

February, 2021

# Suburban Scribe

Newsletter of the Sacramento Suburban Writers Club

[sactowriters.org](http://sactowriters.org)

**Michael J. Fitzgerald** will speak to our SSWC members at our **Monday, February 8, 2021, Zoom meeting.**

His topic is: **The What, How, & Who of Writing**

On Monday, February 8th, Michael J. Fitzgerald, a journalist, novelist and daily newspaper columnist, will outline *his* specific three 'writes' of writing: the what, the how, and the who.

- *What kind of writing do you do?*
- *How do you do it?*
- *Who do you do it for?*

According to Michael, writing can cover an awful lot of territory. But you can break it down to help keep on track — or to shift gears, by keeping the what, the how, and the who in mind.

Michael J. Fitzgerald has been a journalist for 40-plus years, working as a writer and editor for newspapers in Napa, Petaluma, Grass Valley, Chico, and Sacramento.

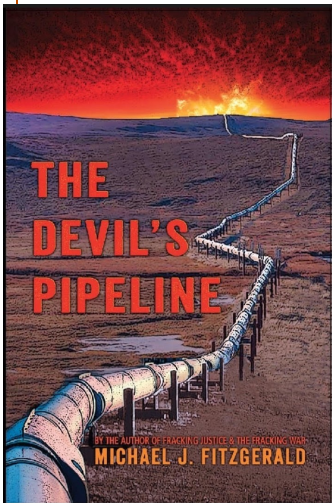


He also has worked with two wire services and contributed articles to numerous magazines and web publications. Michael has published three novels, *The Fracking War*, *Fracking Justice*, and *The Devil's Pipeline*. A fourth, *Sons of Covid*, is in process. He currently writes a weekly column, "Write On" for the daily *Finger Lakes Times* newspaper in Geneva, NY, and contributes stories to *The Pulse* newspaper in Richmond, CA.

He and his wife, journalist Sylvia Fox, taught journalism at CSU, Sacramento and now reside in Point Richmond, California, during winters and Valois, New York, in the summers.

Michael also has a number of blogs about his ongoing writing projects, travel, and special interests. His travel page is: <https://theredwriterwrites.blogspot.com>.

Michael's email is [Michael.FitzgeraldFLTcolumnist@gmail.com](mailto:Michael.FitzgeraldFLTcolumnist@gmail.com).



## Zoom Meeting Info—Briefly

Join us on Monday, February 8 at 7 p.m. for the next SSWC meeting time.

AT 6:55 pm. [CLICK HERE TO JOIN THE 7 pm MEETING](#) —

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88994187927?pwd=UndGRkVoUVFUyUJraFVPZ21WSXo5UT09>

**More details for joining the meeting are on page 2.**

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## ZOOM INSTRUCTIONS FOR JOINING MONDAY'S SSWC MEETING

Date: Monday, February 8, 2021  
 Topic: Ronald Smith's Zoom Meeting  
 Time: 7:00 PM



**Join SSWC Zoom meeting live on Monday, February 8th at 7:00pm until about 9 pm.**

**How? Easy click on the link below, and you will join the fun:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88994187927?pwd=UndGRkVoUVFUYUJraFVPZ21WSXo5UT09>

Another easy way to join the meeting, log into your Zoom account and enter the ID and passcode below:

Meeting ID: 889 9418 7927  
 Passcode: 176301

Write like the wind, free, unpredictable, and hard to see coming, rattling the pages.

Ronald Smith, President SSWC



### Editing / Checking Your Own Writing?

Want some electronic help? Here are a few sites that might be of some help.

A couple of members use Grammarly but said that it costs \$\$.  
 Another mentioned ProEdit ... it has a free trial period.  
 And someone mentioned WordHippo for vocabulary. This one looks like it's free.

### Now, THIS is Filler!

**Farmers would make great writers.**  
 They really know how to work a plot.

**What do you call a writer who doesn't follow the rules of sentence structure?**  
 A rebel without a clause.

**How many mystery writers does it take to change a lightbulb?**  
 Two. One to screw it in most of the way and another to give it a surprise twist at the end.

**What do you call a neighborhood where everyone's a writer?**  
 A writer's block.

### Are You a Mystery Writer?

Laura Kellen



In the January SSWC meeting, one of our new members mentioned that she writes mysteries.

Although we would never encourage a member to leave our fantastic group, mystery writers should know about another local group that specializes in mystery: Capitol Crimes, Northern California Chapter of Sisters in Crime

According to their website: Sisters in Crime is an international organization of writers, readers, booksellers, librarians, agents, editors, reviewers, and teachers. They are interested in promoting the professional development and advancement of women crime writers to achieve equality in the industry. The organization was founded in 1986 by Sara Paretsky with other women mystery writers and enthusiasts. Sisters in Crime has over 45 local chapters around the world.

Much like SSWC, Capitol Crimes hold monthly meetings with a variety of speakers and topics. They also have a newsletter and writer resources. If you're writing in the mystery genre, consider taking a look at Capitol Crimes in addition to sticking with your friends at SSWC.

Their website can be found at: <http://www.sincnorcal.org>

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#### LANGUAGE CHANGES

Too fast? Not fast enough?

A "living" language is *alive* in that it continues to change, to grow.

Some are easy to take, but only because the changes occurred looong before you were born. Hyphens within words are going, if not already gone. (Co-operate. To-gether.)

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-britain-hyphen-1/thousands-of-hyphens-perish-as-english-marches-on-idUSHAR15384620070921>

Commas are disappearing.

Some things I can't stand and hope never change are:

These ones. ("These" is plural and "one" is singular. I've heard this in a TV show AND on the newscast.)

Here's my submissions for the magazine. ("Here is" is singular and "submissions" is plural.

**What are your bug-a-boos?**

Send samples to  
[mledsonanderson@yahoo.com](mailto:mledsonanderson@yahoo.com)

#### Comma Rule Review — Direct Address

The Grammar Guardian

M. L. Edson

Direct Address is when a character talks to someone else and uses the other's name or nickname. A comma is needed before **and**/or after.— two commas if the name is within the sentence and only one if it starts or ends the sentence. (Of course, quotation marks are needed around what is said.)

EVERY time your characters are talking to each other and says the other person's name in dialogue, the name is set off with commas.

Examples:

"Hello, Sam." Since Jo says Sam's name, "Hello" is followed by a comma.

"Yo, Clara, how are you doing?" Comma before and after the person's name.

"I'm fine, Bo."

"Georgie, get down from there!"

"I expect you, Juan, to enroll in graduate school."

"Drive slower, you idiot."

She gasped, "Why'd you pull the trigger, you murderer?"

All of these are direct address, whether or not the actual name is used, and one or two commas are necessary.

**Each time.**

**Every time.**

## K-Drama Techniques (Part 3)

Humor, Camaraderie, Bromance  
Cathy McGreevy



I have been writing about how techniques used in the increasingly popular genre of Korean Dramas can help writers connect with readers. In my previous article, I wrote about making characters multi-dimensional and unpredictable. This article will address the protagonist's interactions with side-characters.

If you've ever watched a Frank Capra movie, you know what I'm talking about. By the end of "It's a Wonderful Life," we know every character who shows up to support the main character, George Bailey, in his hour of need, from the town flirt to the returning war hero. The warm, happy feeling the viewer experiences watching this scene is an example of what K-Drama fans call "the feels," which even the bloodiest Korean zombie movie or most hard-boiled detective drama provides.

Including humor and close bonding between a group of likeable characters makes virtually any story irresistible. It is a trait, sadly, that is missing in many American TV shows and movies and is one of the reasons many viewers like me are turning elsewhere for their entertainment.

There are certain tropes that have shown up in every Korean show I've watched, not just in warm fuzzy romances but in action-packed thrillers like *Hyena*, *Vagabond*, or *Signal*: Characters go out to eat together. They tease each other and give each other funny nicknames. They get drunk and spill out their secrets to co-workers. Often, people who start out as bitter rivals end up warm friends. Sometimes they even sacrifice their lives for each other.

Close friendship between male characters is sometimes referred to as "bromance." One of my favorite examples is in *Goblin*, a show which is that would never be produced in America because, among other things, it deals with fate, reincarnation, and a semi-deity with a fascination with Canada. Don't ask. It also has a very Korean (and irresistible) mix of humor, tragedy, action, and romance.

The Goblin in the title is really a war-hero from the past who, because of a bloody act of revenge, is cursed by the gods to live hundreds of years with a phantom sword plunged through his chest which only he can see. The only way our hero can be released is when a certain woman, known as the Goblin Bride, falls in love with him. As soon as this happens, he will be released to death.

Comedy? Humor? Bromance? Oh yes.

The best part of the show isn't the hero's romance with the girl, although that's the key to his fate, but the changing relationship between the protagonist and the Grim Reaper, who hovers around waiting for the moment he can whisk the main character to his fate. Quite unexpectedly for everyone, the two end up becoming roommates (again, don't ask), and, over time, the best of friends.

I can't count how many times I laughed when the two bicker about their living arrangements like Jack Lemmon and Walter Matthau in *The Odd Couple*, or try to best each other with their powers. The growing camaraderie makes things more poignant when the hero faces painful decisions or when Grim Reaper is forced to do his job. While I wouldn't suggest replicating this plot-line for an American audience, the technique of blending humor and friendship into an over-all story line will make any story more engaging.

Whatever genre you write, do pay attention to the protagonist's relationships with side characters. That Korean "secret ingredient" will make all the difference.

## Microsoft Word Spell Check Bloopers

Continued from the January Newsletter

Eva Wise

*Oops! #2*

Here are more things to think about when you use the Microsoft spell check:

### My sentence

When he got to the bottom of the hill, he saw what he thought was a flashlight on the beach near the park.

Before your wedding, if you'd like.

Carl let me drive one up to the castle last Saturday.

Are you all right, love?

Take short quick breaths, love.

His ancestors, along with Mindy's, were employed by her family in one capacity or another since before she was born almost 500 years ago.

He moved one of his hands down to the small of her back and drew her closer.

She grabbed a cup and poured some liquid out of the blue bottle.

Are you all right, Honey?

### What they want

When he found the underlying cause of the hill, he saw what he thought was a flashlight on the beach near the park.

Before you're wedding, if you'd like.

Carl let me drives one up to the castle last Saturday.

Are you all right, loved?

Take short quick breathes, love.

Her family in one capacity or another since employed his ancestors, along with Mindy's, before she was born almost 500 years ago.

He moved one of his easily/(without trouble) to the small of her back and drew her closer.

She grabbed a cup and poured some liquid unexpected bottle.

Are you all right, Honeying?

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## WORKSHOPS

Gloria Cooksey

For the February workshop, we will explore the metaphor. If you would like to prepare for the workshop, please find a way to describe yourself within the context of a metaphor. During the workshop, you will have an opportunity to enter your metaphor into the chat box, for sharing with the group.

(Metaphor: You use it to stand for, or symbolize, another thing **without** using "like" or "as" — which would make it a simile. It rained cats and dogs.)



## The Rules of Righting

Bye Mort Rumberg



I've done about 16 years of re-search and been able to find that there is 6 rules of righting. I will put them before you so you can benefit from my 16 years of re-search. They were good years and I learned a lot. They are easy to follow, so bear with me.

Rule Number One) Make sure you have written everything correctly. Mistakes, especially in spelling, are not very good. It pays to get an editor for every thing. And use the spell checker.

Rule Number Two) Look through your audience's eyes. Who are you righting for? If it's a kid, don't use too many words they don't understand. If it's an adult, you can use too syllable words because adults today are educated and know how to read good.

Rule Number three) Have characters that are like reel ones. Model your characters after some one you know. That way they will seem like reel ones and they all can grow into the part they play in your story. Don't give them reel names because they can sue you for insubordination.

Rule Number four) Use language as it was used. If your book takes place in 1990 - a very long time ago, use the words they spoke back then. It is not that a history time but you have to have it be accurate. Otherwise it won't be a historical type story.

Rule Number Five) This last rule is to review the rules above this one again. It is very important to make sure all the rules are followed well. Always check spelling, know whom your audience is for, make reel characters, and use reel language as it was used in history.

That be it. Follow those rules and you will be a good publisher.

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Email Mary Lou to have a chance at winning a prize. Put "SSWC Found It!" in the subject line and *tell me which page* this article is on.

Responders' names will be put in a drawing for a prize. Maybe yours will be the only one that's submitted. Easy win.

### To the Funny Members Out There —

Going through a bunch of old SSWC newsletters recently, something was included that might be a great idea ... again.

One of the members had sent in cartoons related to writing — like the ones you see in the funny pages of a newspaper.

Might you be interested in publishing this type of thing?

Any number of members' work could be used, so draw something, add a funny line, and send a copy in.




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## COPY AND DEADLINES

Submit **original** written and edited/corrected 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 book completions and launches, other meetings, apps, contests, books, book signings, classes, etc.

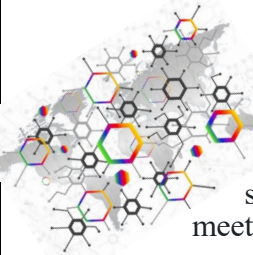
Please keep the submission relatively short, otherwise it will have to be serialized. Also, please submit electronically. There is no pay but byline credit is given — and that looks good to agents and publishers. This is a benefit of being a member of SSWC.

**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.

## Revival

Jeannie Turner



For many years, the Saturday Morning Critique members have so much enjoyed face-to-face meetings and delicious snacks while discussing the merits of the various submissions. They *knew* it would not be very long until this Covid would depart and all could meet together again, so they simply let meetings slide.

Finally, it dawned on them: *This has gone on way too long! We need our critique group!*

Members consulted other critique groups, those which had been smart enough to go immediately to Zoom and have ironed out all the kinks and wrinkles. They were glad to share what they have learned and how they are handling their meetings.

Thanks to them, the Saturday Morning Critique group is revived—once more meeting on Saturday mornings, via Zoom, of course. Not all members are comfortable with Zoom and therefore not all are currently participating, so former members who have moved away have rejoined—a rare blessing of Zoom.

One distant member is Bonnie Bair, author of the widely acclaimed *ABC's of Sacramento* and *ABC's of Vancouver, United States*. She is currently working on *ABC's of Boise*. Because Bonnie is also an accomplished photographer, her guidebooks of interesting places are replete with beautiful photographs.

The Saturday Morning Critique group would like to let other critique groups know—*Zoom really does work! Try it!*

## I'm Not Old — I'm Mature

Eva Wise

Today at the drugstore, the clerk was a gent.  
From my purchase this chap took off ten percent.  
I asked for the cause of the lesser amount,  
And he answered, "Because of the senior's discount."

I went to McDonald's for a burger and fries,  
And there, once again, got quite a surprise.  
The clerk poured some coffee, which he handed to me.  
He said for you seniors, the coffee is free.

Understand — I'm not old — I'm merely mature,  
But some things are changing, temporarily, I'm sure.  
The newspaper print gets smaller each day,  
And people speak softer — can't hear what they say.

My teeth are my own (I have the receipt.),  
And my glasses identify the people I meet.  
Oh, I've slowed down a bit ... not a lot, I'm sure.  
You see, I'm not old ... I'm merely mature.

The gold in my hair has been bleached by the sun.  
You should see all the damage that chlorine has done.  
Washing my hair has turned it all white,  
But don't call it gray ... saying "Blonde" is just right.

My car is all paid for...not a nickel owed.  
Yet a kid yells, "Old Duffer...Get off of the road!"  
My car has no scratches ... Not even a dent.  
Still, I get all that guff ... from a punk who's "H...Bent."

My friends get all older ... much faster than me.  
They seem much more wrinkled, from what I can see.  
I've got "Character Lines," not wrinkles ... for sure,  
But don't call me old ... just call me mature.

The steps in the houses they're building today,  
Are so high that they take ... your breath all away,  
And the streets are much steeper than 10 years ago.  
That should explain why my walking is slow.

But I'm keeping up on what's Hip and New,  
And I think I can still dance a mean Boogaloo.  
I'm still in the running ... in this I'm secure,  
I'm not really old ... I'm only mature.



## 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](http://sactowriters.org)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Genres: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Website/other info/address (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

**MAIL YOUR DUES TO: Jeannie Turner. Her address is in the Directory. If you don't have one, email Jeannie at [turnerjeannie48@gmail.com](mailto:turnerjeannie48@gmail.com) and she will let you know where to send it.**

## OFFICERS

### Elected Officers:

President	Ron Smith
Vice President	Brittany Lord
Secretary	Linda Coveli
Treasurer	Julie Beyers

### Chairs:

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

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



## P R O M P T

What would you like to read about what happened 100 years ago during the Spanish Flu Pandemic?

Turn that around and write what would you like to tell people 100 years from now. What you did do during the lockdown? How did you fill your time while staying home, inside? How did you manage to get food? Who did you miss and did what you miss doing?



## MEETING INFORMATION

**7:00 - 9:00 PM**

**Next meeting:**

**Monday, February 8**

Location: Your home.  
Via your computer, tablet, or cell phone.

*All writers are encouraged to attend. Membership is not mandatory but brings privileges — like **publication in the newsletter!***