

FUN @ ASJA2011
CONFERENCE RECAP

VOICES ON WRITING
GEORGE SLOWIK

MARKET REPORT
SAIL MAGAZINE

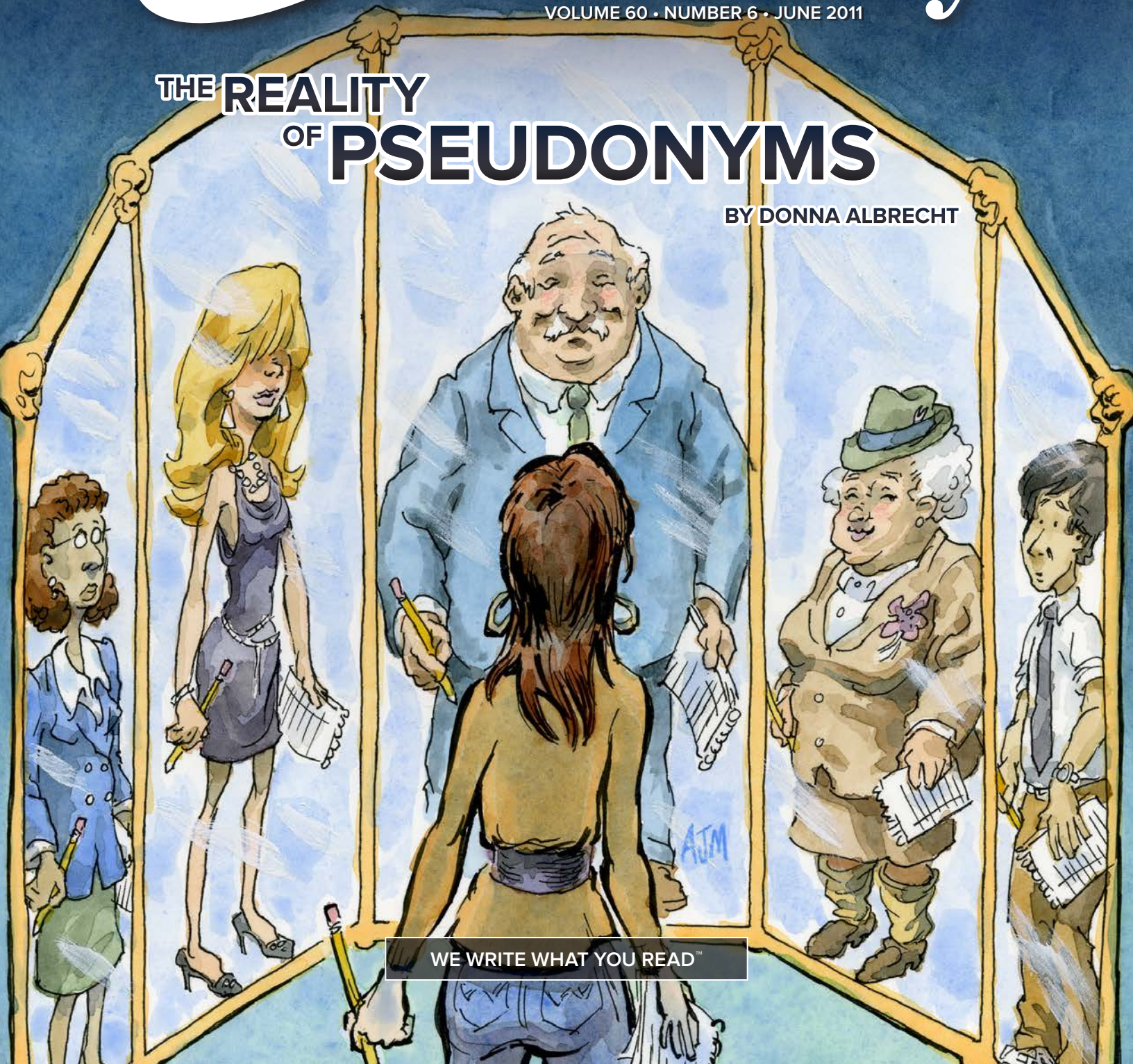
IPAD ADD-ONS
WRITERLY APPS

The asJa Monthly

VOLUME 60 • NUMBER 6 • JUNE 2011

THE REALITY OF PSEUDONYMS

BY DONNA ALBRECHT



WE WRITE WHAT YOU READ™

CELEBRATING THE SUCCESS OF THE 40TH ASJA WRITERS CONFERENCE

By Dorri Olds

Write about your obsessions.”

This was the first tip I heard during the talent-packed weekend of the 40th annual ASJA conference, held at New York City's Roosevelt Hotel in midtown east the last weekend of April. Hilary Davidson credited that quote to ASJA member Susan Shapiro, author of eight books in eight years. The Friday members-only day kicked off with Davidson's panel, *A Life of Crime ... Writing*, moderated by ASJA member Linda Melone.

Davidson said, “I've been obsessed with crime stories since I was six.”

Who among us isn't obsessive? It's a mandatory requirement for writing success. Dani Shapiro, author of two memoirs and five novels, asked memoir workshop attendees, “How many of you wake up at 3 a.m. and run to your computer with an idea?” The entire room raised their hands. Dani Shapiro said, “A memoir is not an autobiography. It's the telling of a story.”

An attendee asked, “But it must be truthful, right?”

Dani Shapiro said, “Yes, otherwise it's called a



Keynote Speaker
Jen Singer



Alexandra Owens and
Gina Roberts-Grey

pathological memoir.”

Throughout the three-day conference, valuable information flooded my brain. Literary agent Janet Reid said, “You need to get feedback that makes you cry. Then suck it up and do the revisions.” She reminded writers that rejections are not reflections of the quality of our work.

“A well-written book can get turned down simply because we sold a book on that topic a month ago.”

Robin DeMattia, moderator of the panel *What Else Can I Write? Adding Income Streams to Your Portfolio*, said “You can earn \$100–200 an hour as a grantwriter for non-profits.” Panelist Anna Maria Virzi from ClickZ said, “There are online magazines that give decent pay. Look for publications spending money on contests. They'll more than like-

ly have a budget to pay you.” Panelist Jennifer Wilkov said, “Outsourcing is key during this economy. Nobody wants to hire staff. There is a marketplace looking for your writing skills. Check out freelance.com and elance.com.”

The Elusive Magazine Editorial Office: A Look Inside session offered a keyhole view into the lives of editors at *Ladies' Home Journal*, *WomansDay.com* and Rodale Custom Content & Marketing. Debra Witt from Rodale said, “I try to look at queries right away.” Moderator Denise Schipani asked her to define that. Witt said, “Within one



Dorri Olds writes personal essays, author profiles, book reviews, travel pieces, movie and art reviews and has been published in book anthologies and magazines. She recently won the creative nonfiction award from New York Press. Olds is additionally a web designer, blogger and social media consultant. Contact her via www.DorriOlds.com.

◀ week.” The panelists all said they’re looking for new writers. Louise Sloan from *Ladies’ Home Journal* said, “My daily emergencies keep me too busy to give feedback to writers, much as I would like to, and articles can get pulled because we had to cut pages due to cost.”

On Saturday morning, during the session *Create a Traffic Jam on Your Blog with Social Media*, panelist Julie Roads opened with a creative exercise. “Close your eyes and imagine walking into a jam-packed Lady Gaga concert. Then imagine throwing your arms up in the air and shouting, ‘I’m here!’ to 20,000 people who ignore you.” This illustrated the incorrect approach to Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, and blogs. “Now picture the same scene,” Roads said, “but this time Lady Gaga points to you and shouts to the crowd, ‘She’s here!’ then displays your contact info on video screens.” The message: Contact people who have tons of followers. Stand out by studying what they talk about, then creatively offer

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ▶

Dani Shapiro



QUOTES FROM THE CONFERENCE SESSIONS

A Life of Crime ... Writing

“A publisher can’t do everything. Mine wasn’t connected with small independent bookstores so I collected reviews, contacted the shops and asked them to carry my book and set up readings. I used social media, I joined Twitter before I had the book deal. An author must create a buzz.”

Hilary Davidson

“If you haven’t sent 100 book query letters, you haven’t even started.”

Janet Reid

Echo Garrett



Grace
Weinstein



Websites I Visited During the Conference

adventurehousegroup.com
amarketingexpert.com
asja.org
barbarademarcobarrett.com
clickz.com
danishapiro.com

elance.com
emilypaulsen.com
ewriteonline.com
freelance.com
getgood.com
ginaroberts-grey.com

hilarydavidson.com
investmentwriting.com
janetreid.com
jillbialsosky.com
kathysena.com
lindamelone.com

marklfuerst.com
publishersmarketplace.com
sreetips.com
susanshapiro.net
writingroads.com
yourbookisyourhook.com

◀ CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

your skills tailored to their specific needs. Show how you can be helpful to them.” Jennifer Abernathy said, “Infotain your viewers by posting videos” and emphasized “coopertition” meaning, cooperate with your competitors.

During *Creating a Career in Copyediting*, Diane Faulker said, “Grammar has changed over the years and you must stay current. Look up the blog: throwgrammarfromthetrain.”

Saturday’s luncheon was a schmooze-fest, exchanging bizcards and whipping out phones to type in Twitter IDs. I felt like I’d made a semicircle of friends by the end of the meal. The opposite side of the table was out of earshot so we just waved and smiled at each other. Alexandra Owens, our executive director, warmly welcomed the crowd. ASJA President Salley Shannon took the mic. Then Jen Singer, the creator of MommaSaid.net, exploded onto the stage. She’s a fireball. After thanking many people, Singer said, “And I’d like to thank my mom, who I literally wouldn’t be here without.”

Singer shouted, “I had brand envy! I wanted to write a book, but had to build my platform—my brand—so I began blogging. That’s how I learned to talk in sound bites. Then, sick of getting that oh-no-not-again look from my IT husband, I taught myself HTML. The blog became popular quickly. I had established a brand. After my first book was

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ▶

QUOTES FROM THE CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Breaking Into Women’s Markets

“Break into writing for *Family Circle* magazine by putting a new spin on topics aimed at moms of teens and tweens.”

Celia Shatzman

“For any *Essence* magazine pitch, include experts and provide statistics. Don’t send attachments or your email may be immediately deleted due to big file size. Send links to sample articles online. Provide as much info as possible. One of our most frequently hired writers learned to include almost her entire article in each pitch.”

Lynna Floyd



Regina Brooks



Linda Melone



Sally Wendkos Olds



Michael Luongo

QUOTES FROM THE CONFERENCE SESSIONS

A Memoir in the Making? Finding Your Story

“Think of your first draft as a free-for-all. Then go back and pull out what the story is.”

Jill Bialosky



Mark Fuerst

QUOTES FROM THE CONFERENCE SESSIONS

"Everything you're doing now has gotten you to the level of business success you are at right now. What got you here, won't get you there."

Jason Womack

"You never finish a piece of writing; you just abandon it when it's due."

Walter Pickut

Finding Corporate Clients

"If you want to find corporate clients, LinkedIn is your best friend."

Alexander Acker

"Write for free—but only for yourself. Think of yourself as a whale feeding on small creatures. Eat the krill (take the small jobs), befriend the dolphins (network, network, network), get to know the HR department at Seaworld (find out whom to contact and what they're looking for). Stir the waters so that corporate clients find you."

Leslie O'Flahaven

◀ CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

published, TV shows contacted me." Singer's agent nabbed her a three-book deal and made sure the contract stated that Singer owns Mommasaid.net.

My Sunday morning began with the session *Finding Corporate Clients*, moderated by Emily Paulsen. Panelist Alexander Acker said, "Agencies are looking for journalistic abilities, a good storyteller and an analytical thinker." His advice: Demonstrate thinking and expertise on your blog, don't be afraid to show your personality, research and follow companies you are targeting, and check out marketing-profs.com to learn effective methods of connecting to agencies and corporate clients on LinkedIn. Leslie O'Flahaven from e-write.com said, "I'll recruit almost any good writer on any topic."

A big shout-out goes to conference director Gina Roberts-Grey (@ginarobertsgrey) who seemed to be all places at all times. There were too many great panels and participants to mention each by name. The three-day weekend added up to enough knowledge to surely boost the income of every writer in attendance. I know I'll be at the 41st conference in 2012.

By the time my fingers were sleepy from tapping notes into my iPad and my brain incapable of comprehending one more sentence, the seminar came to a close. At home on Sunday evening I implemented Sree's nifty idea of creating lists in my Facebook account. The first one I made was called ASJA. ♦

QUOTES FROM THE CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Keynote Luncheon

"There are four things you need to do to be successful. Coopertition (retweet other people's posts), learn to speak in sound bites, learn social media, save journalism without worrying about the medium."

Jen Singer

Suzanne
Loeb



Hilary
Davidson



QUOTES FROM THE CONFERENCE SESSIONS

Sree Explains It All

"Monitor and edit your social media presence. Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg says, 'Privacy is no longer the social norm.'"

Sree Sreenivasan

Kadisha Thomas &
Katie Morrell

