



THE PENINSULA WRITER

Saturday, March 20th

**The 10 Most Common Mistakes Writers Make
when Creating Characters (and how to avoid them)**

**With:
Martha Engber**



I know, I *know!* We don't make mistakes when we create our characters. *But if we did,* I'll bet I know what those mistakes might be. So if you feel the time may come when you'll slip up, ruining that perfect record of careful, thoughtful development that leads to classic, charismatic, bestselling characters—whether for fiction or nonfiction—come to this presentation where I'll throw you not one, but

10 lifelines to help you avoid singing those My Character Done Me Wrong blues.

Martha Engber, writer/speaker/presenter, will discuss how to grow great characters. Martha is the author of *Growing Great Characters from the Ground Up: A Thorough Primer for Writers of Fiction and Nonfiction* (Central Avenue Press, 2007). She teaches and lectures to hundreds of people each year through in-person events and bookstores, conferences and meetings, as well as through on-line courses. Visit her website at www.marthaengber.com. She also maintains a blog for writers, and has author pages on GoodReads.com, Amazon Author Central, and Library Thing.

In December of 2009, her Novel *The Wind Thief* was released by Alondra Press. Homer Gallagher, author of *Tales of the Mosquito Coast* writes:

From the opening scene in the desolation of the Sahara Desert to the final conclusion on a storm-blasted mountaintop, Martha Engber weaves a haunting tale of the ultimate triumph of love between Ajay, the thief from Mumbai, and the strangely obsessed young woman Madina. Reminiscent of the late Garcia Marquez's *Erendira* and *Her Heartless Grandmother*.

CWC OPEN MIKE NIGHT



Wednesday, February 17th
7:30 PM

Twelve writers read for ten minutes each. A great opportunity for authors to get exposure and practice public speaking skills

Open to all!! Readers, writers, and passers by.

To reserve a spot, contact emcee
Jim Hanna:

OpenMic@sfpeninsulawriters.com

WHERE: Borders Books and
Music, 2925 El Camino Real, San
Mateo

650-286-1895

**FOR DETAILS ON MEETING
LOCATION, PLEASE SEE PAGE 8**

**President's message
by Tory Hartmann
March, 2010**



Creating the Emotional Journey

Plot Line Bogged Down? Try this!

Ever get into the middle of your book and your plot seems to be in a quagmire? You're scrambling to find the thread that kept it so interesting in the beginning and now the plot is positively plodding along. If that's happening to you, put your character on the couch and do an Emotional Evaluation.

1. What is the main problem facing your character?
2. What is the main *emotional* problem facing your character?
3. Was there an injury from childhood that is lingering? If so, what is the present-day representation of this injury? (It's great if you can think of a symbol of this injury.)
4. How has your character been recreating this trauma in his/her adult life?
5. Your story should trace your character's Emotional Journey both to solve the main problem of your plot, but also to achieve a satisfying emotional healing.

When your character journeys through hell, we've got to come with him and identifying with your character's Emotional Journey is a great way to hook us and keep us. It's also allows you to write with vigor and conviction. Go ahead, manipulate us! Take us on that great emotional rollercoaster. Drag us along with your reluctant hero. We'll be with you.

Tory Hartman

**The Members Showcase
Returns!!**

We're bringing back the Members Showcase Table. All meetings will now have a table available upon which members can sell their work or services.

**Are you on the Members
Gallery?**

One of the benefits of membership in the SF/Peninsula Branch of Cal Writers is posting your bio, photo and a link to your website on our website. Check out "Members" at www.cwc-peninsula.org and join the Gallery.

To get on the Gallery, send your bio with your link as well as your photo to toryhartmann@hotmail.com.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS



Have an announcement? Want to publicize an event, competition or writers forum of potential interest to other club members? If so, please submit your entries, no later than the 27th of each month for inclusion in the next newsletter to: Linda Okerlund, newsletter editor, at lokerlund@comcast.net.

Group Mentoring

Join us after the meeting for a group mentoring session, to be led by branch president, Tory Hartmann.

Aiming High: Bump your story to the next level (Continued)

Writer Tory Hartmann has studied with Elizabeth George, Tess Gerritsen, Gary Braver, Michael Palmer and most recently, New York agent and author Donald Maass. (*Writing the Breakout Novel, Fire in Fiction*) She will share with you some of the story telling techniques she has learned.

Using your own novel as a starting point, Tory will take you through a series of questions designed to help you increase tension, complicate your character's journey and reveal the bigger story lurking within your novel. So take your story to the next level and stay after the meeting for the mentoring session

SF/Peninsula Branch to Publish!!

Publishing an anthology has long been a dream of many members. In October, a group hashed out various scenarios. On demand publishing, publishing with a local printer, as well as using one of the many print services on the Internet were discussed. Although the publishing method and the finances have not been chosen, the Publishing Committee wants to keep up their momentum and has called for submissions.

It is hoped this endeavor will become an annual publication. Submissions are open to members and will be judged anonymously. The Committee has not as yet put limits on length, but cautions against pieces greater than 7500 words. The book has to be affordable!

If you have a short story, essay or poetry to submit, please follow the instructions below. Previously published material will be eligible for inclusion. At this time, you must be a member of the SF/Pen Branch of California Writers.

Submit 2 copies, double spaced, numbered pages, but **without your name on the piece**. Also include a 3 x 5 card with your name, address, and email. Send to the address below. Deadline is March 20th. Send submissions to: Tory Hartmann,
70 W. Santa Inez Ave, San Mateo, CA 94402. Put "CWC Anthology" on the outside of the envelope.

Looking for places to submit your work??



The Southeast Review 2010 Contests

World's Best Short Short Story Contest

Send up to three short-short stories per submission, accompanied by a \$15 reading fee. Each short-short story should be no more than 500 words. Include your name, contact information (email address preferred), and the title of each of your short-short stories in a very brief cover letter. Do not include personal identification information on the short-shorts themselves. **Robert Olen Butler** will judge. One winner will be chosen and awarded **\$500**. The winner and nine finalists will be published in spring/summer 2011. Label envelope: WBSSSC.

The Southeast Review Poetry Contest

Send up to three poems, no more than 10 pages total, accompanied by a \$15 reading fee. Include no more than one poem per page. Include your name, contact information (email address preferred), and the title of each of your poems in a very brief cover letter. Do not include personal identification information on the poems themselves. **Barbara Hamby** will judge. One winner will be chosen and awarded **\$500**. The winning poem and nine finalists will be published in spring/summer 2011. Label envelope: SER Poetry Contest.

The Southeast Review Narrative Nonfiction Contest

Send one piece of nonfiction, no more than 6,000 words total, accompanied by a \$15 reading fee. Include your name, contact information (email address preferred), and the title of your submission in a very brief cover letter. Do not include personal identification information on the submission itself. **Julianna Baggott** will judge. One winner will be chosen and awarded **\$500 (double the prize from last year!)**. The winning essay and two finalists will be published in spring/summer 2011. Label envelope: SER Nonfiction Contest.

General Contest Guidelines

All submissions **must be typed and sent via snail mail**. Make checks or money orders out to: The Southeast Review. Postmark deadline: **April 1, 2010**.

Friends and current or former students of the judge and those who have been affiliated with Florida State University within the last five years are ineligible.

Please **do not send an SASE**. Winners will be announced on the website in June. All contestants will receive the issue in which the winning submissions appear.

Send all submissions to:

**The Southeast Review
Department of English
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306**



Nimrod International Journal

The 32nd annual *Nimrod* Literary Awards: The Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry and The Katherine Anne Porter Prize for Fiction. **The Awards offer first prizes of \$2,000 and publication and second prizes of \$1,000 and publication, along with a trip to Tulsa to receive the Awards and take part in our annual writing conference. The postmark deadline for this year's Awards is April 30th, 2010.**

One of the oldest "little magazines" in the country, *Nimrod* has continually published new and extraordinary writers since 1956. We are dedicated to the discovery of new voices in literature, and the *Nimrod* Literary Awards are a special way to reward talented poets and fiction writers.

For more information about *Nimrod*, please visit our website at www.utulsa.edu/nimrod

Postmark Deadline: April 30, 2010

Poetry: 3-10 pages of poetry (one long poem or several short poems).

Fiction: 7,500 words maximum.

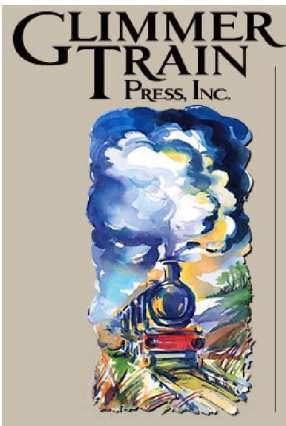
No previously published works or works accepted for publication elsewhere. Author's name must not appear on the manuscript. Include a cover sheet containing major title and subtitles, author's name, full address, phone & email.

"Contest Entry" should be clearly indicated on both the outer envelope and the cover sheet. Manuscripts should be stapled, if possible; if not, please bind with a black clip. Manuscripts will not be returned. *Nimrod* retains the right to publish any submission. Include SASE for results only. If no SASE is sent, no contest results will be sent; however, the results will be posted on *Nimrod's* Web site. Submitters must have a U.S. address by October of 2010 to enter the contest. Winners will also be brought to Tulsa for the Awards Ceremony in October. All finalists will be considered for publication.

Entry/Subscription Fee: \$20 includes both entry fee & a one-year subscription (two issues). Each entry must each be accompanied by a \$20 fee. Make checks payable to *Nimrod*.

Send to:

Nimrod Journal
Literary Contest--Fiction or Poetry
The University of Tulsa
800 S. Tucker Dr.
Tulsa, OK 74104



The March [Fiction Open](#) closes **March 31**. Word count range: 2,000 - 20,000. First place wins \$2,000 and publication in Issue 79 of *Glimmer Train Stories*. Second- and third-place winners receive \$1,000/\$600 (or, if chosen for publication, \$700).



**COMPETE FOR LITERARY PRIZES AT THE SAN MATEO COUNTY FAIR, JUNE 12-20, 2010
SHORT STORY, POETRY, AND ESSAY DIVISIONS -- PLUS 4 NEW CONTESTS!**

The four new contests are:

The "Heroes Arise" Science Fiction/Fantasy Novel Award

Sponsored by Laurel Anne Hill (Author of "Heroes Arise")

Awards Offered: \$100 first prize; \$50 second prize; \$25 third prize

Eligibility: Submit chapter one (maximum 7,500 words) of your unpublished science fiction or fantasy novel according to the entry guidelines for literary contest submissions. Please do not include a synopsis or a prologue. Use standard manuscript formatting.

San Francisco/Peninsula Writers Club: Most Promising Writer of the Year Award

Award Offered: One (1) free year's membership in the **San Francisco/Peninsula chapter** of The California Writers Club, a \$250.00 value.

Eligibility: Submit short story, poem (three (3) poems required for this contest), or essay according to the entry guidelines for literary contest submissions.

The Verna Dreisbach "Why We Ride" Nonfiction Award:

Award offered: \$100 for the winning piece

Eligibility: Submit between 2,000 (minimum) to 3500 words maximum. Open to all writers. Tell us about that special horse in your life.

The National Association of Memoir Writers: The Power of Memoir Award

Awards offered: \$100 first prize, \$50 second prize, \$25 third prize

Theme: The Light of My Life: A Mentor Who Showed me the Way

Eligibility: Submit maximum 3,000 words of your unpublished memoir story. Write about someone who changed your life, and how he/she has helped you keep the faith. Submit according to the entry guidelines, using standard manuscript formatting, double- spaced.

Deadline is 7 pm, Friday, April 30, 2010. Registration to compete can be done online, but no literary entries via email or website (www.sanmateocountyfair.com) will be accepted; written material can be mailed (must be postmarked by April 25th) or delivered to the office.

For more information about **all of the literary contests**, go to

<https://www.sanmateocountyfair.com>

Or contact Bardi Rosman Koodrin: artika@earthlink.net

Conferences and Workshops!!



Authors and Writers

**“Speed-Dating” by the Bay at our 7th Annual Signature Event
Meet-the-Agents, Editors, & Publishers Event**

[Click here to view all the agents!](#)

Saturday, March 27th, 2010

9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p. m.

Sinbad’s Restaurant, Pier 2, San Francisco

**\$50 WNBA member, \$65 non-member, or \$75 at the door
(Buffet Breakfast and Pitch Tips, included)**

Space is limited (we sold out last year) – register by March 15th

<http://wnba-sfchapter.org>

POWERHOUSE LITERARY AGENT DONALD MAASS BRINGS BREAKOUT NOVEL WRITING SECRETS TO HOOD RIVER, OR

Writers will plug in their laptops and get cracking on their "breakout" novels during a weeklong workshop coming to Hood River, Oregon. The workshop, April 12-18, 2010, will be conducted at the Best Western Hood River Inn. Throughout the week, New York literary agent Donald Maass, author of *Writing the Breakout Novel*, will provide an insider's guide to aspiring and experienced novelists who want to take their writing careers to a new level and create fiction that stands out in the competitive publishing world. Students will also receive one-on-one consultations from Maass and staff.

Morning classes with Don Maass provide intensive, hands-on lessons on how to grab and hold reader attention and create unforgettable characters, along with other invaluable tools to getting, and staying, published. Author Lynna Banning says, "The workshop week changed my entire writing life; it added depth to my plotting, focused attention on character-building, and reinforced my joy in being a writer and writing well."

Attendance will be strictly limited to thirty-five attendees to ensure individualized attention. The cost of the workshop is \$1895 for new students, and includes all lodging and meals. Discounts are available for writing group members. Visit the web site, www.free-expressions.com or call 866-497-4832 to register or obtain additional information. Maass is one of New York's leading literary agents. The president of the Donald Maass Literary Agency represents dozens of fiction writers and sells more than one-hundred novels per year to top publishers in the U.S. and overseas.

CONTACT:

Lorin Oberweger, Program Director

<http://www.free-expressions.com/site/intensive.asp>

lorin@free-expressions.com

Ph: 866-497-4832



CWC Members: register before April 15, 2010 and save!

Only \$325 for Full Conference Registration includes:

- All 3 days - September 24, 25, and 26, 2010 - all meals and events!
- 48 workshops!
- Pitch Sessions - multiple opportunities to pitch your work to literary agents at no additional charge!
- Saturday evening gala dinner and Writing Contest awards ceremony (grand prize is \$1000)

*That's \$110 off the regular price and
a \$50 savings compared to the public early registration fee!*

Saturday Only (7:30 am to 5 pm) option available for only \$179!

For more info, conference details, and to register, visit southbaywriters.com.

Offer ends April 15, 2010 -- so sign up today



YOUR BOARD:

President: Tory Hartman:

president@sfpeninsulawriters.com

Vice President and Program Chair: Linda Okerlund

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DIRECTIONS TO THE BELMONT LIBRARY:

FROM HIGHWAY 280: Take HWY 92 east to Ralston Ave. Turn left to The Alameda. Turn right.

FROM HIGHWAY 101 Take the Ralston Ave, Belmont exit. Cross the El Camino to The Alameda. Turn left.

FROM El Camino Real: Head west on Ralston to The Alameda. Turn left.

Once on the Alameda, the library is two blocks further, to the right.

BUS ROUTE: Use SamTrans 295 on The Alameda or SamTrans KX, PX, or TX and get off at El Camino and Ralston in Belmont. Call 1-800-660-4BUS or check out www.samtrans.com for further information regarding details on schedules and routes.

*****PARKING ***:** There is free parking at the library. Some free street parking is also available.

The library parking lot is very limited. **Please use the street and use the lot only if is absolutely necessary!**