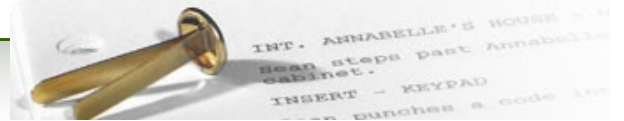


Idaho Screenwriters Association

<http://idahoscreenwriters.blogspot.com>



September Meeting

Tuesday, Sept 20th

6:30pm

Idaho Pizza

Idaho Pizza at

7100 W. Fairview.

Near Cole Rd



AGENDA:

Introductions

“What’s the best writing class you ever took?”

Announcements

** Member’s Announcements*

GUEST SPEAKER

Alex McNish

*Executive Director,
TVCTV*

CONTACT US:

- *Sherry A. E. Cann*
President / Founder
sherry.ae@hotmail.com
871-4501
- *Louise Luster*
CTP Films Executive Producer
ctpfilms@cablone.net /
www.ctpfilms.com
859-5123
- *Lance Thompson*
Script Doctor
scriptdoc88@gmail.com
898-1451
- *Pamela Thompson Career*
Coach/Recruiter
pamrecruit@q.com

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For Table Readings

They must be sent to Sherry in advance to make sure they're ready. This ensures you'll get the best feedback you can get. And makes the experience more beneficial for everyone. Thank you.

sherry.ae@hotmail.com



Treasure Valley Community Television, Inc. is an independent non-profit corporation. TVCTV's mission is to facilitate a free exchange of ideas, community dialogue, cultural and artistic expression for the residents of the Treasure Valley.

How Public Access Works

TVCTV's mandate is to give members of the community a voice. We provide the equipment and training; You make the television programs. Any individual or organization can register to become a community producer. They will be trained on our equipment and given access to TVCTV studios and checkout gear. The equipment is then available on a first-come, first-served basis to all trained volunteers to create programming for Cable One Cable Channel 11. Organizations can form their own video team; individuals can work together. We encourage a wide range of subjects and styles — music, drama, comedy, public affairs, and any other program YOU are interested in making as a TVCTV volunteer.

FROM THE POCKET MUSE

Don't check your e-mail today until you've written three pages.

A character arrives at work to find her chair missing. What happened to it?

Write about a less-than-remarkable aspect of your life.

The rules for writing a best-seller are simple:

1. Take an idea you really, really like.
2. Develop it until it is brilliant.
3. Rewrite it for a year to two, until every word shines.
4. Then bite your nails, hold your breath, and pray like mad.

~ *Sidney Sheldon*

WRITING AND REWRITING

- ⇒ Finish your draft before rewriting. Compose first, worry later.
- ⇒ Rewriting as you go along is like driving a car at night. You never see further than your headlights, but you can make the whole trip that way.
- ⇒ Be determined to make the script as good as it can be. Only a mediocre writer is always at his best.
- ⇒ Often the biggest mistake beginning writers make is submitting a script too soon, usually a first draft. They're too impatient, desperate for something to happen, because they've been at it for so long.
- ⇒ Getting Feedback. Ask advice from everyone, but act with your own mind.
- ⇒ Be open to outside criticism. Don't mind criticism. If its untrue, disregard it; if its unfair, keep from irritation; if its ignorant, smile; if its justified, learn from it.
- ⇒ Discipline is critical, but like a tree that doesn't make a sound if no one is there to hear it fall,

How many pages did you write today?

a screenwriter without a great script won't get any attention in Hollywood. What makes a great script? Art and craft. Art is your talent. No one can 'teach' it to you.

- ⇒ Story craft—weaving a great tale. Nothing counts as much as the story, because it is the story that will attract the director, the actors, the studio, the money. The story is the thing.



"Today, I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth."

~ **The Pride of the Yankees, 1942**



IMP Luncheon



<http://idahomediapro.org>

Wednesday, Sept 21
IMP Luncheon 11 am—1pm

Smokey Mountain Pizza

415 E. Parkcenter

Writing Tips from Sherry.... Wit and wisdom

HABIT n. 1. a. A recurrent, often unconscious pattern of behavior that is acquired through frequent repetition. B. An established disposition of the mind or character. 2. Customary manner or practice: a person of ascetic habits. 3. an addiction.

“The secret to success in any field is to find what successful people do, think about and act on, and do the same.” ~ *Anthony Robbins*

Stephen King suggests that the muse is a woodland fairy, who whispers in the writer’s ear sweet inspiration to encourage the next line of writing.

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence then is not an act, but a habit.” ~ *Aristotle*

If you want something you’ve never had, you have to do something you’ve never done!

Everyone can recognize a funny joke, but can everyone create one that’s as funny, and has never been told before?

In Hollywood, it’s not who you know but who knows you. I will add that it’s also not what you know but what you do. It’s all about action.

PASSION—the urge to screenwrite.

“Cats gotta’ scratch. Dogs gotta’ bite. I gotta’ write.” ~ *James Ellroy*

Being creative and original. Imagination is being able to think of things that haven’t appeared on TV yet.

As Pearl Buck eloquently puts it: “The truly creative mind in any field is no more than this: a human creature born abnormally, inhumanly sensitive. To him a touch is a blow, a sound is a noise, a misfortune is a tragedy, a joy is an ecstasy, a friend is a lover, a lover is a god, and failure is death. Add to this cruelly delicate organism the overpowering necessity to create, create, create—so that without the creating of music or poetry or books or buildings or something of meaning, his very breath is cut off from him. He must create, just pour out creating. By some strange, inward urgency, he is not really alive unless his is creating.”

Being a natural storyteller. We’re only interested in one thing: can you tell a story? Can you make us laugh, can you make us cry, can you makes wanna’ break out in

joyous song?

Being comfortable with solitude. Writing is a lonely life, but the only life worth living. It’s like volunteering for solitary confinement without knowing the length of your stay.

Being a natural observer. Everything has beauty but not everyone sees it.

In order to describe, you need to observe. Successful screenwriters naturally develop the habit of observing others, which gives them an ear for the way people talk and an eye for the way they behave.

Being collaborative. Our mind is like a parachute. It only works when it is open.

You have to collaborate and listen, but you can’t sell out your own work either. You try to navigate between their good and bad ideas and find a way to let them have what they feel they need without damaging what you feel is the emotional core and spirit of your piece.

I would suggest that you think about what habits you can design for yourself, that will help you become a better writer.

Everyone has to find what works for them, but if you don’t make a commitment to something, then nothing will get done. And a year from now you will be exactly where you are today.

So make your habit, and do it!



Sherry A. E. Cann, Founder

Idaho Screenwriters Association

Sherry.ae@hotmail.com

The Career Coach: Question Authority ~ ©copyright 2011 Pamela Kleibrink Thompson

My dad is turning 83 at the end of September. I'd like to share a few lessons I learned from him.

I remember my dad had two signs on his desk at home: "Think" was written in big black letters on a white background. The other was "Question Authority." In your career, there will be many authorities. Many will offer useful wisdom. A few will discourage you. Don't listen to those who disparage you and your talent.

Those who question authority are those whose names we remember today. Contrary to Church doctrine, Galileo supported Copernicus' theory that the sun was the center of the solar system and that the earth revolved around the sun. Galileo was placed under house arrest by the Church when he was found guilty of heresy, but his arguments changed the way man viewed his place in the universe.

Years ago, an aspiring actor was told by a well-known and respected casting director that he would never make it and that he should give up acting and do something else. He didn't listen to this "authority" discouraging him from pursuing his passion and Dustin Hoffman became a well-known Academy Award-winning actor.

Throughout my academic career, my teachers encouraged me and liked my work. I was an "A" student. When I was in high school, I had a teacher who was not a fan. Her lack of positive feedback made me question my abilities as a writer for the first time and I veered away from my passion for a while. I believed in her authority more than myself.

Authorities aren't always right. Here are just a few examples of some authorities that have been wrong:

Thomas John Watson, Sr., former president of IBM, is well known for his alleged 1943 statement: "I think there is a world market for maybe five computers." (My father worked for IBM for many years.)

IBM was not the only company with a president with little prescience. "There is no need for any individual to have a computer in their home." -- Ken Olson, President, Digital Equipment Corp., 1977

Even visionaries might not have all the answers. "There is not the slightest indication that [nuclear energy] will ever be obtainable. It would mean that the atom would have to be shattered at will." -- Albert Einstein, 1932

Many authorities have been mistaken about things that seem obvious to us now.

"If excessive smoking actually plays a role in the production of lung cancer, it seems to be a minor one." -- Dr. W. C. Heuper, National Cancer Institute, 1954

"The talking motion picture will not supplant the regular silent motion picture. There is such a tremendous investment to pantomime pictures that it would be absurd to disturb it." -- Thomas Edison, 1913

"Video won't be able to hold onto any market it captures after the first six months. People will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night." -- Darryl F. Zanuck, Head of 20th Century-Fox Studios, 1946

Never let any authority dissuade you from pursuing what you love to do. In 1889, the editor of the San Francisco Examiner rejected a manuscript by saying, "I'm sorry, Mr. Kipling, but you just don't know how to use the English language." Rudyard Kipling, the British author and poet, is best known for the book of children's tales *The Jungle Book* (1894), the Indian spy novel *Kim* (1901), the poems "Gunga Din" (1892) and "If—" (1895), as well as many short stories. In 1907, Kipling was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature and still remains its youngest-ever recipient.

"You ain't goin' nowhere, son. You ought to go back to drivin' a truck." -- Jim Denny, Manager of the Grand Ole Opry, 1954

That former truck driver didn't listen to the musical authority Jim Denny. The truck driver went on to sell over one billion records around the world, more than any other recording artist, and received 14 Grammy nominations (3 wins) from the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences. At age 36, he received the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award. Former truck driver Elvis Presley, the King of Rock and Roll, also starred in 33 films.

"To thine own self be true," extolled William Shakespeare in *Hamlet*. Don't allow anyone else to define who you are. Take a lesson from my dad this September, question authority and don't accept another's definition of what is doable. Start contributing your unique voice and vision to the world today.

Pamela Kleibrink Thompson is a recruiter and career coach and some consider her an authority on getting a job in the entertainment business. Her father, Paul Kleibrink, turns 83 on September 29. Happy Birthday Dad! He is an authority on thinking and questioning authority. So-called authorities don't always have all the answers. For personal career coaching, recruiting and speaking engagements, contact Pamela at PamRecruit@q.com.