again that they write first for themselves and then for the reader.

We talk in our first meeting about their childhood and young adult encounters with writing so I can have a full picture of their writing life and commitment, as well as how writing has sustained them. Most of these writers are eager for us to give feedback on their manuscript (first 30 pages or first three chapters) before we embark on a contract. Since our paths could easily have crossed earlier in our writing life, our souls have some stories that resonate with each other in all of the manuscripts we select. I enjoy the peer review process and give a full report to them after reading their submission.

THE DECISION:

When asked to be their publishing consultant and to read their manuscripts or chapters as a peer reviewer prior to the proofreader, editor or designer, I am honored and accept immediately (my partner husband also does peer reviews). Although I am flattered about the peer review, I know it will be one of the most difficult aspects of our relationship and I do not take it lightly. My feedback must be honest and sensitive. Being the publishing consultant enlists my expertise, but to accommodate the author's voice and honor their vision in a peer review I know I will be challenged.

In accepting the job of peer reviewer whole heartedly and with fierce abandon, I begin reading daily 10-15 pages each morning. Doing the exercises and questions I prepare for myself will be part of my final report to the writer. While opening my heart to the possibilities of their work and learning more about my new writer friend, I forge ahead enjoying each new day.

Although I realize as I proceed through their writing, which can be daunting due to unedited drafts, that their views and ideas are not necessarily mine I enhance my life with the read. We are very selective about the types of books we publish, so I set aside an hour early each morning for this reading time. My days are enriched because I view their work as a gift and value it greatly.

THE PROCESS:

My goal is to help another up-and-coming author. My objective is to take their work through the step-by-step process for a quality book and visualize the reader involved in this endeavor as well. Transforming their life as the author did only a few years earlier, the reader will be forever changed from the experience of the book. Good and honest work in the peer review is part of our strategy for success.

Possibly spanning the course of several years, the author may have ended suffering and challenging experiences with a wonderful turn of events that tells a story of inspiration with ideas for the reader's life too. A book well worth reading has to play a role in saving the life of

the author and/or protagonist in some way while allowing the reader to hope they too can witness a transformation.

Most authors are bold and courageous in their telling of their stories and are not afraid of the risk if it means helping another soul on a spiritual search. The self-help and memoir genres are alive and well. Most people today are on a spiritual quest. I realize in my morning readings that the books we review and publish are similar creatures in many ways. Being completely involved in the manuscripts in doing the peer reviews, I see them as an opportunity for me too and take the review to fruition in a positive manner.

THE INSIGHT:

None of us, me, my husband or the authors we work with, takes rising above the “ashes of life” lightly or looks past the obvious to realize a happy life. Reading and critiquing our authors’ manuscripts or chapters is a responsibility taken to heart. It is the sweetness of the process and a critical area on the successful journey of what we can offer the author.

Just as the author’s philosophy shines in their book, it also chooses to thrive in the challenges and opportunities of launching a book to market. Our authors look to us for intuitive and creative ways to find solutions to the questions they pose for themselves in their writing plan. Their positive attitude is paramount when we accept them into our program and take responsibility for making the book launch happen for them. We share a common belief with our authors that there is something larger than ourselves involved in the creative and writing process, and that creativity is as much a part of healing as a pen is to paper.

We published three wonderful books in 2009 in the genres of self-help, spirituality and new fiction. They are written by creative and artistic souls who love their art and admire other’s art too. They come to see their life’s worth sharing in writing as well as in art.

As stated throughout many of the books we publish, the path of life is sometimes simple; it just isn’t always that easy to achieve. We help you break-out and launch your first book or another book quickly and easily.

THE FEEDBACK:

Our peer reviews captivate an approach to faith and love, courage and the science to saving the voice of the writer’s work. Most of our authors share their mind, body and spirit experiences in a mix with creativity and a love for the written word. This philosophy and attitude carries forward.

Having experienced our latest author’s work for many weeks, this philosophy is enhanced, and I have learned a lot. All of the books (listed below) have pushed me to places I have neglected

overtime. It has been a wonderful journey. Thank you, Mia, Cay and Kiki for an enlightened 2009.

It has been a privilege to meet Mia, Cay and Kiki as writer clients. We have become friends through our working together and I encourage them to get their message out to the public with appointments on Internet Radio and online social networking, speaking to women who are in need of their message and blogging to the general population who in these difficult times needs to be part of the psychology of hope.

THE APPRECIATION:

We are pleased to be a part of three more important and inspiring books. Each one of these women truly touches a chord for anyone who needs to know life can turn for the better with a slight change of attitude, a chance with faith or the courage to try new things. Cay and Mia's books are especially for the "baby boomer" generation that feels so many times to be in a poor light. All three books show us how to appreciate our lives just the way they are and to be grateful for what we have and give back.

All too often, this "baby boomer" generation of mine finds itself lost and confused when in fact we continue to make a tremendous impact on every aspect of our society. These three women author's books should be part of Wellness Community and Life Long Learning programs for early retirees and third career people who need to take stock in just what they are worth and where they can go from here.

My husband and business partner Earl, and I, would especially like these three beautiful books *The Secrets of the 100 Golden Keys*, *Remnants-ready for new life* and *Healing and the Creative Response* to be compulsory reading for the many displaced "middle aged" workers who feel they have nowhere to turn and no solutions for a life interrupted. Whether you are a "baby boomer" considering a new career or a "young-at-heart" senior person seeking answers and spiritual truths about yourself and your life, these books stand out like the artwork featured in them.

Happy New Year and enjoy the reading.

Recommending this year's books launched fall 2009:

<i>Healing and the Creative Response</i>	Cay Randall May	www.healingcreativeresponse.com
<i>Remnants-ready for new life</i>	Kiki Swanson	www.kikiswansonbooks.com
<i>The Secrets of the 100 Golden Keys</i>	Mia Pratt	www.100goldenkeys.com