



In the Eye of the Reader

By Lyndsey D'Arcangelo

When I sit down to write a novel, I focus on the characters, first and foremost. Granted, I usually have a rough idea of a plot—maybe a line or two about where I want the story to begin and where I want it to end—and everything else gets filled in along the way. But without compelling characters, the story falls flat and the plot becomes lifeless. That's why the characters need to be memorable and distinct. They bring the novel to life.

Fictional characters are funny breeds. They come alive in an author's mind and take on the persona of a real human being. As an author, I feel a special connection to the characters I have created. This is especially true with my latest novel, *The Education of Queenie McBride*, because it's the sequel to my first book, *The Trouble with Emily Dickinson*. The characters have evolved from one novel to the next and in my mind, they are old friends. They share the details of their lives with me in a very intimate way. I know their thoughts, feelings and idiosyncrasies. It's no wonder that when I picture them in my head, I see them in a very particular way. But the amusing thing is not everyone else sees them the way I do.

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Here's your SEPTEMBER ISSUE teaser! How many times did you beg to hear just one more fairy tale read to you at bedtime when you were a child? What made those stories so enchanting? And how can you use the same elements that were in your favorite fairy tale when you fashion a true story for a *Not Your Mother's Book* edition? In September's *WOW Principles* newsletter, co-creator Terri Elders asks us to remember what bewitched us in "So What About Once Upon a Time?"



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We want to hear from you!
Contact Publishing Syndicate at
Writer@PublishingSyndicate.com

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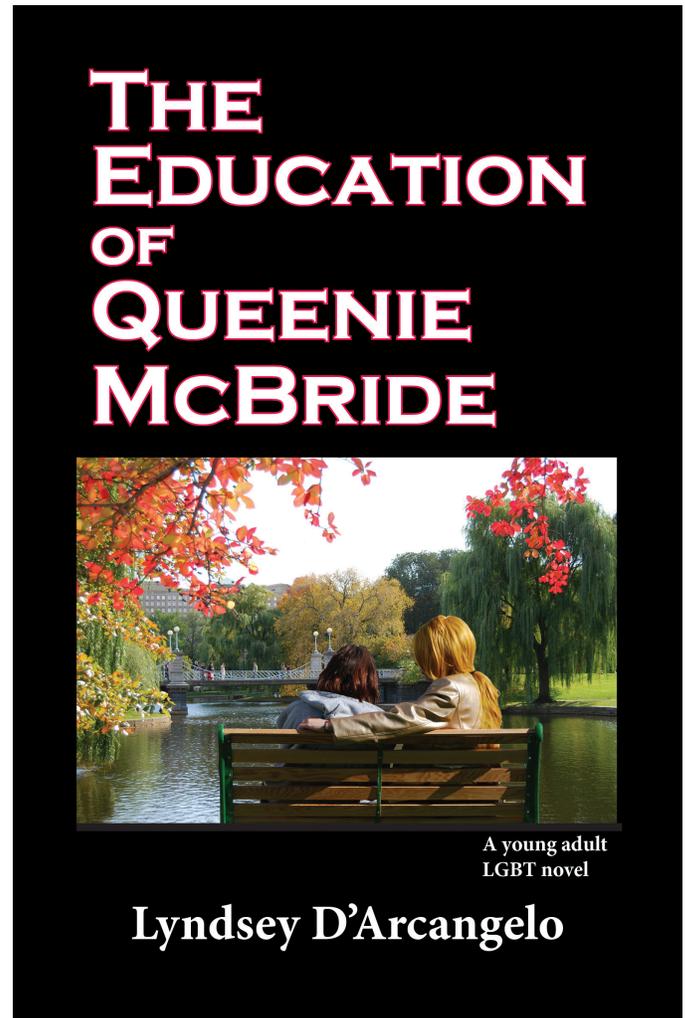
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Earlier this spring, I was working with Publishing Syndicate on a cover for *The Education of Queenie McBride*. I assumed that they saw the main character—Queenie McBride—as I did. I pictured her as a tall, lanky blonde with an androgynous wardrobe. They saw her a bit differently. When I first saw the cover of the book, I thought, “No, that’s not Queenie.” But as my stubbornness began to relax, I realized something quite insightful: readers of my book will see the characters differently. Why? Because we all have separate minds and beliefs and opinions that cause us to form the pictures in our head. For example, after reading the bestselling book *The Help*, I saw the movie; the image of the characters in my mind was quite different than what I saw on the big screen.

Another example is Harry Potter. Before the book series was made into a movie, how did you picture the characters in your mind? Were they exactly how J.K. Rowling intended them to be? Or did your imagination create something else entirely? Read any novel throughout history and the same result will occur. What you see in your mind when you read the book isn’t what the person next to you sees. That’s the beauty of reading. Your imagination creates the world and characters from the words on the page. It all comes to life in your individual mind and it’s a unique experience every time.

Realizing this made me wonder how my readers saw the characters I developed, how they pictured certain scenes taking place, and how they created the settings in their minds. What a wonderful thought! The possibilities are endless. I know that I will always see my characters in the same way. But it’s quite all right for others to see them in a different light.

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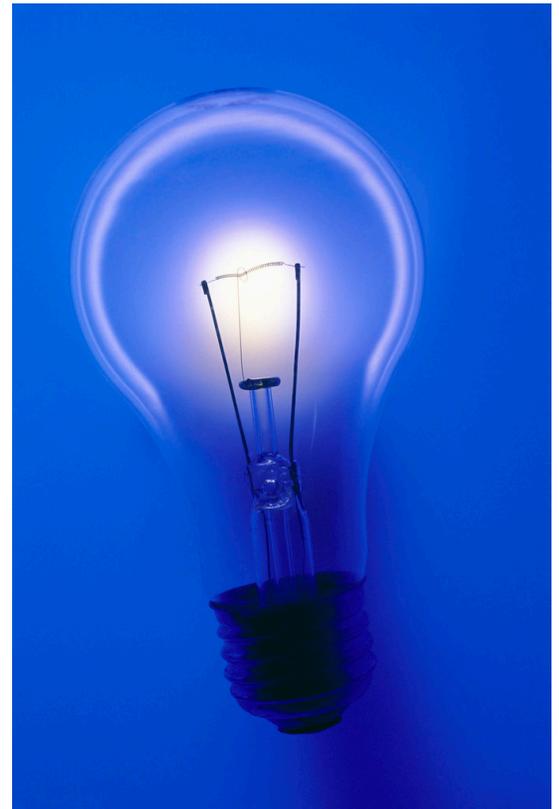
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Creating a memorable character isn't an easy thing to do. It's important to add certain personality traits and flaws to make the characters relatable and distinctive. I think that Rowling gave Harry Potter the scar on his forehead because she wanted something distinctive to stand out in the minds of her readers. Sure, the scar was central to the book series itself, but it was also a memorable character trait. Mention a lightning bolt scar and a pair of black round spectacles to any reader and they will know instantly what you are talking about. Though Harry's face and build may have taken on a different appearance in the minds of readers all over the world, one thing always remained the same—the lightning bolt scar and black round spectacles. These two distinct character traits will live on forever.

It takes a delicate balance when developing characters for your story or novel. It's important to make the character stand out, but it's equally as important to leave some things up to the imagination of readers. That way, readers can develop their own personal relationship with your characters and establish a bond that will last well beyond the final page of your novel.

I don't have a specific step-by-step process I follow when I am creating a character. I come up with a name, whatever pops in my head. Then the description follows after that—again, it just pops in my head. I'm not sure why, but it works for me. Other writers often jot down character traits including hair color, eye color, height, weight, facial features, etc. Then the character name follows after that. There's no right way to develop a memorable character. But a little advice goes a long way. I suggest checking out this website for tips: <http://www.charlottedillon.com/characters.html>



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The Wow Principles e-newsletter

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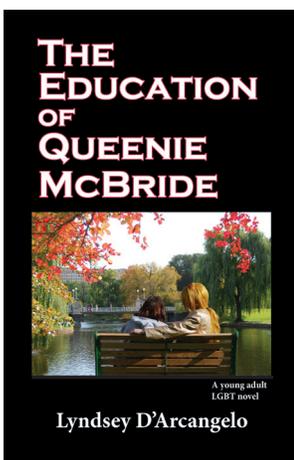
Back to my most recent fictional character, Queenie McBride. I think she's the kind of character who makes a lasting impression. Or maybe you might resonate with a different character from that book. Either way, I'd love to hear your feedback. How did you picture the character in your mind? What kind of details did your imagination create? What character description stood out most? I'd like to hear from you. Drop me a note at LynsD21@gmail.com or visit www.lyndseydarcangelo.com.

-- *Lyndsey*

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Paperback or e-book editions of Lyndsey's books are available everywhere, including Amazon!

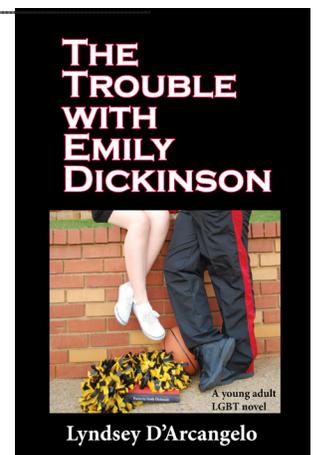


Book Description

This LGBT Young Adult novel features over-privileged and overconfident, Queenie McBride who thinks she has this whole college thing figured out. But as soon as classes begin at Boston University, she discovers that things aren't going to be as easy as they were in her private high school. Luckily, her best friend JJ is there to help keep her in line. But when Queenie meets Pudge, a homeless LGBT teen, her entire world is forever changed. With the help of Izzy, a strong-headed and beautiful social worker, Queenie learns how to be there for Pudge, leave her old habits behind and become the person she's always wanted to be.

Book Description

Meet Josephine Jenkins, better known as JJ. A senior at Sampson Academy (high school), JJ's a closet poet and a talented writer suffering from stage fright. She's also committed the ultimate lesbian faux pas—she's fallen in love with a straight girl. Kendal McCarthy is uber popular. She's the campus beauty and a cheerleader. But she's still searching for that elusive high school experience that will help her make sense of herself before she leaves for college. When JJ and Kendal cross paths, their lives suddenly become more interesting in ways that neither of them ever imagined. Filled with unique and witty banter courtesy of Queenie McBride, JJ's over-privileged confidant, this tale of innocent love exposes the reality of what can happen when two polar opposites collide in a most unexpected way—through the poetry of Emily Dickinson.

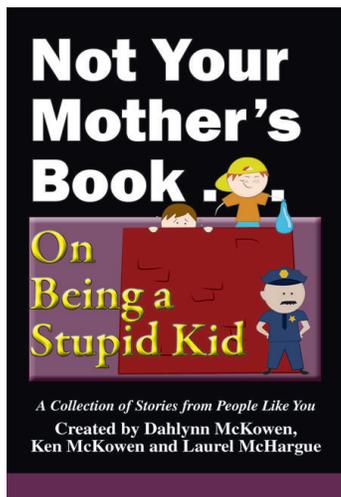


The Wow Principles e-newsletter

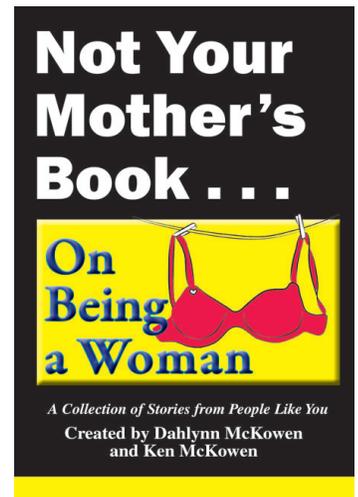
A Plea from the Gang at Publishing Syndicate

Exciting things are happening at Publishing Syndicate. We are working toward making the final decisions as to stories for four *Not Your Mother's Book* titles: *On Being a Woman*; *On Being a Stupid Kid*; *On Travel*; and *On Dogs*.

We anticipate that final story selections for both the *Woman* and *Stupid Kid* titles will take place in early September, with *Travel* and *Dogs* by the end of September. With that said, PLEASE do not send us e-mails asking if your story has been selected...where it is in the process...have we read it...was it received...you get the idea. We know you are all just as excited as we are, but the e-mails are too many to handle. We have received thousands of stories for consideration and if we respond to all the inquiries coming in, we'll never get them done.



Anthology books will be released typically six months from the posted deadline. If you see no deadline posted, the book is not on the production schedule yet. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't send in stories. Case in point: we posted the *Stupid Kids*' title just for fun and the tidal wave of great stories submitted stunned us. Because of this, the book moved up on the production schedule by nearly an entire year!

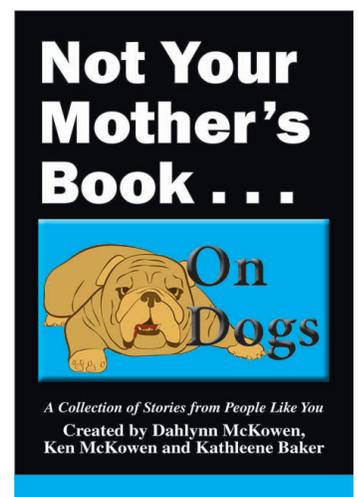
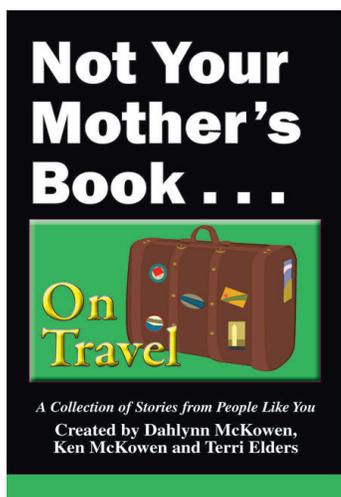


A good rule-of-thumb if your story is strongly being considered: you'll receive a Permission Release Form to complete.

So hang tight and thanks for your patience!

Fondly,

*Dahlynn, Ken, Laurel,
Terri and Kathleene*

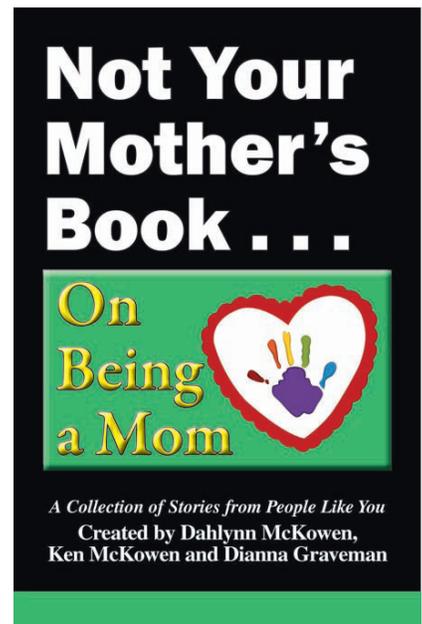


NYMB . . . On Being a Mom

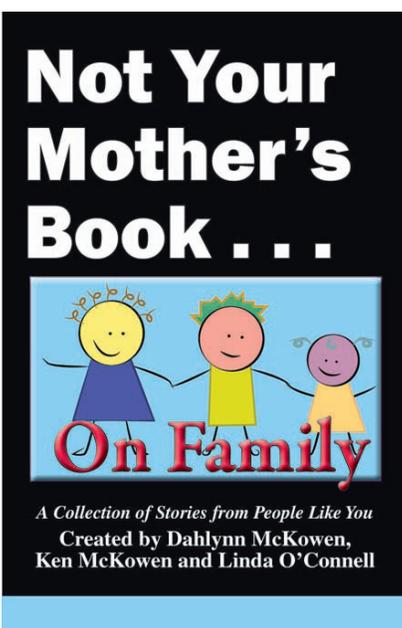
While we're looking for stories about the side of motherhood most of us have experienced or seen first hand, we would love to read stories about the side that most of us don't talk about because it's too embarrassing or silly! No need to explain: you know what we're talking about. Now write about it!

Tentative Chapter Titles Include:

- Call of the Wild
- OMG, How Embarrassing!
- You Can't Scare Me; I'm a Mom
- If Everybody Else Jumped Off a Bridge...
- New Parent Jitters
- Birds Do It...
- You Did WHAT?
- Driving Mom Crazy
- Parting Words



Story deadline for both books: October 1, 2012



NYMB . . . On Family

Who doesn't have a slew of great stories to share when it comes to their family? From funny family stories handed down through the generations to more current happenings that will one day turn into family legend, we want to hear them all. No holds barred.

Tentative Chapter Titles Include:

- I'm No Chicken!
- I'm Telling! You're in Trouble!
- Dinner—Down and Dirty
- Waiting in Line for the John, the Jam and the Juice
- I Inherited What?
- Forget the Closet!
- Ringleaders
- Family Reunions

Submission guidelines and more information can be found on Publishing Syndicate's website.

HURRY! STORIES NEEDED!

Updated 8/30/12

Not Your Mother's Book . . .

A new anthology for a new century!

Nearly 40 titles in the NYMB series need stories! Stories must be written by people age 18 and up. Details on the PS website.

Four new titles will be released this coming fall/winter: *On Being a Woman*, *On Being a Stupid Kid*, *On Dogs* and *On Travel*.

DEADLINES for NYMB

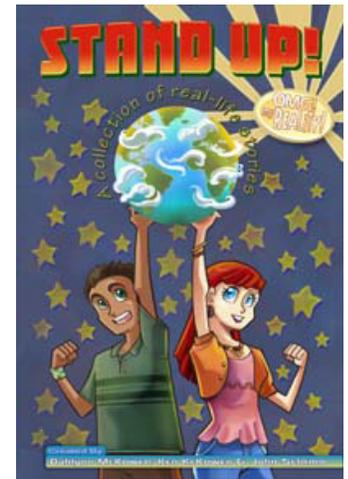
On Family: October 1, 2012

On Being a Mom: October 1 2012

OMG! My Reality Youth Series

Time to get published!

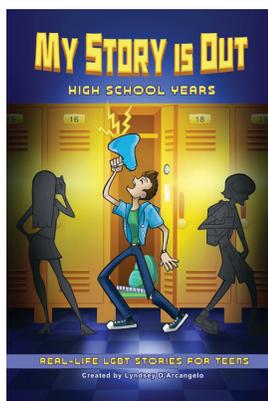
Accepting stories for four *OMG! My Reality!* titles: *Kids*; *Preteens*; *Teens* and *Stand Up!* Stories must be written by those age 25 and younger. Please share this information. Thanks!



DEADLINE for OMG! books

Stand Up!: November 1, 2012

www.PublishingSyndicate.com



My Story is Out: High School Years

Created by Lyndsey D'Arcangelo

The nation's newest anthology for LGBT teens!

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT: October 1, 2012

Attention LGBT teens and college-aged kids! Lyndsey needs stories for her book, so please pass along this information. Contributors who make the book will be paid royalties! www.MyStoryIsOut.com

**Dream
of
ThingsSM**

Dream of Things has a great line-up of anthology books. On their website, be sure to click on the "Workshop" tab for a listing of titles. Good luck!

www.DreamofThings.com

Go for it! Get published! 