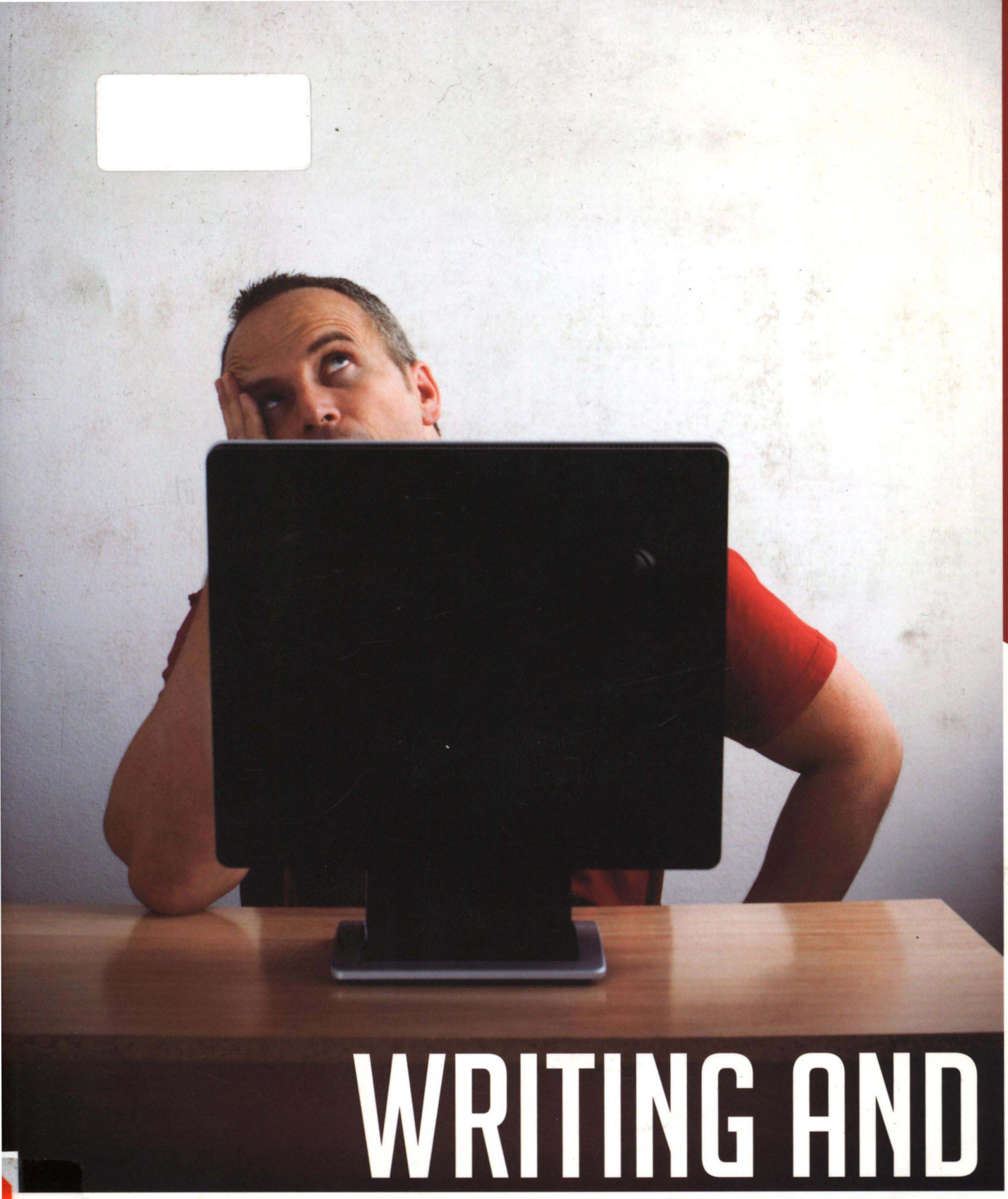

ALA GUIDES FOR THE BUSY LIBRARIAN

EDITED BY CAROL SMALLWOOD

WRITING AND PUBLISHING

THE LIBRARIAN'S HANDBOOK

Have you ever considered writing or reviewing for the library community? Are you interested in publishing a book on your favorite author or hobby? Do you need to write and publish for tenure? If so, *Writing and Publishing* is for you. Practical how-to guidance covering fiction, poetry, children's books/magazines, self-publishing, literary agents, personal blogging, and other topics will help you write

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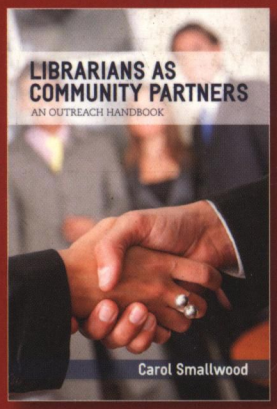

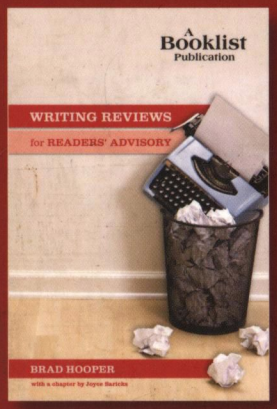

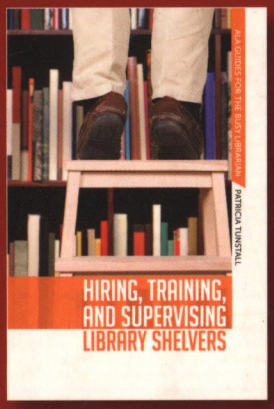

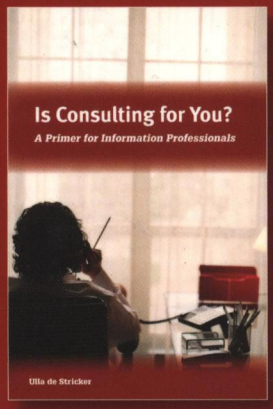

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THE LIBRARIAN'S HANDBOOK

EDITED BY **CAROL SMALLWOOD**

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Carol Smallwood received her MLS from Western Michigan University and her MA in history from Eastern Michigan University. She is the author or editor of eighteen books for Scarecrow, McFarland, Libraries Unlimited, Pudding House Publications, Peter Lang, and others. Some other credits include *The Writer's Chronicle, Journal of Formal Poetry, Detroit News, Instructor, English Journal,* and *Michigan Feminist Studies.* The novel *Lily's Odyssey,* the coedited anthology *Contemporary Women: Our Defining Passages,* and a short story in *Best New Prose Writing 2009* are forthcoming. A 2009 National Federation of State Poetry Societies Award Winner and a finalist for the 2009 Eric Hoffer Award for prose, Smallwood has experience in school, public, and special libraries and has served as a library consultant. She appears in *Contemporary Authors* and *Who's Who in America.*

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WRITING AND PUBLISHING

ALA GUIDES FOR THE BUSY LIBRARIAN

Hiring, Training, and Supervising Library Shelvers, by Patricia Tunstall

FOREWORD

Most libraries love to share with one another. Whether they offer reciprocal borrowing or interlibrary loans, it all comes down to sharing resources. This sharing, in effect, greatly enlarges a single library's collection. What the library does not own, others do, and a patron can obtain a book from as close as the library one town over or as far away as a library in another country.

Likewise, librarians generally love to share ideas with their colleagues—an action that greatly enhances the profession's knowledge base. At the local and regional levels, news travels quickly about a program that was particularly well received or well done, often through the grapevine and e-mail or at meetings of regional groups, such as an adult reading roundtable. More broadly, librarians present ideas that turned into terrific projects, procedures, or practices. They share these ideas in a number of ways, such as table talks, displays, and formal presentations at state and national conventions.

But it is the written word that likely is the most widely used way that librarians share their ideas. Some librarian-authors may have cut their teeth writing for their libraries' newsletters. Others have written for the professional journals of various state groups, such as the Illinois Library Association's *Reporter,* or of national associations, such as the American Library Association's *American Libraries.* Librarians also contribute articles, columns, book reviews, and letters to *Library Journal.* And librarians write books or chapters in books about the profession's myriad topics, including management, technology, intellectual freedom, and innovative services.

Being the creative and innovative people they are, librarian-writers may not necessarily limit themselves to writing about their profession. Many also write short stories, novels, and poetry, not only expanding their imaginations but also entertaining or edifying the reading public. This is another facet of librarians' sharing their thoughts and ideas.

The book you have before you is a unique collection of articles by and about librarians whose work has been published in one form or another. Here, the writers

talk about their writing processes, the thinking behind their works, and their feelings about sharing with others their experiences in the library and literary worlds.

I hope you enjoy the compilation and, in the nature of librarianship, that you share it with a colleague.

—**Bob Blanchard**, adult services librarian, Des Plaines Public Library, and contributor to *Illinois Library Association Reporter* and *Thinking outside the Book: Essays for Innovative Librarians* (2008)

PREFACE

Librarians tend to be creative people, and what profession other than library and information sciences could be more encouraging for writers? We are surrounded by books, technology, and people, which provides the opportunity to write not only for the profession but also poetry, novels, short stories, and creative nonfiction for children and adults.

Writing and Publishing: The Librarian's Handbook was prompted by a desire to acknowledge the many contributions by librarians who write and to encourage beginning librarian-writers. A great benefit from writing, as observed by the well-known writer Natalie Goldberg, whom one of my creative writing classes studies, is that "when we write we begin to taste the texture of our own mind."

In compiling this book, we asked published librarians to submit two 1,900- to 2,100-word unpublished pieces to show their writing range, and we encouraged them to follow Gustave Flaubert's advice in order to help readers: "Whenever you can shorten a sentence, do. And one always can. The best sentence? The shortest."

Calls for submissions went to school, public, academic, and special librarians, as well as library and information sciences faculty from the United States and Canada who have been published in librarianship as well as outside the field. The ninety-two chapters are grouped by topic in the table of contents and indexed by subject and author. It has been a pleasure working with these forty-seven creative librarians who are willing to share their hard-won success.

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