

## Show and Tell – confusing 4 letter words...



Bronwen Evans

**I don't think any of us disagree that a reader is drawn into a story more when the story is told by showing rather than telling. I SUCK at showing and it's taken me years to understand what is showing and what is telling.**

At the recent local Hawkes Bay RWNZ Saturday meeting, there was general confusion over

1. What was show and what was tell?
2. How much SHOW is too much?
3. Where and how TELL often works

We all brought along one page from our current WIP and we analyzed what on the page was SHOW and what was TELL.

As we set about reviewing each other's pages, it became clear some of us were not really clear on what was SHOW and what was TELL. I searched through my teaching files of info I have received in various course and found this definition of SHOW, which I think is the clearest, by Lori Wilde. (Lori Wilde teaches this in her Improving Your First Draft Course. You can sometimes find her courses through WritersUniv.com).

Lori says there are four ways of showing something.

They are:

- 1) The actions a character takes (both voluntary and involuntary)
- 2) Dialogue (and the way it's spoken)
- 3) Specific and concrete details
- 4) Inner monologue

This is an example that Lori did with a piece of my writing to demonstrate what is show and what is tell...

"Can this morning get any worse?" (showing, dialogue) she softly said to herself through gritted teeth (showing, action, speech and gritted teeth) as her temperature, along with her temper, began to rise. (this last part is telling. To show it, demonstrate that her temperature along with the temper is rising.)

**RE-done:** "Can this morning get any worse," she muttered through gritted teeth. Sweat dripped down her brow as the thermometer inched up to 92 degrees.

Kade—bloody—Colter stood in one of the mechanic bays, leaning against a 'seen better days' 1962 Alfa Romeo Spider. The quintessential sports car was battered and broken, but a pure diamond in the rough. (showing, great job)

A real beauty, and she wished she was thinking only of the car. (this is inner narrative so it's telling. If you wanted to show, put it in deep third.)

**Re-done to be:** What a beauty! She raked her gaze over Colter. Yep, a real beauty. Darn it.

Kade grinned and leaned in, all denim and swagger, smelling like motor oil and man. She ground her teeth. (show, action). Handsome wasn't even his middle name, it should be his first—Handsome Colter. And how like him to own the one car her hands itched to work on. (Show, this inner monologue, great job.)

As she walked nearer, she pushed her hair back off her face. (show, action.) All the better to see the car with—yeah, right. (Show, inner monologue, good job.)

Kade drew her eye as much as the car. (this is telling)

**Example:** You could show it with something like: - Her gaze shifted from the car to Kade's dark mesmerizing eyes.

*(the HB girls thought telling here was fine – how about you? Does rewriting add more?)*

He'd always had that effect on her. (this is telling. Show the effect.)

**Re-done:** She lost her breath, gulped. He stepped closer. Her pulse pounded hard in the hollow of her throat. Could he see? Did he know? God, why had she married his meth-head brother when he was the guy her body ached for?



Marriage to Kade's deadbeat drug addled brother meant she'd turned the switch off even when the sparks flew between them. Her life would have been completely different if she'd met Kade first. She hated him for making her think that. Hated him for insisting she work on his car. "I brought you a present." He nodded his head at the alfa. "How'd you like to work on my car?" Kade's sexy voice added to the headache building behind her eyes.

Placing her hands on her hips she smiled. Rock and a hard place... This is what it felt like to be trapped. A thought struck. She could tell him to fuck off, but as her fingers trailed over the chassis, she admitted she wanted this job. For the joy of restoring the car of course. Only the car. (Show. Great example of inner monologue.)

The swallowing of her card at the ATM this morning also reminded her that she could not afford to lose this job. (telling)

**Re-Done:** Kade stepped closer and he smelt delicious. She should run, leave, but Kade's brother had taken all her choices—taken everything in fact. Money, house and her pride. Marcus Black only needed one little reason to show her the door and pissing off Kade was a big reason. Her eyes narrowed as she took in Kade's stance, leaning over the hood of the Alfa as if he owned this workshop, with a smug look on that handsome face. When did she ever have a choice?

"She's going to be amazing when I've finished with her." Her stare dared him to disagree. (This is showing. Good job.)

### Can you see that **SHOWING** usually takes more words?

So, when is telling okay? Lori suggests you use tell when:

1. You need to deliver a lot of information quickly—for example at the end of a book where you're wrapping up details that don't deserve a lot of attention but do need resolution.
2. When the circumstances of the story don't allow for showing. For instance, if you're trying to keep information from the reader to reveal later.
3. When relating backstory. (We're not talking about intentional flashback scenes. Flashbacks are active scenes that need to be shown, or they should be relegated to the quickly told backstory.)
4. When the information is essential, but not very interesting (i.e. no conflict). Such as dating montages that let us know a couple is falling happily in love.

So – here is another example of telling:

They went through the breakroom to the huge supply warehouse and stopped at the door to what she knew was a supply closet.

So, I rewrote it into showing...

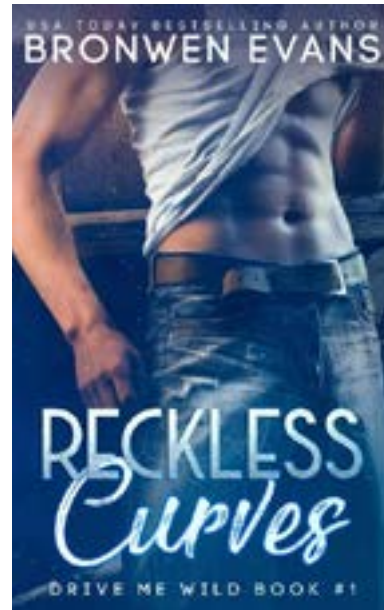
The smell of stale coffee hit her as they moved through the breakroom into the cavern of grease monkey heaven called the supply warehouse. Marcus stopped suddenly and she ran smack into his back. She felt her face heat and quickly said, "You brought me here to show me the supply closet?"

But was that sentence important enough to need to be

re-written? Given the scene and pacing was that okay to leave as telling?

Ultimately, it's up to you to decide what's worth dramatizing through "showing" and what's better suited to "telling." You might decide "telling" is more appropriate than "showing". Remember, you're in charge of your story.

Good luck!



### RECKLESS CURVES

Reckless Curves, Drive Me Wild Book #1 Bad Boy Autos.

*Thomas (Tom) Lorde's morning couldn't get any worse. One call changes everything. Apparently he's a dad. He should be on the phone to his lawyer. He wouldn't put it past a woman—any woman—to lie to get at his hard earned money. His mother trapped his father into marriage and then left them both for deeper pockets. But when the news is delivered from between the sweet lips of Kendra Black, his best friend's out of bounds little sister, and his one major 'f'ing' mistake, he knows he's screwed and that she's not lying.*

*Kendra Black knew contacting Tom would be a mistake. Three years ago, he'd made it very clear he had no feelings for her. He slept with her and then flew to Europe without a backward glance. However, he left more than a broken heart behind. He might not want her, but now that's he's back in California, her son, their son, Connor (Con) Black, deserves to know his father. What she hadn't expected was Tom's old-fashioned lap of honor. He wants to marry her. Why couldn't he simply be a weekend dad like her father? She can't deny the physical attraction is still there. He might be okay with a marriage based on hot, raw, animalistic sex and only sex, but she wants more. She deserves a man who loves her and she refuses to wave the checked flag until he gives her his heart.*

[Reckless Curves releases March 30th](#)



USA Today bestselling author, [Bronwen Evans](#) grew up loving books. She writes both historical and contemporary sexy romances for the modern woman who likes intelligent, spirited heroines, and compassionate alpha heroes. Evans is a three-time winner of the RomCon Readers' Crown and has been nominated for an RT Reviewers' Choice Award. She lives in Hawkes Bay, New Zealand with her dogs Brandy and Duke.

# Why Embrace the Chick-lit Cover Design Rules



Enni Tuomisalo

It's easy to tell that chick-lit is seen as a lesser literary genre, and the cover designs are considered part of the problem. By going for romantic covers with all things cute and pink, are we reinforcing the idea that women's fiction should not be taken seriously?



I understand the sentiment. I am a woman, and a writer. I want us to do well and get the recognition we deserve. Still, I'm suggesting we should embrace the pretty illustrations and bright pastel colours – especially when starting out.

Recognition comes with sales volumes. If you sell a lot of books, you will be taken seriously. And eventually, you will have the freedom to put a picture of a toilet bowl on your book cover and sell millions. But not before that. Not when you're starting out. In the beginning, your main goal—and this is definitely hard enough—is to get your books in the hands of the right readers. By right readers,

I mean people who enjoy books in your chosen genre.

Ideally, you want your books in the hands of people who enjoy your particular take on the genre, including those who are excited about your chosen theme, type of main characters and maybe even the story location. This is where the book cover design comes in. You need to communicate all this, while staying within the genre look and feel.

## BE THE SURPRISINGLY NUTRITIOUS MARSHMALLOW

But my book is so much deeper and more meaningful than that!" I hear you. Many books are. Many movies are. In fact, if you look at films *Garden State* and *Legally Blonde*, you could argue that *Garden State* packs in more depth and meaning. Yet, the two movie posters don't look that different. Both opt for a soft blue sky with fluffy clouds, a red/pink title and displaying the main cast with some related props. This is because the film studio's first and often only concern is to sell the film. If they succeed in getting people in the theatre, the job is done. The audience might go in expecting a fun, light-hearted flick and be surprised to find powerful storytelling with more depth. Are they going to complain? Most likely not.



Spot the similarities...

In my experience, humans are lazy. Many of us, regardless of what we lie on Facebook or dating sites, often choose the 'easy read' over the challenging one. If it turns out to be the literary equivalent of a marshmallow, it won't satisfy us. But after a long day at work and arguing with our spouse, we choose it anyway. And ultimately, this is why we need the romantic, light-hearted, magical, and yummy book covers. They promise us chocolate cake, when we just can't be bothered cutting up vegetables.

I'm not suggesting you forget about your story and just go for any script font and frilly bits to attract those looking for a light read. It's important to communicate the subtle flavours of your story to attract the right readers, who are more likely to enjoy it. Even within the wretched women's fiction category, there is quite a bit of design variation (see my other article *A chick-lit book cover design demystified*) so find a style that you're comfortable with. But, for the sake of your book, don't abandon all genre convention for the artistic and obscure.





## TWO-SECOND DECISIONS

Making a book look serious or obscure may work for an established author, whose name carries the promise of what lies inside. But, by and large, the obscure book cover will launch your book into obscurity. The decision to click on a book cover is made in seconds. You might believe your cover 'makes people think' or 'reflects what the book is about', but this is not the level of consideration readers apply when browsing a book shop or a website. Most of what goes on isn't even conscious thinking. Reader's sub-conscious brain is decoding an established visual language of genre. They remember the types of stories they've enjoyed before and look for similarities: The swirly font, or maybe the more brushed style, combined with just enough magenta to say it's fun and contemporary, or a dreamy-coloured sky that holds a promise...



## BEAUTIFUL BUT OBSCURE BOOK COVERS

Our brains are great at detecting patterns and we rely on these patterns to make sense of the world. Nobody wants to do complex thinking when looking at book cover designs. We want to just find one that 'looks interesting' and click on it.

## THE REAL DESIGN CHALLENGE

As a designer, you might think it's easy to follow genre conventions as sort of a formula. It's not. There are two parts to great book cover design. The first is the genre. It has to be absolutely clear. The second one is the story. What makes this book different? What is the unique flavour here? Balancing this with the genre conventions, as well as making sure the design is fresh and contemporary (as, even with the genre conventions, design itself constantly evolves) is the real challenge. It's worth getting it right, though. Books are literally judged by their cover, even before the conscious thought kicks in.



*Enni Tuomisalo has worked as a graphic designer since zip drives were still a thing and has an unhealthy obsession with book covers. In the past, she's also dabbled in filmmaking and screenwriting, as well as spent years organising a film festival. Enni was born in Finland but has called New Zealand home for 14 years. After a decade in Auckland, she finally settled in (not for!) Hamilton with her husband and two sons. Enni has always loved writing and is currently working on her second romance novel.*

# Understanding Point of View



## Lola Goulton

**Point of view is one of the most common issues I find when editing fiction. Yet understanding point of view is an essential aspect of a modern novel.**

The basic approaches to point of view are:

- First person
- Second person
- Third person
- Omniscient

### FIRST PERSON

First person uses 'I' as the personal pronoun. This takes the reader inside the mind of one character. The reader can only think, see and experience from the viewpoint of this one character. First person therefore needs a strong and interesting character. Browne and King say:

In order to succeed in the first-person point of view, you have to create a character strong enough and interesting enough to keep your readers going for an entire novel, yet not so eccentric or bizarre that your readers feel trapped inside his or her head.

Note that some readers don't like novels written in first person and some publishers don't accept first person manuscripts, so choosing this option might limit your market.

### SECOND PERSON

Second person uses 'you' and 'your', putting the reader inside the story. However, this tends to come across as contrived: as the reader, we know we are not the character or having that experience. Second person works for instructional non-fiction and is the mainstay of 'choose-your-own-adventure' books, but isn't considered appropriate for novel-length fiction.



## THIRD PERSON

Third person puts the reader in the position of observing the action through the eyes, ears, and thoughts of a single person. It is written in the grammatical third person language of he/she and his/her. Third person can range from a distant, almost omniscient point of view to a more intimate point of view that reads more like first person. This pulls the reader into the scene and provides a degree of narrative intimacy and emotional engagement.

The rules of writing third person Point of View are:

- There must only be one point of view character in each scene (more than one is referred to as headhopping).
- The point of view character should be the individual most affected by the actions in that scene.
- The first name mentioned in a scene should be that of the viewpoint character.

Because each scene is written from the point of view of a single character, the reader can only see what the viewpoint character sees, hear what the viewpoint character hears, and know what the viewpoint character thinks. Authors can use body language to hint at what another character might be thinking, but we can't be told what they're thinking. Otherwise, we're either headhopping, adding an author intrusion, or slipping into omniscient point of view.

## OMNISCIENT

Some people see omniscient point of view as one end of a continuum of a range of third person viewpoints. Others see it as unique and separate from third person. Omniscient uses the grammatical rules of third person, and uses he/she and his/her pronouns. The main problem with omniscient is it tends to tell, rather than show, which makes it harder for readers to emotionally engage with the characters. As such, it's currently out of favour with publishers and readers. Omniscient is hard to write well, and often reads like third person with headhopping. True omniscient point of view has a separate narrator with a distinct voice, as in *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* or *The Princess Bride*.

## CINEMATIC POV

Cinematic point of view describes the action through the eyes of an external narrator but excludes the thoughts or feelings of the characters. Like omniscient, cinematic point of view tends to tell rather than show and doesn't give the much-needed emotional engagement with the characters. But it can be useful in certain circumstances, e.g. if the author doesn't want an emotional reaction.

## QUESTIONS AROUND POINT OF VIEW

There are two main questions to ask when considering point of view:

- Which point of view should you use?
- How many point of view characters should you have?

In modern fiction, the choice is essentially between first person and third person.

Genre may play a part in your decision:

- Women's literature and cozy mysteries often use first person point of view.

- Romance novels may be first person or third person.
- Thrillers or suspense are usually third person.
- Middle Grade novels are likely to be third person, and may use omniscient or cinematic viewpoint.
- Young Adult and New Adult novels may be first person or third person.
- Fantasy novels are likely to be third person, and may use omniscient.

Overall, most adult fiction uses third person point of view. A minority use first person (which some readers dislike). A tiny number use a combination of first and third person, although this is not a technique for beginner writers.

## USING MULTIPLE POINTS OF VIEW

Most novels are written using multiple points of view, as this provides variety and interest. However, multiple points of view can get authors in trouble.

There are three main ways of using multiple points of view in fiction:

- First person point of view with multiple characters.
- Combining first person and third person point of view.
- Third person point of view with multiple characters.

Writing multiple characters in first person is not a technique for beginners. Done well, it is excellent. Done badly, it is virtually unreadable. Orson Scott Card explains the problem in *Characters and Viewpoint*:

Switching first-person narrators mid-story is usually ineffective and always difficult, because it violates the illusion that the character is "really" telling the tale.

Another option is to combine first person and third person. Again, this is excellent if done well, and if there is a solid narrative reason for the combination e.g. using first person for the evildoer to disguise their gender. This is not a technique for beginners, because the constant change between first person and third person can draw the reader out of the story.

This is why most authors stick with the tried-and-true options:

- Third person point of view with two, three, or four characters.
- First person point of view with a single character.

I hope that answers your questions about point of view.

If you're looking for some good books on plot and conflict, check out my Amazon shop at [www.amazon.com/shop/iolagoulton](http://www.amazon.com/shop/iolagoulton). And visit [www.christianediting.co.nz](http://www.christianediting.co.nz) to sign up for my free email course, *Learn to Revise Your Novel in Two Weeks*.



*[Iola Goulton](#) is a New Zealand book reviewer, freelance editor, and writer. She holds a degree in marketing, has a background in human resource consulting, and works as a freelance editor specialising in Christian fiction. When she's not working, Iola is usually reading or writing her next book review.*

# Guest Editorial:



Amy Blythe

**So many anniversaries fall this time of year.**

**The good, the bad, and the ugly.**

**In that order, in fact: thirteen years ago, I married my (still) lovely man; nine years ago, my city shook itself senseless (the buildings are looking better by the week, but plenty of the people are still a bit damaged); and one year ago, a student of mine, and so many other people, were gunned down at prayer.**

I keep remembering. Which is good, really. It is fitting to remember, and perhaps it's perfectly reasonable to recall more regularly the ugly stuff than the good.

Not that my memories are really ugly. Many of them are beautiful moments, tender and warm and hope-filled and true, but the heartbreak at the core is still there.



*Caption: The view from my office window the week after. Photocredit: Amy Blythe*

I find it really hard to talk about the good that comes out of devastating pain because the last thing I want to do is diminish that pain. The good comes, even when we wish it wouldn't. Even when we just want to rage and mourn and block out the light, the good comes.

This complex, wonderful, brutal reality is easier to put into words on the page than out loud, maybe.

Maybe, on some level, it's why we romance writers do what we do. Our characters carry painful pasts into these stories, and that hurting stands in the way of love... but not forever.

Romances are, at their heart, stories that answer suffering with love. Happy ever after is our only non-negotiable; these are stories of hope in dark places. We must honour the indelible loss, never belittle the suffering. But we cannot let it rob the future of joy.

That's the message inherent in every romance. Maybe that's the reason I keep going back to the genre (reading them, writing them) no matter how much I enjoy a gnarly spec fic or a gritty crime drama. No other genre calls me back time and again in the same way as romance.

I need hope.

When I first drafted this editorial, life was quite different. My expectations of the months to come were pretty bleak:

It was the week of March 15, an anniversary I was dreading. The trial was set for June. The media palaver looked like it was just beginning. I teach high school English and conversations online and in people's homes bleed into my classroom.

I was expecting some really good and beautiful, teachable moments, profound kindness and breath-taking generosity. But even that would likely be draining; I taught one of those killed. I taught his siblings, too. This was the sort of thing that happened to other people, until it wasn't.

A year after the events, the shock has worn off. For me. For everyone. Time passing has pros and cons. I expected, in the coming months, to see some racism, the bold undeniable kind, and the micro-aggressions. At school, I was going to encounter a little of both, as well as some just-plain-ignorance-but-it-still-hurts, because there are those who like to get a reaction, and there are those who hear it at home.

And it's my job to create a safe space in my classroom. Which was going to be an absolute mother of a mission.

And then the murderer plead guilty. And the trial won't go ahead. And we all breathed a great big sigh of relief.

And we all got sent home for a month. That happened too. People keep using the term lockdown to describe what we're doing at the moment. The last time we were in lockdown was so much worse.

This period of isolation isn't going to be easy, not by any stretch. My classroom just moved on line. In one of my first on-line lessons a kid asked how I would give out detentions (I won't); another asked if he could eat in class (just turn off your microphone first). A third asked if he could borrow a pen (smart arse).



The hard stuff coming at us now is a very different flavour of tricky. We all have slightly different adaptations to make, obstacles to grapple with, perks and pitfalls.

But there's one thing we're all going to need: hope. And I, for one, am gonna need an escape. Not an actual escape, because Auntie Jacinda's been very clear about that: #StayHomeNZ. But escapism? Sure, yes please. Neil Gaiman once said, "pretty much every form of fiction... can actually be a real escape from places where you feel bad, and from bad places. It can be a safe place you go, like going on a holiday, and it can be somewhere that, while you've escaped, actually teaches you things you need to know when you go back, that gives you knowledge and armour and tools to change the bad place you were in."

A sense of hope is no small thing. Keeping even vaguely up-to-date with world events under normal circumstances will quickly drain one's hope-stores. Just now, a very limited diet of world news will send anyone over the edge. I want to know what's happening. It matters to me to stay informed. It matters to more than just me - I mean it genuinely does matter. So, for better or worse, I tend to see the news.

And we don't know what's going to happen. This isn't genre fiction. There's no narrative arc with promises to the reader and a Goodreads rating to assure us those promises will be fulfilled.

Somehow, we need to keep hope anyway. Our circumstances, the news, the children fighting over whose turn it is on the computer, all of it can drain our hope-stores. Regaining, refilling that is vital, or we'd all just give up. And then we really would be royally wrecked.

So, may I suggest, along with staying in your bubble, and eating a vaguely balanced diet, and limiting your social media time, and getting out for a (local-only) walk, and not sharing pseudoscientific drivel online, and being kind to your housemates... may I suggest a steady diet of books that give you hope.

**Escape for a bit. You'll come back stronger, more resilient and brave. And hope-filled.**

**Kia kaha, Kia māia, Kia manawanui.**

**Be strong. Be brave. Be steadfast.**



*Amy Blythe is a high school English teacher by day (and sometimes night) and writes poetry and romantic comedies. She is the author of 'What's French for Oops?' Look out for 'What's Dutch for Damn?' later this year, or get a sneak peak now in the 'Rising Heat' anthology.*



## News from the President



Susan Sims

**As I write the world is changing, the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting all of us in a variety of ways. There's information and misinformation coming at us like the water from an enormous fire hose and it's hard not to be pulled into speculation.**

Every one of us is figuring out what is best to do under our unique circumstances as confirmed cases increase, following the guidelines from the New Zealand Government (both for health-related and business support information) for Kiwis, or the Australian Government for our Australian members, is really important.

It is normal to feel stressed or anxious in these situations. For Kiwis to get support with grief, anxiety, distress or mental wellbeing, call or text the free 'Need to talk?' service on 1737. This is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for you to talk things through with a trained counsellor.

Our RWNZ community is extraordinary, a group of generous, supportive and empathetic people who don't hesitate to help when needed. The writing you all produce makes a difference for people, immersing them in the joy of story, providing hope and filling lives with amazing characters and plots. This is really important in times like this.

As many of you will know from the Facebook group, Steff, Linda and their Dream Team are keeping abreast of the ongoing changes to group gatherings, airline and other travel restrictions that may affect their ability to bring the terrific conference they have planned to life this year. They are keeping in touch with the Exec and are thinking strategically about the best options in case Conference 2020 needs to be cancelled and will confirm what's happening as the situation evolves.

Keep safe, keep well, and keep writing!

Love  
Susan



## KORU is Open. Bronwen Evans.

The KORU Published Romance Book Award is OPEN for ENTRIES until 31 March 2020

Hi everyone. I'm the Koru Contest Manager this year and I thought I'd let you know we are open to entries.

You can enter two stories but only one in each category!

25 long

25 short

15 novellas

Why enter? I can only speak for myself, but it's to find new readers and showcase the talent within RWNZ. It would be fantastic to have ALL our published authors enter so we can share with readers the talent we have within RWNZ.

Each book gets read by five readers.

These are some of the emails I've had in from Judges...

Thank you for asking me to judge again. It is an honor. I love finding new authors to read.

I discovered a great author that I now follow by judging last year. I look forward to finding new favorites!

I found new authors and one I went and bought her complete backlist. This is such an exciting thing to do, I never know who I'll get.

This year we've simplified the score sheet so that readers are not stretched. Just 6 questions...

So, get those PDF's ready. Read the size requirements on the entry page and let's give these reader judges some fabulous romances to read and judge.

<https://www.romancewriters.co.nz/shop/contests/koru-published-book/>

Help support and showcase RWNZ talent.

## Public Lending Right Review

**Public Lending Right review:** the Department of Internal Affairs is having a review conducted of the Public Lending Right for New Zealand Authors scheme (PLR). The review will look at the scheme's:

- Policy intent
- Funding
- Regulations
- Scope, and
- Operational procedures.

As part of this review, we wish to understand how the PLR operates in practice, the key issues of the scheme and identify opportunities for change. We want to hear from authors, editors, illustrators, librarians, publishers and other key stakeholders within the sector.

<https://natlib.govt.nz/publishers-and-authors/public-lending-right-for-new-zealand-authors/review-of-the-public-lending-right-for-new-zealand-authors>

And it's survey for individuals: If you wish to take the survey as an individual, please use this survey:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/65XTBVN>

## Call for Secretary!

The RWNZ is currently short one secretary! We're looking for a volunteer to fill this role. If you've got good communication skills, an eye for detail, love signing cheques, preparing agendas and taking notes, then is this the opportunity for you! The exec meets once a month on Zoom, and we'd love to be a full house for our next exciting discussion.



For more info see the role description on the RWNZ website.

[https://www.romancewriters.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/RWNZ-Secretary-Job-Description-2017-05-30.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0L8U-IsZ\\_n5lswpfP7iAy1PYzJNeOhXhuzjZelRUqpPtsLiGlmZmYM](https://www.romancewriters.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/RWNZ-Secretary-Job-Description-2017-05-30.pdf?fbclid=IwAR0L8U-IsZ_n5lswpfP7iAy1PYzJNeOhXhuzjZelRUqpPtsLiGlmZmYM)

Any questions or to register interest, talk to our president Susan at [president@romancewriters.co.nz](mailto:president@romancewriters.co.nz)





## 2020 Conference Update: COVID-19 and registration

Hi everyone! Linda and I wanted to write to update you on the Dream Team's 'Get out of my dreams. Get into my book' 2020 COVID-19 plan, as well as the status of conference registration.

As you may have seen in the media, the NZ Government has introduced some of the toughest border restrictions in the world to flatten the curve of the pandemic. These restrictions require anyone flying into NZ until March 31st to self-isolate for 14-days upon arrival.

While these restrictions only apply up to March 31st, the government may choose to extend them. If so, it will be difficult for our international speakers and delegates to attend conference. We're also aware of the public health risk of large gatherings in the current environment, and will not put our speakers or delegates at unnecessary risk. We will follow Government guidelines as they are updated - keeping in mind that our conference is still several months away.

### WITH THIS IN MIND, HERE IS OUR CURRENT PLAN:

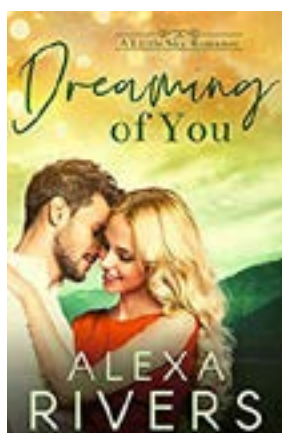
- We are waiting until the next update from Government to see how the impact of Covid 19 is progressing, in line with Government policy before we decide our next step. This means we will not open registration now.
- We will advise international speakers and delegates not to make or alter their travel arrangements until after our next update, when we know what our government's long-term response will be.
- In early April, the conference committee and RWNZ executive will make a decision about the future of the 2020 conference based on government guidelines for public health and safety. It may be that the decision is postponed further; the conference goes ahead as scheduled, or that conference is postponed until August 2021.
- We will keep you updated with our decision and next steps in early April. If we have to postpone, we'd love to invite you to attend in 2021. If this happens, we'll be inviting our international speakers, editors, and agents to be part of the 2021 programme, as staying on as the conference committee to give you one of the best events ever.
- If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at [steffgreen@gmail.com](mailto:steffgreen@gmail.com) – I'm happy to help if I can.

I understand this may be disappointing. Conference is always the highlight of my writing year and I'm looking forward to seeing you all and hearing from our amazing speakers. But hope is not lost yet! Please bear with us while we work through our plan to ensure everyone has a safe, fun, and enjoyable conference experience.

Thank you for your understanding,

Steff & Linda

# Woos and Hoos

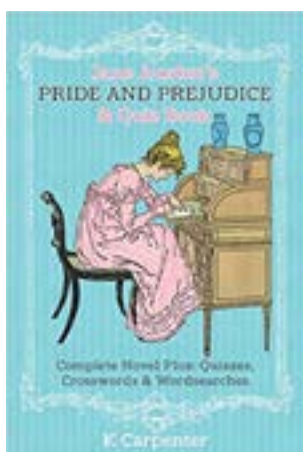


Ashlee Robinson's small-town romance, *Dreaming of You*, published under the pen name Alexa Rivers, launched on 21 February. *Dreaming of You* features a cynical wedding boutique owner and a corporate lawyer with a romantic heart.

Buy *Dreaming of You* [here](#)



Carole Brungar has a new book coming out in the beginning of March. The paperback will be available in bookstores throughout NZ and ebook is now available for preorders on Amazon. It's called *Going Home* and is a love story set during the Vietnam War.



Check out Kura Carpenter's newest release, a *Pride & Prejudice* quiz book! True Fans of P&P who already know Longbourn was terrorised by an arsonist, Wickham a spy for Napoleon, and Mr Collins the heartthrob of a generation, will find the quizzes superbly easy. Everyone else will find them tolerably amusing.

Buy P&P Quiz Book [here](#)

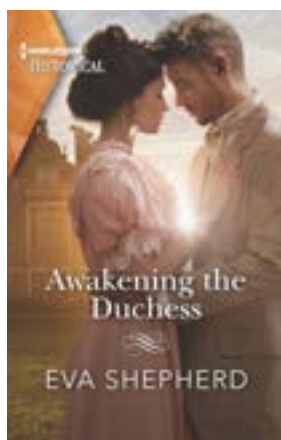


Bronwen Evans has a new release on 30 March 2020 - *RECKLESS CURVES: Bad Boy Autos, Drive Me Wild Series Book #1*. A secret baby, best friend's little sister, romance set in *Bad Boy Autos*. Think *Fast and Furious* but nothing illegal!

Buy *Reckless Curves* [here](#)

**Heart to Heart is always keen to share new book releases from members, news of awards, contracts, basically anything that we can celebrate. Send us a 2-3 sentence summary of your good news and, if it's a new release, your book cover and buy link, by the twentieth of each month online at <https://www.romancewriters.co.nz/membership/member-woo-hoos/> or directly to: [heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz](mailto:heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz).**

# Woos and Hoos



Vera Larsen's second book, *Awakening the Duchess*, is released this month by Harlequin-Mills and Boon. W/a Eva Shepherd, Vera is a member of the Canterbury chapter of RWNZ.

Buy *Awakening the Dutchess* [here](#)



Félicitations to Amy Blythe on the release of *What's French for Oops?* a slow burn, sexy romantic comedy. Meet Jean: a nanny with a plan... that just went out the window of the taxi cab headed for Heathrow. So long, London! Bonjour, Paris! ...is the sum total of Jean's French, but her maths is fine and this apartment does not have enough bedrooms.

Buy *What's French for Oops* [here](#)



New Release! *His Own Heaven*, the third book in Jennie Kew's Bennett's Bastards Series dropped this week (27th Feb) to positive reviews.

"This book is magically delicious and oh so wickedly naughty and well worth the emotional roller coaster ride."

Buy *His Own Heaven* [here](#)



Lizzi Tremayne has been picked up by Leabhar Books in Brazil for the publishing of *The Long Trails* series in Portugese! They are also interested in publishing her *Once Upon a Vet School* series in Portugese as well!

Buy *A Long Trail Rolling* [here](#)

Heart to Heart is always keen to share new book releases from members, news of awards, contracts, basically anything that we can celebrate. Send us a 2-3 sentence summary of your good news and, if it's a new release, your book cover and buy link, by the twentieth of each month online at <https://www.romancewriters.co.nz/membership/member-woo-hoos/> or directly to: [heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz](mailto:heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz).





Karen Winter has published another book in her Romance Writers' Bookshelf series: *Romance Tropes: Bet/Dare/Wager*. You'll find it to be a valuable resource, providing you with examples of stories written in this trope. With this wealth of knowledge in your toolkit you'll be able to come up with innovative plot scenarios for your own stories.

Buy *Romance Tropes* [here](#)



## The Bookshelf

***Do you have a writing resource you'd like to share with the RWNZ members?***

***Or a review of a technical book (marketing/craft/writing life)?***

***Please send it to :***

**[heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz](mailto:heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz)**

***Thank you!***

## The Welcome Mat

Another red carpet roll-out this month for new members:



Maya Linnell - overseas  
Carol Roberts - Wellington  
Vanessa Evetts - Wellington  
Corina Douglas - Central North  
Keneana May - Overseas  
Jayne Johnson - Overseas  
Rebecca Taylor - Wellington  
Joanne Evelynna - Overseas  
Julie Small - Wellington  
Emily Michel - Auckland  
Marie Miller - Overseas  
Rachel Smith - Central North  
Kylie Short - Overseas  
Travy Brenton - Overseas



Great to have you all with us!

Don't forget to read the information for new members page on our website [here](#)

Of course, you'll need to login before you can access the members' area, but you'll find information there about how to join the [RWNZ Members-Only Facebook page](#).

## Contacts

**Susan Sims:** [president@romancewriters.co.nz](mailto:president@romancewriters.co.nz)

**Mollie Smith:** [vicepresident@romancewriters.co.nz](mailto:vicepresident@romancewriters.co.nz)

**Tania Roberts:** [treasurer@romancewriters.co.nz](mailto:treasurer@romancewriters.co.nz)  
: [secretary@romancewriters.co.nz](mailto:secretary@romancewriters.co.nz)

**Josie Berliner:** [publicity@romancewriters.co.nz](mailto:publicity@romancewriters.co.nz)

**Gillian St Kevern:** [membership@romancewriters.co.nz](mailto:membership@romancewriters.co.nz)

The deadline for every issue is the 20th of the month prior (e.g. 20th October for November issue). Please have all articles, news, reports, and advertising to Gillian at [heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz](mailto:heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz) on or before the deadline.

Heart To Heart (H2H) is the official publication of Romance Writers of New Zealand (RWNZ) and is published eleven times a year. No part may be reproduced or used for profit by RWNZ or others without prior written permission from the editor.

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of RWNZ, its executive, or its editors. While every effort is made to ensure accuracy, no responsibility will be taken by RWNZ or the editors for inaccurate information.

Heart to Heart Contact: Gillian St. Kevern (Editor) [heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz](mailto:heart2hearteditor@romancewriters.co.nz)

To submit a woo hoo, e-mail Gillian or use [this form](#) on the website.

To join the RWNZ Members-Only Facebook page, click [here](#).

# Regional Round-Up Reports

## AUCKLAND

Convenor: [Ruth Clough](#)

This month's meeting took place on Saturday 1 February at the Three Kings Tennis Pavilion. We had sixteen attendees for our first meeting for the 2020 year.

Our speaker this month was Ada Maria Soto who presented a potted history of the United States of America and answered all our questions about America including questions about high school, college and the education system as well as the role of police vs county sheriffs.

Thanks Ada for your fascinating talk - I'm sure we came away from the meeting with more knowledge of America and American history than we started with.

## COAST TO COAST

Convenor: [Bel Macfie](#)

In February Catherine Hudson shared some of her key learnings from the Mel Robbins on line workshop she took. The focus was on how to reset your mindset and remove self-doubt

Discussion topics:

- 54321 and take action
- Imposter syndrome and how to use it to your advantage
- Feelings are natural but behaviours and thoughts are a choice
- Finding your anchor thought
- If you have a problem that could be solved with action, you don't have a problem

Four common thoughts/behaviours:

- Hesitating - where we're uncertain, overthinking things, waiting for something to happen, waiting for perfection. This is often characterized by looking busy but actually you are hesitating from taking action
- Hiding – shrinking back, triggered by fear, procrastinating, self-sabotaging, staying small, invalidating yourself
- Hypercritical -triggered by past failures, feeling wounded, shame, focusing on the reasons why you cant do something
- Helpless – negativity, low self-worth, actively playing the victim

It was a fantastic and highly interactive workshop enjoyed by everyone and all the group found some sage advice that resonated with them.

## HAWKES BAY

Convenor: [Bronwen Evans](#)

This months Hawke's Bay RWNZ meeting was held at Bron's place and we have a great turnout. We've moved our meetings to the second Saturday of the month this year. This month we all had to bring a couple of pages from our work and we evaluated the SHOW and TELL aspects of writing. It was an interesting conversation with differing opinions on what was Show and what was Tell, the advantages to one versus another, and how some of us didn't like loads of Showing as it slowed pacing and made the read 'hard work'. We came to the conclusion that SHOW is great but telling has it's place.

The next meeting is at Jackie Rutherford's house on Saturday 14 March 1pm. Email Bron for details.

## WELLINGTON/KAPITI COAST

Convenor: [Gudrun Frerichs](#)

February: 15 of us met at Tracey and Fred's delightful Island Bay home on Saturday 1 February. We had a lovely time reconnecting with members of our tribe after the summer break, and heartily welcomed new member Sita. (Hi Sita!).

Gudrun did a great job chairing the meeting for the first time, with Lynne and Moira as support crew.

On the agenda was:

- Monthly round robin catch up.
- Some very entertaining cold reads.
- Jane shared her research and led a discussion on synopses, blurbs, and pennames.
- Updates on the summer writing retreat that Gudrun has organised for the end of the month, which roughly a dozen of us attending thus far.
- New ideas for 2020 were discussed — including our chapter's awesome expansion, and how our numbers are now outgrowing people's living rooms. To resolve the issue, our group will now be hiring rooms at local libraries; alternating monthly between Petone and Paraparaumu.
- Group discussion re: plans for next meeting.

# Regional Round-Up Reports

## NELSON

Convenor: [LaVerne Clark](#)

## CHRISTCHURCH

Convenor: [Emma Lowe](#)

The March meeting of Canterbury Romance Writers fell on the 8th this month, with sixteen attendees, Amy Paullusen introduced an awesome session on book cover design, resulting in a one-off cover design for Erin and her current WiP "Something in the Blood." Thank you so much, Amy. You're one talented lady!

It's great to see the group going from strength to strength, and with forty-eight local members now, this year is looking to be as good as last year.

Work has begun for our mid-year anthology, with several member submitting stories for another contemporary romance anthology, with the focus this time being 'first kiss' - for anyone wanting any further information, please contact us at [RWNZCanterbury@Gmail.Com](mailto:RWNZCanterbury@Gmail.Com)

## OTAGO

Convenor: [Samantha Burton](#)

The Otago/Southland chapter met up on Saturday 1 February - eight of us - to discuss our 2020 writing/publishing goals. Our next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 7 March, when Emily Larkin will be talking about her career from traditionally published to self-published author of Historical and Fantasy Romance.

## BLenheim AREA

Contact: [Iona Jones](#)