

Publishing Short Stories by Brad R. Cook

I've always been a little jealous of songwriters. I'm not saying it's easy. It's not, songwriting is hard, but it can be done in hours. Meanwhile, I toil over a novel for a year or more. Not fair.



Brad R. Cook

However, then I discovered short stories and flash fiction.

Short stories, by definition, are short. They can be written in a day, maybe a week, or even a month, but that's it. I don't have to endlessly work through 75,000 words, it's more like 5,000.

Bliss.

Writing a short story is about capturing a moment in time, a mood, or making a point about a subject. Maybe it's just an adventure, but I always try and add in something deeper, more than the surface plot. Like a song, it doesn't have to be an opus, a story can share a feeling. There is so much I can do with these moments. Explore ideas, alternative genres, dive deeper into characters, or just have some fun.

7 pm, July 12
via ZOOM

The best of what I write will be released to the public for them to consume. I've penned 30 stories so far but only 10 of them have been published. Quality matters.

So, why publish my short stories? I could send them off to magazines or journals, some would even pay me, and I do, I have, but... most of what I write other publications don't want. Anthologies tend to look for specific stories, journals tend to want a certain kind of story, and much of what I write doesn't fit into these molds. However, many of my stories continue my brand. Short stories are a way, if you like my novels, then here, you might like these stories too. Using short stories to build my brand is one of the main reasons I release them. I've written a steampunk young adult trilogy and a middle grade steampunk adventure. Those are a few of my books, but in addition, I wrote several steampunk short stories. So, if you like my novels, there's more that readers can consume. Once I had enough

continued on page 2.

Looking for more information on how to get started?

Join us on July 12 for "Publishing Short Stories," featuring Brad R. Cook.

Brad R. Cook is the author of historical fantasy and award-winning short stories. He began as a playwright, dipped into the corporate writing world, and served as co-publisher and acquisitions editor for Blank Slate Press. He currently serves as historian of St. Louis Writers Guild after three and a half years as president. He learned to fence at thirteen, and never set down his sword but prefers to curl up with a centuries old classic. Visit bradcook.com and @bradcook on social media.

ZOOM
(new as of 5/24/23):

Sign-up is free. Join from your smartphone, computer, or tablet. If it's your first time, follow the prompts and allow it to access your camera and microphone. Use this link for the meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/94227448734>.

Meeting ID is 942 2744 8734. Passcode is 563402.

Navigating the Wild, Wild West of Publishing By Cathy Davis

Join the St. Louis Publishers Association on August 9 to learn about "Navigating the Wild, Wild West of Publishing" featuring Cathy Davis.

"It's not about how well your book sells, it's all about how well your book sells YOU!"©

With well over 1,000,000 books sold on Amazon each year, independent authors are scrambling to get noticed, grow their following, and keep more of each book sale. Aspiring authors who join this presentation will learn how to:

- Identify Your Author Platform
- Focus on Content that Grows Your Business
- Gain a Better Understanding of Your Publishing Options

This presentation is geared more for non-fiction authors, although Cathy does

offer publishing insight that applies to all authors, as well.



Cathy Davis

Cathy Davis founded Davis Creative in January of 2004 and expanded services to include publishing in 2008. Davis Creative Publishing is now a sought-after industry leader, helping over 2,000 authors become published, and nearly 1,000 authors to become #1 International Best Sellers. She believes it's

when we share our stories that we make a difference in the lives of others. She is a board member of her local National Speaker's Association (NSA) chapter and former Co-Dean of the STL Speaker's Academy. Cathy lives in St. Louis, MO, with her husband, Jack, and their rescue SchnickerDoodle, Chewy (AKA: Chief Barking Director). Connect with her at creatwepublishingpartners.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

via ZOOM

July 10, 6:30 – 8:30pm
SLPA Authors Summer Series
Spine Indie Bookstore & Café
1976 Arsenal St., St. Louis, MO 63118
<https://www.stlouispublishers.org/event-5314579>

July 12, 7:00 – 8:30pm
Publishing Short Stories
with Brad R. Cook
<https://zoom.us/j/94227448734>

August 9, 7:00 – 8:30pm
Navigating the Wild, Wild West of Publishing
with Cathy Davis
<https://zoom.us/j/94227448734>

Short Stories continued from page 1.

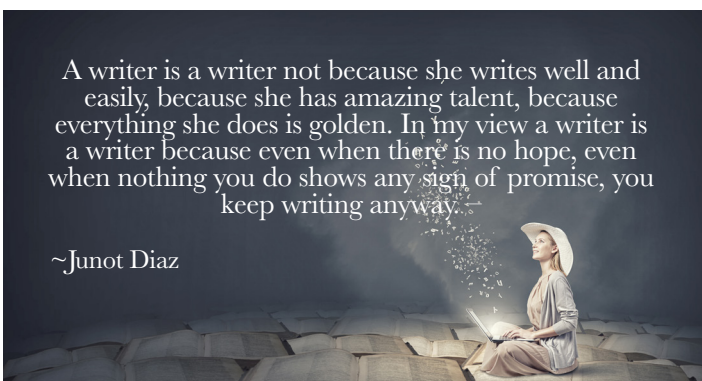
steampunk short stories, I brought them into a collection, and now alongside my novels, I also sell a collection of my steampunk short stories. Often, they sell as a lot.

Why do I print my short stories? That's an excellent question, one I toiled on for years. I wanted to print them, but wasn't certain if they were worth the cost. Then I started working at convention booths. Often, so often, younger con-goers don't have the money to buy my entire trilogy. Why devote all their limited funds on books by an unknown author when there is so much more to buy? However, if I have a cute little book for sale that is a cool story and it's only a couple of dollars? Sale. Boom.

The best part... it is so much cheaper than publishing a book. I make much less too. No one is buying a car from publishing short stories, at least anymore, but they might buy several coffees. Quality is always important. As an author these stories represent me, but I look at them as pulp fiction. I try to remember that 99% is fine, I don't have to give 110%. I also have the benefit of being a cover designer, so I don't have to pay for that, but there are a lot of low-cost options.

So go forth and publish! I'll dive into where and how in my presentation.

If you want to read my short stories they can be found on Kindle. Visit www.bradrcook.com/short-stories/ to see them all.



LAST MONTH'S RECAP The Profitable Way: Hand-Selling Your Books to Build Your Business

Special thanks to **Cherie Postill, SLPA Vice President, marketing professional and author of *How to Train a Beta Reader and Sell More Books***, for showing the benefits and strategies for in-person sales and sharing excellent insider tips to be the most effective and boost your confidence. Connect with her at clpostill.com or email cherie@clpostill.com.



Cherie Postill

Why Hand Sell Your Books?

When you meet readers in person, you have a captive audience that is interested enough to stop and ask about your work. Take advantage of that opportunity. Benefits include: networking with other authors, make more money (eliminate the middle-man, shipping costs, etc.), learn about readers' preferences first-hand, forces you to think about how to present your brand, opportunity to sell your "swag" (bookmarks, postcards, gifts), grow your email list, and get new sign-ups to subscribe to your newsletter.

Where to Hand Sell Your Books?

Go where your readers are! Whether it's a book fair, community festival, genre-related event, conference or speaking engagement, come ready to engage with potential readers. Ask fellow vendors about upcoming events. If your book is nonfiction, look for opportunities to partner with an organization for a charitable effort. If you only have 1-2 titles, consider partnering with another author to share the cost of the booth/table.

How to Hand Sell Your Books?

For setup, use vertical space so your items are easily visible from all angles (collapsible shelf, banner, posterboard, easel). Helium balloons are a great way for people to notice your table, remember your spot for later, and direct others to visit you. Why should readers care about your book? Describe the main character, catalyst, conflict, and what's at stake to draw them in. Qualify the customer—ask if they read books in your genre to maximize the time. Take brief notes in between conversations. This will help develop where/how to sell your books and can also improve your writing for future projects.

SLPA Authors Summer Series

Apply to win one of three evenings in our summer series for authors at **Spine Indie Bookstore & Café!**

Don't miss your chance to host an author event with promotion from the St. Louis Publishers Association, including offer giveaways to attendees. Up to three authors may be featured each night. Winners will be selected based on the strength of the submitted application.

Our featured author for July 10 is Jean Walters, author of *The Magic and Mystery of Dreams: The Ultimate Handbook for Interpreting Day and Night Dreams and the Symbols in Your Life*.

The two remaining dates are August 14 and September 18. Application deadline is July 16. For more information, visit: <https://www.stlouispublishers.org/event-5314579>.



Meetings on the second Wednesday of every month

In-person gatherings are suspended due to COVID-19 concerns.

All meetings will be held online until further notice.

Admission and Membership

- Monthly meetings on Zoom are FREE
- **Membership is \$60 per year.**

Visit: stlouispublishers.org/join
stlouispublishers.org/benefits

SLPA NEWS & VIEWS

Editor: [Kerri Holloway](#)

Designer: [Carolyn Vaughan](#)

Webmaster: [Kevin Ericson](#)

