

Book Agents

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Thanks to the wonderful workings of the worldwide web, we writers have access to numerous tools, services, and pieces of advice for everything from writing to submitting to acquiring book agents. In the same respect, because of the facility and accessibility of the web, we also must be guarded, educated on, and protected from smarmy, conniving individuals attempting to pass themselves off as book agents. I have been writing since I was old enough to hold a pencil in my teeth and try writing on the walls of my mother's beautiful home. I have been writing for a living for a lot less longer and have looked into the guiles and guises and gifts of book agents for even less time than that (primarily because I have a limited desire to publish a book that will make zillions and therefore have limited need for all that much research into book agents, publishers, and the like). But I have come across super-important, and clearly valuable information that anyone in the writing life might want to peruse or study.

FINDING AND MOVING TOWARD LEGITIMATE BOOK AGENTS

The Burry Man Writer's Center – This is a comprehensive site with thousands of job leads as well as hundreds of links for writers seeking to find agents in most genres…from mystery to romance to fiction and more.

Author Link.com – not just a place to find agents, but a venue for talking about books, writing, and publishing.

Literary Agents Directory – As its name suggests, this site is devoted to writers who want to find agents for every genre, from nonfiction, fiction, and reference to poetry and children's prose and in every country, from here to Holland and back.

IDENTIFYING AND AVOIDING SCURVY BOOK AGENTS

These writers and writer sites/pages include directories and/or forums defining, determining, and discussing those con artists who have scammed writers in the past and who are now caught or still out there lurking, sniffing, and hoping to pounce:

Editors Directory at Another Realm (a.k.a. Predators and Editors site).

Whispers and Warnings at Angela Hoy's Writers Weekly

The Water Cooler at Absolute Write

The Warnings Forum at Brady Magazine

The Writer Beware Pages at SFWA's site (<http://www.sfw.org/beware/agents.html>) –SFWA also has a second reputation (besides protecting writers by forewarning them): they suspected a literary agent/pod was a fraud, and wrote a book of absolute crapola nonsense—so bad a grammarian would have instant cardiac arrest. The book was “accepted”. Look for a link on the site. You can buy the book. It is brilliant in its ulterior intent.

THE HOW-TO AND HOW NOT-TO APPROACH BOOK AGENTS SITES

The Randy Murray Literary Agency – This agency features a guide for “how to impress a literary agency.” It speaks to the Murray Agency specifically, but establishes sensible protocol for approaching book agents in general, as well.

Everyone Who's Anyone in Adult Trade Publishing, Propagandaville and Tinseltown, Too, is a Worthless, Superfluous, Giddy, Giggly, Chickenhearted, Money-Grubbing, Nazi Moron [go to the U.S. Literary Agents section(s) at everyonewhosanyone.com] – This is an absolutely hilarious approach, the writer getting apoplectic about rejection, decides to not only query every single agent in the United States but posts their responses and lists their contact info. Lesson? You'll figure it out.