

## Writers League of The Villages



Information, education,  
and networking for writers.

Laurel Manor Recreation Center  
1st Wednesday of the Month  
8:30AM-10:30AM

[www.WLOV.org](http://www.WLOV.org)

Writers League of The Villages

# WLOV NEWSLETTER

April 1, 2018

## Message from Your Newsletter Editor

By Larry Martin  
[drlarry437@gmail.com](mailto:drlarry437@gmail.com)



This issue contains a lot of information about WLOV activities and upcoming writing-related events. The Table of Contents (below) should help you sort out items you want to read first.

As WLOV is the ‘umbrella writing organization’ in The Villages, our aim is to reach out to all writers in TV. Hence this newsletter now goes to all the various writing clubs that have signed up via Simplelists. If you receive it and are not a member of WLOV, consider joining.

The discounts on Expo tables and other events are greater than the yearly fee of \$15. And consider this: there are many writers in TV who are not members of any writing club, or who are simply not familiar with WLOV. Some writers are averse to joining clubs about their craft, and that’s OK. Others, however, are delighted to find out about WLOV. So let your writer friends know. Send the pdf file of this newsletter to at least ONE writer you know who is *not* a member of any writing club, or who may not know about WLOV. Odds are you know at least one. Here’s a suggested email: “Hi. Thought you might be interested in the latest WLOV Newsletter. Great organization for writers like yourself. You should consider joining. The membership application is on their website, [www.wlov.org](http://www.wlov.org).”

You can send the pdf file as an attachment, or just provide this link to the April newsletter.

<http://wlov.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/3/6/24362452/wlovnewsletter-april-2018.pdf>

### Mainly of interest to writers in The Villages Page

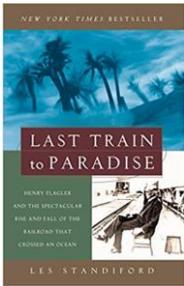
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# WLOV Calendar of Upcoming Writing-related Events

DATE	EVENT
Wed, April 4	General Meeting, Laurel Manor, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. Penny Thomas will talk on <b>Selecting Your Book Genre and Writing an Effective Back Cover Book Blurb</b>
Tues, April 17	The Enrichment Academy’s Speaker Series, Rohan Recreation Center. Miami author Les Standiford will speak on his book <i>Last Train to Paradise: Henry Flagler and the Spectacular Rise &amp; Fall of the Railroad that Crossed an Ocean</i> . \$5 fee for Villages residents. To register go to <a href="http://www.districtgov.org">www.districtgov.org</a> , click on recreation tab under departments, then click on icon for The Enrichment Academy.
Sat, April 28	Florida Writers Association all-day workshop Altamonte Springs, FL: <b>Focus on Craft</b> . Open to non-FWA members. <a href="https://floridawriters.net/conferences/focus-craft/">https://floridawriters.net/conferences/focus-craft/</a>
Wed, May 2	General Meeting, Laurel Manor, 8:30 – 10:30 a.m. WLOV member Barbara Miller will speak on: <b>CreateSpace - How is Amazon changing the publishing platform and will those changes impact you?</b> For more about a special event during the May meeting, please see President’s Message, below.
June & July	No regular WLOV meeting.
Wed, June 6	WLOV-sponsored field trip to Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings home and State Park; see President’s Message, below.
Sat, June 23	Florida Writers Association all-day workshop Altamonte Springs, FL: <b>Do It Yourself Marketing</b> . Open to non-FWA members. <a href="https://floridawriters.net/conferences/focus-diy-marketing/">https://floridawriters.net/conferences/focus-diy-marketing/</a>



## Message from Your President



As I sit here writing, Mother Nature is orchestrating another rain event for the second day in a row. After all those weeks of dry weather, it seems rather strange to hear thunder and witness explosive torrents of rain again. Since I managed to squeeze in a ride on my horse after this morning’s downpour, it doesn’t matter that this afternoon’s golf is cancelled. Life is good (especially when I think about all of those poor folks up north who are braving their fourth major storm in less than four weeks).

Enough about the weather — I’d like to share information about our upcoming events:

For our April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting, WLOV member Penny Thomas will address the importance of knowing your genre when you write popular fiction. Branching out from there, she’ll address the key elements of writing elevator speeches, tag lines, and back cover copy. If, like me, you’ve struggled with some of these efforts, you’ll be taking notes. I know I will have my pen poised.

Our meeting on May 2<sup>nd</sup> will be special, if a bit bittersweet. We will be saying *au-revoir* to Mary Lois Sanders – a woman who has been a smiling, gracious, and supportive WLOV presence since the club’s inception. Please join us for pastry and coffee and some shared memories. Since Mary Lois would not be comfortable having the meeting focus entirely on her, we will also have a speaker. WLOV member, Barbara Miller will present a timely topic: “CreateSpace - How is Amazon changing the publishing platform and will those changes impact you?”

June is a meeting hiatus month for WLOV. In lieu of a meeting, we’ve scheduled a field trip on Wednesday, June 6<sup>th</sup> to the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park. If you are interested, please let me know April 4 (either by email to [ritab1423@gmail.com](mailto:ritab1423@gmail.com) or by signing-up at the April 4<sup>th</sup> general meeting). Also, let me know if you are willing to drive and if so, how many people you can take, or if you will need a ride. More about the MKR venue is provided on page 3 of this newsletter. I hope you’ll be able to join us. The rest of the year’s events—including our Holiday Expo—are coming together nicely. Stay tuned for more details in future Newsletters.



Thank you for the enthusiastic response to our initiation of a 50/50 raffle at the March meeting. The raffle garnered \$60 for our treasury. If the response continues to be as positive, we will distribute the winnings to three rather than two lucky members in the future.

WLOV name-tags: The members who ordered name-tags at the March meeting will be able to pick them up at the April meeting. We will continue to sell these attractive magnetic name-tags at each meeting at a cost of \$5.00 ea. Of course, the real challenge is remembering to wear them!

See you on April 4<sup>th</sup> at Laurel Manor. As always, please contact me at ritab1423@gmail.com with any comments and suggestions you might have. Or, stop

by after the meeting to chat.

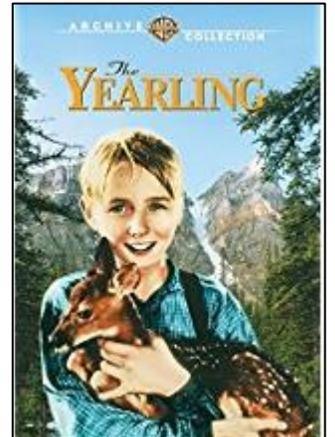
Rita Boehm

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## Visit Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings Historic State Park



Less than an hour north from The Villages, near the town of Micanopy, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings (August 8, 1896 – December 14, 1953) lived and worked in the tiny community of Cross Creek. The house and surrounding farm are now a Florida Historic State Park. The home, shown above, is where she wrote her Pulitzer prize-winning novel *The Yearling*, and other fiction. Our WLOV-sponsored field trip on Wednesday, June 6 will visit the home, have a guided tour, and then stop for lunch before heading back to The Villages (for details about signing up, see President’s Message, above). The park fee is 3\$/person.



*The Yearling*, about a boy who adopts an orphaned fawn, won a Pulitzer Prize for fiction in 1939. It was later made into a movie of the same name. According to Wikipedia, the book was written long before the concept of young adult fiction, and is now commonly included in teen-reading lists

Marjorie Rawlings was honored as a First Floridian by Governor Charlie Crist in March 2009. The United States Postal Service released a commemorative stamp in 2008 honoring Rawlings and the literary arts.

In 2007, the Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings house and farm yard was designated as a National Historic Landmark, the United States’ highest historic recognition.

## A “Thank You” and a “Welcome” from Our Expo Chairmen

### **THANK YOU**

by Mark Newhouse



I want to thank everyone for the amazing success of the Central Florida Book & Author Expo this year, held January 27. The author survey was a tribute to the hard work of the Expo Team: Jim Meyer, Jack Hayes, Bill Russell, Mary Lois Sanders, Jan Zahorian, Donna Beard, Barbara Phillips, Larry Martin, and Maggie Wacker. Special thanks to all of our ambassadors. We need you to maintain your special relationship with your clubs and organizations throughout the year. Finally, thanks to every WLOV member who spread the word and supported our efforts. It has been my pleasure to serve you and I know I leave the Expo in great hands with Jim Meyer and his plans for the Holiday Expo, December 8, 2018.

### **WELCOME**

by Jim Meyer

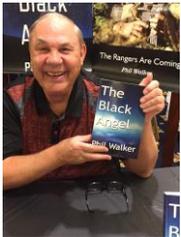


Our next Central Florida Book and Author Expo will be held Saturday, December 8, 2018, in the Eisenhower Rec Center. We have changed the date to take advantage of holiday book buyers. The January Expo had a waiting list for display tables, so I strongly recommend you get your application in early. Between May 2<sup>nd</sup> and May 20 we will be accepting WLOV members’ applications for tables. After May 20, applications will be open to all authors (in or out of The Villages). The application for tables, along with a revised price list, will be posted on the web site by April 15 ([www.wlov.org](http://www.wlov.org)). WLOV members *whose dues are paid for 2018* may bring a check for a full or half table to the May 2<sup>nd</sup> General meeting, or mail their check to: Donna Beard, 110 Costa Mesa Drive, The Villages, FL 32159.

## **WLOV is Growing!**

**Phil Walker**

**Membership Chairman**



I am pleased to announce that our current paid membership has risen to 114 people. So far this year we have acquired 17 new members. We are very happy with our growth and progress this year.

The number of those whom we list as members, but have not yet paid their 2018 dues, has fallen to just 26 people. Sadly, if you are one of those people, your name will be removed from our membership listing.

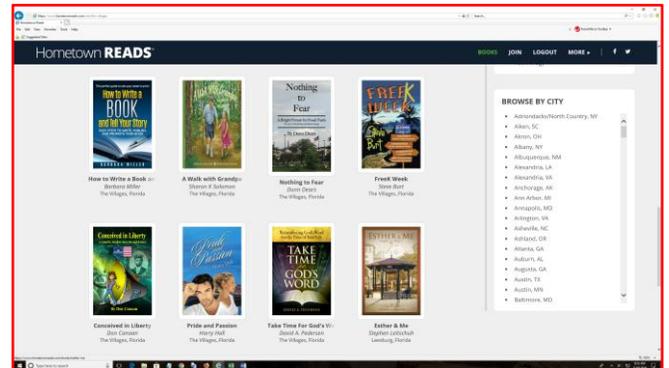
## **WLOV Meeting March 7**

At the March 7 general meeting WLOV member John Prince spoke on inserting humor in your writing. He emphasized that even serious writing can have some humorous aspects, and knowing how to place humor can sharpen your writing. John has also given a course on this subject at The Villages Enrichment Academy.



## Hometown Reads Expands to 10 books/author

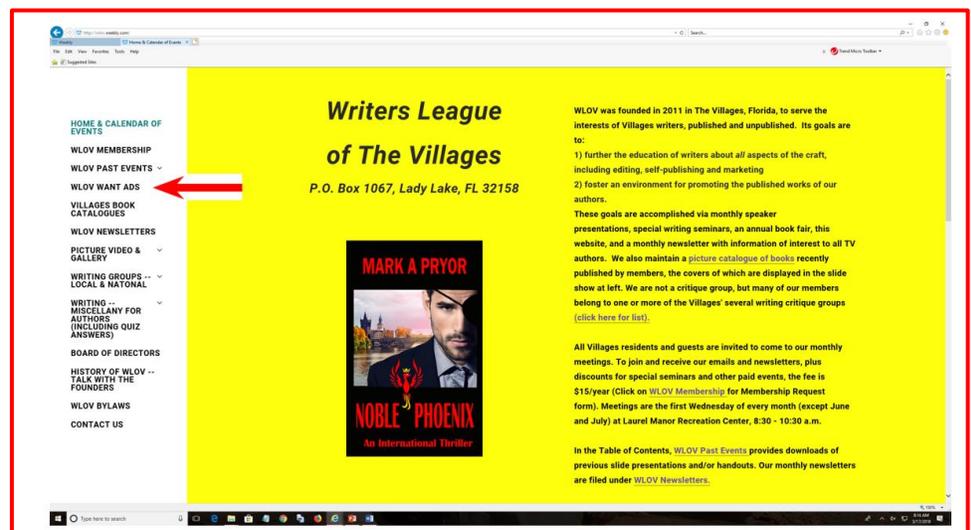
The previous limit for the number of books you could list was 7. It is now up to 10. Listing of your books is free. The screen shot on the right shows a few of the books published by local authors. To join Hometown Reads and list your books under The Villages location, go to <https://www.hometownreads.com/>



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## Writers seeking local editors/proofreaders

[www.wlov.org](http://www.wlov.org) has a section called "Want Ads" where you can list services you offer or request something writing-related, like book exchange for Amazon reviews. One service frequently requested by our members is for editing and/or proofreading. While these services are abundantly offered via internet businesses and freelancers, many Villages authors would prefer to deal with someone local. Below is an announcement of a new, locally-based publishing company that offers such services. If you also offer publishing-related services, or know someone in the Villages who does, please send me the contact information ([drlarry437@gmail.com](mailto:drlarry437@gmail.com)). We'll keep a list and post the names on the web site.



\* \* \*

## New Publishing Company Announced by WLOV Founder Mark Newhouse

Mark Newhouse is pleased to announce that he and his son, Keith, have joined together to form Newhouse Creative Group, with AimHi Press as its children's book imprint, and NCG Self-Publish Services (see graphic) that offers publishing help at reasonable prices. The company's first releases are *Dreidel Dog*, a picture book, and *Passover Puppy Coloring Book*. Focusing on the school and institutional markets, NCG will be seeking new acquisitions soon. For more information contact Mark at [www.newhousecreativegroup.com](http://www.newhousecreativegroup.com) or [mark@newhouse.net](mailto:mark@newhouse.net).

**NOW PUBLISHING!**

PLEASE EMAIL  
[KEITH@NEWHOUSECREATIVEGROUP.COM](mailto:KEITH@NEWHOUSECREATIVEGROUP.COM)  
FOR MORE INFORMATION

Basic Self-Publishing	\$160
Proofreading (per 10 pages)	\$20
Basic Cover Design	\$30
Preferred Cover Design	Contact for pricing
Kindle Publishing	\$60

Full distribution, marketing, editing, and consulting services also available

  
Newhouse Creative Group

## Current Writing Contests

There are dozens of writing contests for aspiring authors, some national in scope, others local. Listed here are three contests close to home, with looming deadlines.



**Journeys** is an anthology of short stories chosen by a contest committee, with the winners published in a volume called *Journeys*. It is run by WLOV's Mary Lois Sanders, and is now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year. Maximum story length is 3000 words. The deadline for submissions is June 30, 2018, with the results announced in October, and *Journeys XI* to be launched in December. The fee per story entry is \$20. Click on link below for contest guidelines.

[http://wlov.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/3/6/24362452/cwn\\_journeys\\_xi\\_short\\_story\\_contest\\_guidelines.pdf](http://wlov.weebly.com/uploads/2/4/3/6/24362452/cwn_journeys_xi_short_story_contest_guidelines.pdf)

### Royal Palm Literary Award Competition

Professional feedback and a chance to earn a trophy and bragging rights — yours for entering the Florida Writers Association's flagship Royal Palm Literary Award writing competition!

"The rubrics are a wonderful idea. Your contest is the best judged and the most competitive I've ever heard-tell-of. Measurable criteria are the way to go in any contest, and you folks have nailed it." —Susan Lindsay  
"I did not anticipate the analysis I received. This is another feather in FWA's cap. Getting real constructive feedback. Wow! Thank you so much. You bet I'll submit in 2018." —Yves Masson

#### 2018 RPLA Guidelines & Submissions

Submissions are accepted February 1, 2018 through 11:59 PM EST April 30, 2018.  
The earlier you enter, the lower the fee.

- Download Adult RPLA Guidelines
- Download Youth RPLA Guidelines

Adult Entry Form

Youth Entry Form

Questions

#### Past RPLA Competitions

- Lists of past winners are available [here](#)
- Read samples of first-place winning works in the "RPLA Showcase"
- What entrants said about the 2017 contest [\[PDF Download\]](#)

### Royal Palm Literary Award Competition

**(RPLA)** is a yearly writing contest, in multiple genres. Submissions go from February 1 through April 30, and winners are announced at the annual RPLA Awards Banquet in late October. Many WLOV members have won this competition. There is a fee schedule for each submission, the amount depending on the genre and what month it is submitted. RPLA accepts both published and unpublished works. All details are on the website. Even if you don't win, the rubrics you will obtain provide valuable feedback.

<https://floridawriters.net/competitions-awards/royal-palm-literary-award/>

### Florida Writers Association Collection

The Florida Writers Association Collection is an annual writing competition that showcases member writing and helps members grow their skills.

Each year, entrants write to a theme and sixty submissions are chosen for publication. A "Person of Renown" chooses ten stories for special recognition. The Person of Renown is the FWA Royal Palm Literary Award Competition Published Book of the Year winner.

- Fiction, nonfiction, and poetry are eligible
- Prose entries must not exceed 1,200 words; poem entries must not exceed 50 lines
- There are separate competitions for adult and youth members
- Florida Writers Association dues must be paid through October 31 in order to qualify for publication
- There is no entry fee

To learn more about or purchase previous volumes, click on their titles in the sidebar.

#### 2018 Guidelines

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- Download Adult Collection Guidelines
- Download Youth Collection Guidelines

Adult Entry Form

Youth Entry Form

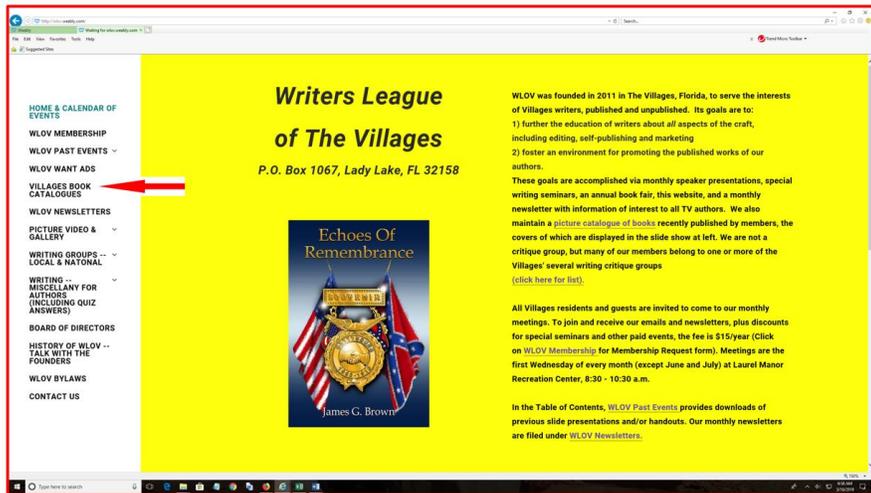
Questions

**Florida Writers Association Collection** is an annual writing competition that showcases member writing and helps members grow their skills.

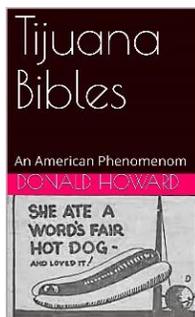
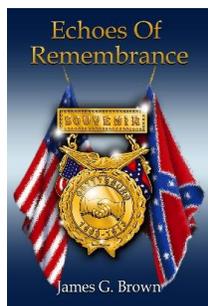
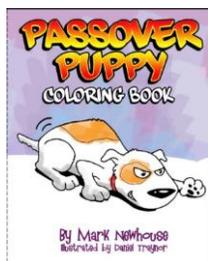
Each year, entrants write to a theme and sixty submissions are chosen for publication. Entries may be fiction, non-fiction, or poetry. A "Person of Renown" chooses ten stories for special recognition. The Person of Renown is the FWA Royal Palm Literary Award Competition Published Book of the Year winner. There is no entry fee. Submissions are accepted February 1, 2018 through 11:59 PM EST April 30, 2018. To read more and learn about this year's theme, go to:

<https://floridawriters.net/competitions-awards/collection/>

# WLOV Book Catalogue Expanded, Still Missing Books



Several recently-published books by our members are not in the WLOV catalogue. If you wish your book listed in the catalogue, which is posted at [www.wlov.org](http://www.wlov.org) (see arrow), please send me a high resolution picture of the cover, a short blurb and the Amazon link. The catalogue is for books published 2016-2018. Books added since our March meeting are shown below.



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## Free Guide to Manuscript Publishers

By Larry Martin

**Free Book:**  
**The 2018 Guide to Manuscript Publishers**

- ✓ **Find the right publisher.**  
We review 172 traditional book publishers that accept submissions directly from authors.
- ✓ **No agent required.**  
All of the publishers listed accept submissions from authors without an agent or previous publishing experience.
- ✓ **Get the book now, completely free.**  
Just enter your email address in the form below. We'll send you the book right away.

Enter your email address:

Authors Publish

This 314-page pdf file is free. Even if you don't find a publisher for your work inside, the Introduction is well worth reading. It emphasizes the list is of traditional publishers, and excludes vanity publishers who want to charge you for services. Publishers in this list pay the author, not the other way around.

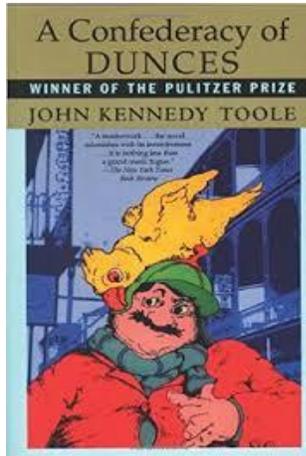
The direct link (obtained by putting in my email address) is: <https://www.authorspublish.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/The-2018-Guide-to-Manuscript-Publishers-1.pdf>

If the above link doesn't work, the link below shows the screen on left, where you can enter your email address for the free download.

<https://www.authorspublish.com/manuscript-guide-2018/>

# Literary Rejection: The Sad Story of John Kennedy Toole, author of *A Confederacy of Dunces*

By Larry Martin  
drlarry437@gmail.com



Last month I provided a list of novels by then-unknown authors that were rejected numerous times by agents and publishers. Each book went on to become a huge bestseller, e.g., *Catch 22*, *A Time to Kill*, *Carrie*, *Harry Potter*. The message was clear: rejection doesn't mean your book is no good, and agents and publishers have no lock on recognizing great works. Not included in last month's list, because his story is unique, is John Kennedy Toole (photo from Wikipedia). Toole wrote *A Confederacy of Dunces*. *Dunces* is a comic farce that takes place in 1960s New Orleans. The book has a long history of rejection.



Toole actually got his manuscript into the hands of perhaps the most gifted and famous editor of the last half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Robert Gottlieb. In 1964, when *Dunces* was submitted, Gottlieb was editor at Simon and Schuster, and he would later go on to run Alfred A. Knopf, where he edited such luminaries as Toni Morrison, John Cheever, John le Carré, Michael Crichton, and Bill Clinton. In 1987 he succeeded William Shawn as editor of *The New Yorker*. After five years at *The New Yorker* he returned to Alfred A. Knopf as editor ex-officio. Gottlieb was a giant in the business of editing and publishing.

Unlike so many of the books mentioned in last month's newsletter, *Confederacy* was not rejected out of hand. Gottlieb liked the manuscript, just thought it needed a clearer focus. There ensued much correspondence between editor and author, with Gottlieb repeatedly suggesting major changes and Toole, ultimately, resisting. After two years of back-and-forth between editor and author, Gottlieb decided he couldn't publish the book without substantial changes, which Toole said he could not do. Toole retrieved the manuscript and apparently did nothing more with it. The year was 1966.

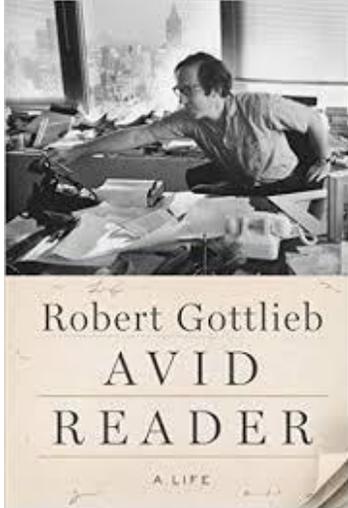
Toole probably had some deep psychological problems, but at the time was gainfully employed teaching at Dominican University in New Orleans. However, his psyche worsened and he grew more despondent. He was living with his mother Thelma in New Orleans, and they apparently fought often. He quit his job and went on a solo road trip. In Mississippi, on March 26, 1969, he killed himself by piping carbon monoxide into his car. He was 31. The *Dunces* manuscript lay on top of his dresser at home.

For two years his mother did nothing with the manuscript. In 1971 she began sending it out to other publishers, where it suffered rejection after rejection. Then, in 1976, she called Walker Percy, a famous Southern writer teaching at Loyola University New Orleans, and insisted he read the manuscript. He said no thanks, but she kept calling. Percy would later write:

But the lady was persistent, and it somehow came to pass that she stood in my office handing me the hefty manuscript. There was no getting out of it; only one hope remained—that I could read a few pages and that they would be bad enough for me, in good conscience, to read no further. Usually I can do just that. Indeed the first paragraph often suffices. My only fear was that this one might not be bad enough, or might be just good enough, so that I would have to keep reading.

In this case I read on. And on. First with the sinking feeling that it was not bad enough to quit, then with a prickle of interest, then a growing excitement, and finally an incredulity; surely it was not possible that it was so good. I shall resist the temptation to say what first made me gape, grin, laugh out loud, shake my head in wonderment. Better let the reader make the discovery on his own.

Despite his enthusiasm, even famous Walker Percy couldn't get a publisher to take it, including his own (Farrar, Straus). Finally, Percy convinced Louisiana State University Press to publish the book, and an initial run of 2500 copies came out in 1980. Percy provided the Forward. The book took off and the rest, as they say, is history. **In 1981, *Confederacy of Dunces* won the Pulitzer Prize for fiction.** The novel has been in print since ever since, and has sold more than 1.5 million copies, in 19 languages.



What was Robert Gottlieb's reaction? In his 2016 memoir, *Avid Reader*, he writes:

I knew that Ken had done a good deal of rewriting of his book before he died, but I had no notion as to whether the book as published was the result of this work or was more or less the book I had first seen. When recently I read that the latter was the case, I decided to go back to it—and found that my reactions were almost exactly the same as they had been fifty years earlier. There was the explosive energy I remembered, the prodigious imagination, the heady humor – and the overload, the strain, the sophomoric take on life. I guess I was both sorry and relieved that my opinion hadn't changed.

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I read *Confederacy of Dunces* after a lecture on New Orleans-based literature recommended it as the one must-read book about the city. I found it an unusual novel, entertaining in many areas, but also somewhat sophomoric in places. Would it have won the Pulitzer Prize without the history of how it came to be published, and the tragic death of its author? No way to know.

What I have come to learn is that virtually every bestseller has a substantial number of detractors, people who just can't stand the book. The graph shown here is the Amazon breakdown of customer reviews for *Dunces*. Even if you haven't read the book, I recommend comparing the comments of the lowest (1-3) with those of the highest (4-5).

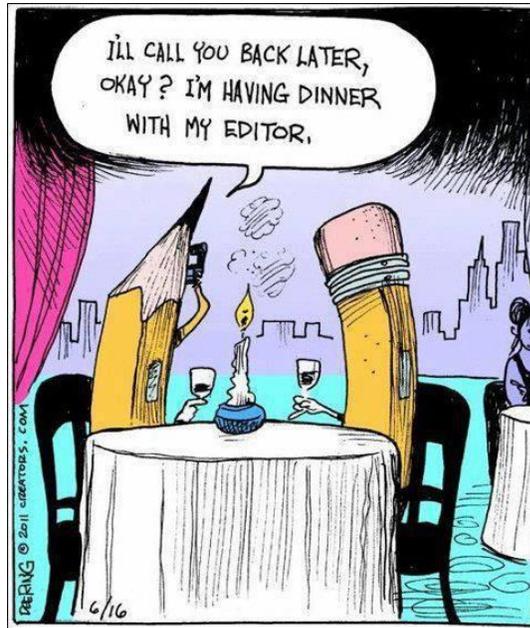
Here is a comment from a "3" review.  
 Not particularly comical, a bit tedious, characters somewhat unattractive. Hard to like an obese rather slovenly main character with a horrible mother. Altogether not something I would suggest you read.

And one from a "5" review.  
 Funniest book ever - my review won't do it justice. It's so smart. The protagonist's commentary on his encounters in New Orleans and with life in general are delivered in dry, caustic humor, and with a haughty, jaundiced eye of the world around him, while maintaining a self-deprecating realization of his own "minor" and "occasional" (according to him) deficiencies. The descriptions of the characters are so spot on that you feel like you know these people - and they're all so interesting. I can't say enough. But, humor is taste-specific. It may not appeal to everyone, although I can't imagine who wouldn't find the adventures of Ignatius J. Riley engaging.



It was Toole's misfortune that his first 5-star star reviewer, Walker Percy, came too late in the game.

# Cartoons

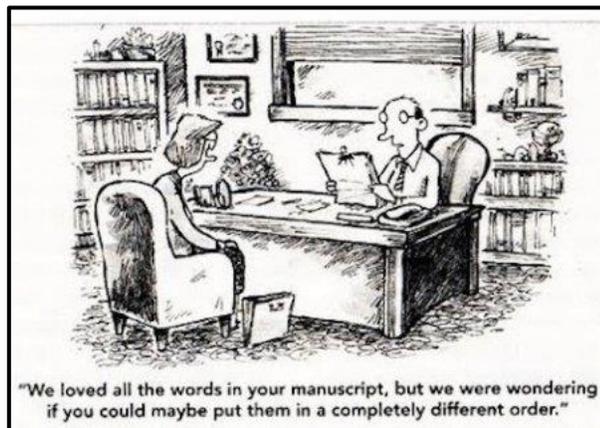


ARCTIC CIRCLE

ARCTICCIRCLECARTOONS.COM



<http://arcticcirclecartoons.com/2014/07/02/cartoons-on-creative-writing-classes/>



<https://jeanfischer.wordpress.com/2015/09/07/ten-of-the-funniest-cartoons-about-writing/>