

# The Author's ADVOCATE



## Special Newsletter

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Infinity Publishing and Buy Books on the Web.com

*“Express Yourself...”*

## Infinity's Affordable Authors' Conference

You know how you feel when you walk out of a theater after viewing a lackluster movie??? The acting was flat. The story was flat. You feel aggravated that you had to sit through lots of commercial messages even before the start of the feature. You blew twenty bucks and wasted several hours of your time for a movie that simply wasn't worth it. The only positive note from this costly outing was that the overpriced popcorn was pretty good—and even that was on the greasy side!!!

This September, we want you to return home from our Authors' Conference *knowing* that you made a wise investment!!! We *guarantee* that you'll leave inspired after hearing a variety of worthwhile suggestions from leading marketing experts on how to successfully promote your book. You can rest assured that there will be no commercial messages. The pitches in the seminar presentations will be focused on how to help you with your renewed efforts for promoting your book.

As always, our primary objective in planning for our annual conference is to deliver far more than we promise. We also strive to provide tangible benefits for every attendee. The ten copies of your Infinity-published book that will be waiting for you at the hotel is a very tangible bonus for Infinity authors!!! The door prizes given out on Sunday morning have been specially selected because of their value for authors. The food is delicious, the service is most attentive, and the sleeping rooms at the Sheraton are comfortable and spacious. You'll rub shoulders with people from all over the country and you'll meet some of the leading book-marketing experts. It's a guaranteed “win-win!!!”

### Special \$999

#### Book Publishing Setup Fee and Conference Registration Package

Yes, that's right!!! For \$999, new authors can have their book published by Infinity Publishing *and* register for our Authors' Conference, held this September at the Sheraton Park Ridge at Valley Forge, PA. If we have your submission on or before September 15, and you approve the proof copy of your book in a timely fashion, then you'll have 10 copies of your newly published book waiting for you at the conference!!!

This book publishing setup fee / conference registration offer is also available to Infinity authors publishing another title with us. However, in keeping with our policy of giving a \$50 discount off our regular \$499 setup fee, deduct \$50 from the \$999 and the cost for an Infinity author attending the conference and publishing a new book with us is \$949 – but wait, there's more!!! Not only will you have 10 free copies of the book you've already published with us, you'll also have 10 free copies of your newly submitted book waiting for you at the hotel!

There's more!!! If you have referred a friend to publish with us under our “Refer-a-Friend” program, you each have a \$50 discount credit. But here's a real deal – those \$50 credits just *doubled* in value when applied to your conference registration. For the new author publishing with Infinity *and* attending the conference, the cost is \$899! Infinity authors with a \$50 referral credit may deduct \$100 from their registration fee.

## Focusing on Fiction

Mickey Spillane's series of Mike Hammer detective murder mysteries are acknowledged as one of the all-time top sellers in that genre. His straightforward titles like *More Than Murder* and *Murder Me, Murder You* made book buyers out of browsers. He created a storytelling style that immersed the reader in detecting who did what in the compelling plot. In the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, all of Spillane's *Hammer* books sold millions of copies, a major achievement back when the counting of books sold was more accurate than present-day. Back then, there were no bookstore chains – today's quagmire of returns didn't exist!!!

Throughout most of his career, Spillane didn't get reviewed by the major reviewers. Their collective position was they didn't review "poorly-written trashy crap." Mickey replied that he didn't care what critics said about his style; all that mattered to him was what his readers thought. Mickey's *who dunnit*-style of books were in ever-increasing demand by a massive army of readers – one being my dad. Spillane was interviewed by *Life* magazine – the major weekly news/photo magazine of the time – and he was asked if he wanted a fan club. He quickly replied he didn't want fans – he wanted customers!!!

Mickey was a true author of pulp-fiction. His novels didn't benefit from pre-release reviews in the major papers, nor did he have a new book release announcement in the trades. But as soon as his latest novel was released, the word spread like wildfire that Mickey's new *Hammer* was on the rack in the drug store. It usually sold out in days – and he sold millions in his lifetime. Mickey died recently, but his contribution to writing will never be forgotten!!!

There's no doubt that novels are a challenge to sell, and a first-novel by an unknown author can be especially daunting. From a marketing point of view, the challenge with every novel is to sell the storytelling ability of the author to write an entertaining and gripping tale for readers to enjoy. It's convincing the buyer that your novel is a highly entertaining book with a creative plot. The sizzle of your plot line is what hooks the customers and your wordsmithing skills are what people will be talking about when the reading is done.

At this year's Authors' Conference, the presenters will be focusing on both fiction and non-fiction books. Novels are indeed a novel challenge because each one is a unique story created for the sole purpose of entertaining the customer. Just remember Mickey Spillane's credo – *never forget your reader!!!*

## Pricing of Trade Paperbacks

I just finished reading *The Franklin Affair*, a novel by Jim Lehrer published as a Random House trade paperback with a cover price of \$13.95 – the hardcover version was priced at \$23.95, available at the discounted price of \$16.76 on Amazon.com or as a trade paperback for only \$10.74. But in the here-and-now of the moment, holding the \$13.95 trade paperback in my hand at Border's played directly to my need for some instant gratification – besides, I had a Border's gift card with about a \$20 credit remaining on it!

What caused me to pause and ponder my pending purchase was the poor quality of the digitally-printed trade paperback book. Yes, it was perfect-bound with an attractive matte-finished cover, but the text pages were a lightweight newsprint stock, thinner than regular newsprint stock and not even close to the weight of the pages in a mass-market paperback. Also, it was not even close in overall quality to the books published by Infinity Publishing.

The same 208-page book published by Infinity Publishing would clearly be of a much higher quality and, based on the page count, would have a suggested retail price of \$13.95. Same price, better quality, and our paper has a nicer feel and better opacity that's easy on the eyes.

Border's had a nice variety of recently-released trade paperbacks and each one was priced correspondingly to our books with a similar page count. They had a sale on selected trade paperbacks – *3 books for the price of 2*. Now, I view this kind of offer as a way generating greater reader acceptance for the trade paperback format and their pricing at the retail level.

Mass-market paperbacks are now being published in what is referred to as a *reader-friendly* size of 4 1/8" x 7 1/4". This is close to the 5 1/2" x 8 1/2" size of a trade paperback. James Patterson's recent novel, *4<sup>th</sup> of July*, was on sale at Border's in the *reader-friendly* size for \$7.49 (marked down from \$9.99) to help folks get used to buying the new format at a higher price. Hardcover book prices are increasing, too; my guess is that's so the chains can buy at a deep discount and then mark just-released hardcover titles down by as much as 40%.

All things considered, our suggested pricing, based on page count, is right in line with what other publishers are doing with their trade paperback books.

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Take care and enjoy often...John