

March, 2020

Suburban Scribe

Newsletter of the Sacramento Suburban Writers Club

sactowriters.org

March 9, 2020 speaker: David Kulczyk

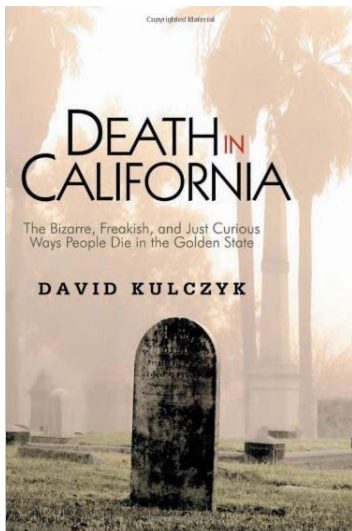
From Bike Messenger to Professional Author

How does one go from being a 35-year old Seattle bike messenger to getting paid to write articles for the prestigious Seattle Times?

David Kulczyk knows. This award-winning author of fiction went from bike messenger to professional author – without the credentials of a college education to provide a leg up. Now with over twenty-five years of experience as a paid, published author, David has a wealth of stories that will inform and entertain you.

What's it really like being a writer? Kulczyk will tell you the cold, hard facts. He'll tell you what you can expect, whether it's

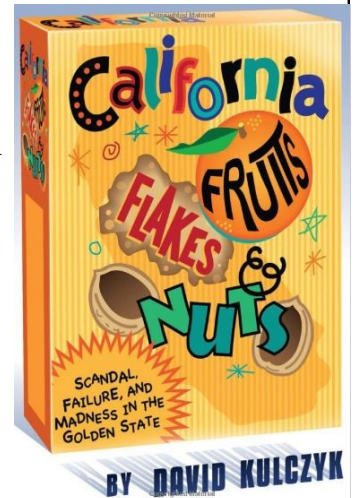
dealing with incompetent editors, negotiating a book deal, to getting out of a bad book deal, or having other writers steal your work. What's it like to interview musicians who have no concept of time or other boundaries? How do you deal with people who you wrote about who aren't happy with what you said? What about the pros and cons to publishing your own books? And let's not forget the tricky act of balancing work with your private life.



David Kulczyk is a Sacramento-based writer and homicide historian. He is the author of six true crime or odd deaths books. As a freelance writer his work has appeared in the Sacramento News and Review, Maximum Ink Music Magazine, Pop Culture Press, Madison Magazine, The Colorado Springs Independent, The SF Guardian, The East Bay Express, The Chico News and Review, the Seattle Times and TruTV. Kulczyk appeared

in two episodes of the television show Deadly Women.

David attended Madison College, the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and graduated from California State University-Sacramento.



Future meeting dates—All Mondays:

April 13 — Phil D'Asaro, graphic novelist

May 11 — Annual Banquet

Meetings 7—9 p.m. 5501 Dewey Drive, Fair Oaks

sactowriters.org

Beta Readers?

Brit Lord

Do you like reading? Do you like helping out your fellow authors but just don't have the time for a critique round? Do you ever read a story and wish you could tell the author about that huge plot hole that needs to be fixed?

Then being a beta reader might be for you. The SSWC is currently looking for avid readers who have an interest in helping out their fellow writers by reading their work and offering feedback. There are many people looking for a beta reader or two, and you may be just the person to help them out.

If you are interested in being a beta reader, or looking for one, come talk to Brittany, and she can help you get started. If you have any questions, feel free to talk to Brittany at any meeting as well.



Word Selection

Mort Rumberg

Here are some variations to use instead of the usual, more common words. These words may add more panache to the writing

When tempted to use "like" think about using these variations instead:

Admire Adore

Cherish Love

Idolize

If you still want to convey more favorable attributes and the above seem too much, try:

Prefer Appreciate

Fancy Enjoy

Treasure

When tempted to use "young" as with a person, since we all may have different ideas what "young" means, think about using these variations instead:

Fresh Green

Naïve Fresh

Raw

Other words that seem to convey more emotion may be:

Youthful Budding

Growing Early

Bird's Song on the Wind

L L Gates

The morning is quiet and clear
 Not a sign of a breeze anywhere
 Singing so sweet into the warm air
 We sing to the sky as the notes take flight
 Across the meadows we can be heard
 Sweet music aloft, gently welcomes the spring
 Together we sing our dainty notes
 Flickering from branch to branch, with our glad gift
 Singing together our songs fill the air
 Flowers and leaves open to hear
 Heralding a newness to behold
 Then the wind commeth to shroud our songs
 Carried on the wind, petals, and leaves
 But our notes cannot ride
 They muffle away
 So, we stop and wait for the wind to subside
 Why can't our notes be heard on the wind?



FYI — **Bay Area Book Festival** coming up at the beginning of May. This is the volunteer signup form. Search the web for general details.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSePm9TLKcm1ON9XlwjphuHj71Sgq-plkQKecvm5zdj03wcX5g/viewform>

<https://www.baybookfest.org/2020festival/>

COPY AND DEADLINES

Submit original written material such as: poems, letters, book excerpts, articles, book reviews, humor, web sites to visit, general information, fun stuff to share — almost anything. Also, share info about other meetings, contests, books, book signings, classes, etc.

Please keep the submission relatively short, otherwise it will have to be serialized. Also, please submit electronically. There is no pay but byline credit is given — and that looks good to agents and publishers. This is a benefit of being a member of SSWC.

Remember to put SSWC Newsletter Submission in the subject line ... PLEASE!

Contact: Mary Lou Anderson (916) 459-0888 mledsonanderson@yahoo.com
 Deadline is about two (2) weeks prior to the meeting date.

If You Couldn't Make It to Last Month's SSWC Meeting, What Did You Miss?

An excellent speaker on a fascinating topic, that's what! William Burg shared information about the wicked history of our area — spellbinding!



Used or Heard of Any Good Websites Lately?

W W W
Wow! Whatta Website!

This website lists plot twists and ideas for writing murder, suspense, thrillers, or something to add to almost any genre.

Interesting and an easy read:

<https://blog.reedsy.com/plot-twist-ideas-examples/>

If you have found a great website relating to writing, please send the name /contact to me (mledsonanderson@yahoo.com) to include in the newsletter.

Whether it's for free barcodes, inexpensive lessons on social media (marketing, anyone?), grammar rules, or anything else, please send it in so it can be shared with the rest of the members.

The first three members who respond to this request will each receive the next newsletter for free. **Wow!**



Advanced Writers Techniques (AWT) Mike Brandt



AWT group meets at 6:00 PM, an hour before our regular monthly meeting, at the Crossroads Christian Church. Learn how to be innovative while cultivating your skill set to create a book readers will love.

March's session: we'll discuss – **CRIME STORIES ACROSS CONTINENTS** – Writing about crime and mystery in a foreign setting with a local perspective. It happened in Paris? No...maybe Rio? No...maybe Cape Town? Well, wherever it happened, stop by for an international globetrotting session. *Merci, danke, todah, and spasibo.*

Each participant will have an opportunity to express their thoughts. Please respect fellow writers' time and arrive at 6:00 PM

Grab a chair and bring it into the kitchen area. All are welcome and your writing skills will improve.

This information was forwarded by Cathy McGreevy:



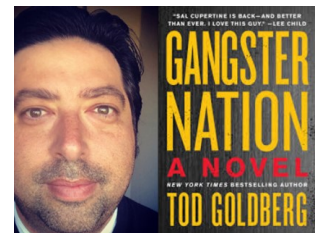
**Stories on Stage Sacramento Presents
New York Times Bestselling Author
Tod Goldberg with Award-Winning Debut Novelist Anita Felicelli**

Friday, March 27, 2020, Stories on Stage Sacramento—the area’s premier non-profit literary series, now in its 11th season featuring the work of today's best authors performed with theatrical flair—has a unique evening planned. Promising a “darkly funny, criminally touching story-time for grownups,” the March event features the work of literary crime fiction author [Tod Goldberg](#) (*Gangster Nation*, Counterpoint, 2017) and award-winning fabulist/noir author, [Anita Felicelli](#) (*Chimerica*, WTAW Press, 2019). Doors open at the CLARA Auditorium (E. Claire Raley Studios for the Performing Arts, 1425 24th Street, Sacramento) at 7:00 pm and the performances begin at 7:30. More information, including the full 2020 Stories on Stage Sacramento season lineup, as well as links to obtain advance tickets for the March 27 show are at www.storiesonstagesacramento.org. Tickets will also be available at the door, though event co-directors Shelley Blanton-Stroud and Dorothy Rice caution that opening night of the series’ 2020 season sold out in advance of the event.

Capital Books on K will sell copies of the authors' novels and story collections and there will be free cookies (provided by local bakery, Pushkin’s) and beverages for sale. The readers for the evening performance will be announced soon.

More on the Authors:

[Tod Goldberg](#) is the New York Times, national and international bestselling author of over a dozen books, including the novels *Gangster Nation*, *Gangsterland*, *Living Dead Girl* and the popular *Burn Notice* series. His short stories have been anthologized in two award-winning collections (*Other Resort Cities* and *Simplify*). In addition to his work on the page, Tod cohosts the podcasts *Literary Disco* (named one of the best literary podcasts in the world by the *Washington Post* and others) and *Open Book*. He holds an MFA in Creative Writing & Literature from Bennington College and directs the Low Residency MFA program in Creative Writing and Writing for the Performing Arts at the University of California, Riverside. His next books, *Gang Related* and *Death of a Gangster*, will be released in 2020 and 2021.



[Anita Felicelli](#) is the author of the novel *Chimerica* (WTAW Press, 2019) and the short story collection *Love Songs for a Lost Continent* (Stillhouse Press), which won the 2016 Mary Roberts Rinehart Award. Anita’s stories have appeared in *The Normal School*, *Joyland*, *The Rumpus*, *Kweli Journal*, *Eckleburg*, and elsewhere. Her essays, reviews, and criticism have appeared in the *New York Times* (Modern Love), *Slate*, *Salon*, *SF Chronicle*, the *Los Angeles Review of Books*, *Babble*, *Romper*, *Electric Literature*, and more. She graduated from UC Berkeley and UC Berkeley School of Law.



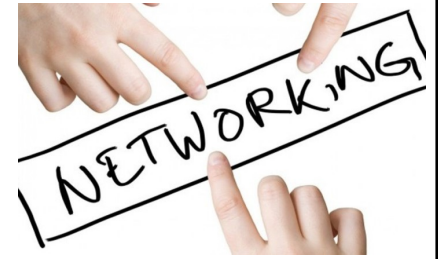
Please join us Friday, March 27, 2020 for a darkly funny, criminally touching story-time for grownups. You'll hear the work of literary crime fiction author and MFA program director, [Tod Goldberg](#), and award-winning fabulist/noirist author, [Anita Felicelli](#). Soon we'll announce the actors who will perform their stories. Doors open at The Clara at 7:00 and the performance begins at 7:30. Please donate to reserve your spot below. (Our last event sold out in advance.) Capital Books will sell copies of our authors' novels and story collections. Sue Staats will bring her homemade cookies and Pushkin's Bakery will donate gluten-free delights. The Clara will sell wine and beer.

Tickets for the Friday event are a total of \$12.24 (includes their "fee")

The Saturday event costs \$91.81 (again, includes their "fee")

Networking in the Genres

John J. Vester



If enough is as good as a feast, what is a feast like? The riches keep on coming in the genres.

Sierra Writers Conference is, unfortunately, past. But I can, with a clear conscience, recommend you attend next year. It was Jan. 31 to Feb. 1. The first day was at the Rocklin campus of Sierra College, the second day at the Grass Valley campus. Here's a link for this past event, to give you an idea of what it offers.

<https://www.sierracollege.edu/events/upcoming/2020/02/writers-conference-1.php>

The talk about NaNoWriMo was wonderfully enlightening about this exciting yearly program to write your book in 30 days. It happens in November, so you can take part this year. Grant Faulkner talked about it being a motivator, for five reasons. 1) you work on a deadline, 2) Inspiration is not worth waiting for, 3) quantity brings about quality, 4) It brings you in touch with the village it takes to write a book, and 5) writing should be joyful, not torture. He also mentioned the obstacles we all need to overcome in our writing: The Imposter Syndrome, the Inner Editor, and Fear of Rejection. If you're interested, go to <https://www.nanowrimo.org/>

Also, the conference allowed me to have some work critiqued on Saturday. I found it very helpful. The moderator, when asked about on-line critiquing, recommended Scribophile. If you're interested, go to <https://www.scribophile.com/>

A great presentation by Sands Hall provided valuable insights into scene building. A scene has to do the following:

Establish a setting

Actively reveal character

Bring any important physical objects to light

Have an objective of a character brought to the fore

Action

Scenes can also summarize and a character can reflect on things. But the scene is the only way to move the plot forward and engage the reader. You also don't want to put too much of the scene time in dialogue.

Dialogue was the subject of Pam Houston's presentation. She calls dialogue "Two not good tennis players with two agendas, fighting for dominance." She illustrated this wonderfully and humorously from her own writing. "Words are not free," she told the audience, "or they waste the reader's time." Dialogue is to create tension and to reveal character. There was a lot of good information, which she capped by saying, "Do a word search for 'ly' and get rid of most adverbs, especially in dialogue attributions."

Go to the conference next year if you can. You won't be sorry.

As a result of attending I made some nice contacts. Networking in the genre, indeed.

Some quick takes:

A very active writing club, the Gold Country Writers, meets every Wednesday of the month (if you can believe it) in Auburn. They do an excellent job providing critique opportunities twice a month, and run the sessions very deftly. They have some very good writers. Visit their Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Nonprofit-Organization/Gold-Country-Writers-110459542483093/>

You can see Sands Hall at the *Gold Rush Writers Conference* <http://www.goldrushwriters.com/>
Fogcon is March 6-8 in Walnut Creek <http://www.goldrushwriters.com/>

A major new event in San Francisco is *SF by the Bay*. It runs through the end of April, so more on it later. But do check it out. Download the program at <https://sfpl.org/events/special-programs/sf-bay>

The *Contact Conference* is April 3-5. It is part writing conference and part science. The goal being to figure out how to speak with the alien <http://www.contact-conference.com/>

Baycon is May 22-25 in Santa Clara <https://baycon.org/>

The Nebula Awards are in the LA area, May 29-31. More on that later, but do check it out.

<https://nebulas.sfga.org/nebula-conference/>

Happy conventioning and writing. And keep networking.

Join the Club!

We are a vibrant club with active writers, have several critique groups (with room for more), and stay wonderfully supportive of each other.

SSWC supports local writers and encourages everyone to write and publish. Attending meetings is free, but membership brings benefits, such as publication in the newsletter and anthology, use of our club's library, qualification for grants to attend conferences (limits apply), and ability to join our first-class critique groups.

MEMBERSHIP is paid on a yearly basis. If joining after April, dues are prorated by quarter (unless you are just really late in maintaining your membership!).

_____ Individual \$40 / year

_____ Couple \$55 / year

_____ Full-Time Student \$30 / year

_____ Platinum Senior (70+) \$30 / year

More information is on our website: sactowriters.org

Name: _____ Genres: _____

Published? Y / N (yes, includes self-published) Email: _____

Phone: _____ Address: _____

Website/other info/address (optional): _____

OFFICERS

Elected Officers:

President	Ron Smith
Vice President	Brittany Lord
Secretary	Cathy McGreevy
Treasurer	Julie Beyers

Chairs:

Achievements	Y O U ????
Coffee/Treats	Al Gilding
Conferences	John Powell
Critique Grps	Brittany Lord
Historian	Pat Biasotti
Librarian	Ron Smith
Membership	Jeannie Turner
Newsletter	Mary Lou Anderson
Nominations	Y O U ????
Prgm/Speakers	Laura Kellen
Publicity	Paul Turner
Raffle	Y O U ????
Sunshine	Nan Roark
Website	Wes Turner
Workshops	Paul Turner

**There's a spot in the list
above for YOU!**



Motivational Prompt

Ever have a problem getting people to do what you know should (or needs to) be done?

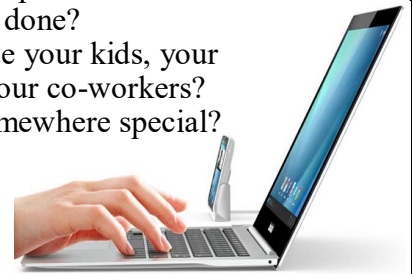
What have you used to motivate your kids, your students, your family members, your co-workers?

Was it a treat? Was it going somewhere special?

What actually worked?

Any funny experiences of an effort that was an epic fail?

Write it down. Send it in.....



MEETING INFORMATION

2nd Monday of every month

7:00 - 9:00 PM

Next meeting:

Monday, March 9
Crossroads Christian
Fellowship Hall

5501 Dewey Drive

Just north of the Dewey and Madison intersection

All writers are encouraged to attend. Membership is not mandatory but brings privileges.