How To Blog For... THE HUFFINGTON POST



21 Proven Tips for Getting Published on The Huff

GARRY RODGERS

HUFFINGTON POST SIGNATURE BLOGGER

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Copyright

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* * *

THE HUFFINGTON POST

THE INTERNET NEWSPAPER: NEWS BLOGS VIDEO COMMUNITY



dyingwords.net

Provoking Thoughts on Life, Death, and Writing
Website of Gerry Rodgers - Retired RCMP Homicide Detective and Forensic Coroner

* * *

Preface

Why do you want to blog for the Huffington Post?

If you're a serious blogger, like me, it's because the Huffington Post is the world's largest blog site. Getting published on the HuffPost is a significant badge of achievement -- it's the gold standard of blogging -- social approval by a major media corporation that your work meets its mark of excellence.

Beyond satisfying your ego -- come on, most bloggers have a sizeable ego -- there's a huge return in amplifying your blogging audience. Like, you just can't buy this type of exposure.

As a blogger, you have something to say and you want to hear what others say back. If it's quality content -- and that's the key -- you'll want to say it on the Huffington Post.

"But how in the world do I ever get noticed?" you ask.

Well, it might not be easy, but it can be done. And it's done by applying the tips in this guide in a holistic approach. In other words, applying these tips in an overall, systematic manner.

I started blogging in 2012 and howled into the wind for the longest time. My goal from the start was to get the blogs from my personal blog site at *DyingWords.net* regularly published on the HuffPost.

I probably submitted content to the Huff thirty or forty times.

Crickets, Zilch, Nuttin'.

I never gave up, but I never fixated on it, either. I just went on writing new content, tried to make it the best quality I could, and worked on expanding my platform.

"Your what?"

Your platform.

It's linked to your brand and your profile. You elevate your platform by manipulating SEO, metadata, keywords, headlines, ledes, byline, and a whole wide range of things to make your web presence stand out.

You're going to need a solid platform to get noticed by the Huffington Post, but don't worry -- I explain these terms and exactly how to apply them in the much more detailed guide *How To Blog For The Huffington Post -- 101 Proven Tips for Getting Published on the Huff.* This 21 tip guide is a just primer with enough information to get you going in the right direction.

Back to the Huff.

I kept posting quality content on <u>**DyingWords.net</u>** and targeted a specific audience -- crime readers and writers. My following grew as I gained experience.</u>

Then, one day -- right out a the fricken' blue -- a Huffington Post editor dropped an email into my box inviting me to write a paid feature article on crime scene cleaning. It was part of a promotion the HuffPost was running for *Esquire Network's* new TV Series *Spotless*.

I couldn't believe it! I'd been discovered by a Huffington Post editor who did a simple Google search, looking for a crime writer with an actual forensic background.

So I gave the article my best shot. They liked what they saw. Checked me out some more. Then took me onto their Blog Team as a regular, signature contributor with a key to the Huff's *Backstage* door.

Can it happen to you? I can't promise anything, but I'll share everything I know about improving your chances of getting noticed by a Huffington Post editor.

If you're interested in learning more about the mechanics of writing and publishing blogs for the Huff, get the complete guide <u>How To Blog For The Huffington Post - 101 Proven Tips For Getting Published on the Huff</u>. It also contains sixty-one hyperlinks to informational sites, including the direct email and social media addresses to all the HuffPost editors.

I'll bet if you work these tips -- and do the work -- they'll pay off in a way that's so, so worth it.

You never know when a HuffPost editor will call.

Garry Rodgers Vancouver Island, Canada February, 2016

* * *

SECTION ONE -- UNDERSTANDING THE HUFFINGTON POST CULTURE

Tip #1 -- Know the Huffington Post's History

The Huffington Post was founded in 2005 as an online newspaper and weblog by New York author, columnist, and media veteran Arianna Huffington. She cooperated with AOL executive Kenneth Lerer. Their vision was a liberal alternative to the *Drudge Report*, the popular conservative news website that gathered headlines from around the Web.

Initially, the HuffPost drew on Arianna Huffington's Rolodex of A-list celebrities and high-powered friends. Soon it opened to a wide range of bloggers from across the political and cultural spectrum. None of the guest bloggers were paid, but they contributed many thousands of posts and the site became a pioneer at enticing writers to work online for free -- in exchange for the potential of huge personal exposure.

The Huff built its speed and strength as a **news aggregator**, sniffing items on many topics from thousands of websites. They posted these stories as well as links to other articles that fit its left-of-center editorial approach. It also mixed plenty of celebrity gossip that kept readers returning.

Because the Huff borrowed and reposted existing content from other outlets, it's been criticized for luring traffic from traditional news outlets and accused of making online news reporting less profitable than print.

But the Huffington Post successfully showed that collecting headlines from many sources is a service many readers appreciate -- helping them sift the sands of online news in an easy and enjoyable way. And advertisers were gladly willing to support it.

The site quickly grew to employ its own reporters, columnists, and investigative journalists who produced original content in addition to aggregate items.

On February 7, 2011, AOL bought the HuffPost for US\$315 million, keeping Arianna Huffington on as editor-in-chief of The Huffington Post Media Group.

In 2012, The Huffington Post became the first digital media enterprise to win a Pulitzer Prize.

If you're serious about being a HuffPost blogger, then it's mandatory to read the definitive book *The Huffington Post Complete Guide To Blogging*. It's written by a collective of HP bloggers and editors with forewords by Arianna Huffington and Ken Lerer. Published in 2008, it's slightly dated, but the background of the company and its structure are must-knows for improving your chances of blogging for the Huffington Post.

* * *

Tip #1 (a) -- Know What the HuffPost Does

The Huffington Post is strictly an online business. It doesn't publish in print, including newspapers, magazines, journals, or books. Most of the content is up-to-the-moment material with sections on news, politics, business, crime, education, entertainment, environment, science & technology, popular media, movies, comedy, lifestyle, culture, healthy living, women's interests, parenting, local interest, and a whole lot more.

The Huff is all about *content aggregation*, regardless of source. They regularly pay mainstream agencies like AP and Reuters for content and are swamped with content sharing offers from news competitors such as the New York Times, the Washington Post, the Wall Street Journal, the London Guardian, CNN, CBS, ABC, NBC, Time, Newsweek, and the list goes on.

The Huff's frontline editors sort the wheat from the chaff to get the most timely and interesting stuff on the web. Depending on what section the editors are assigned to, say Books or Entertainment, their sources expand dramatically.

Compiling quality, original content drives the Huffington Post's business and builds an infrastructure that enables thousands of other people to have a space to come and write, inform, play, and start conversations.

These other people are the Huffington Post's unpaid bloggers who flock to the site in a chance to be seen and heard by an audience vastly larger than they'd ever be able to reach on their own.

* * *

Tip #1 (b) -- Know How the HuffPost Works

There are four levels of content providers for the Huffington Post:

Salaried Employees -- Such as reporters, journalists, and editors who are full-time -- generally based in main centers such as New York, Toronto, and London.

Assignment Writers -- Who are freelancers and paid a fixed rate to work on specifically commissioned projects.

Contributing Bloggers -- Who are unpaid, but are a screened and proven commodity. They may submit posts whenever they choose through the Huff's exclusive internet portal called *Backstage*.

Occasional Guest Bloggers -- Who submit posts on an unpaid, unsolicited basis. This is the Huff's slush pile and, for the most part, is a longshot at getting accepted.

The good news for unknown bloggers is that the Huff editors are constantly looking for new contributors -- especially unique, talented contributors with interesting voices. The challenge is in getting yourself noticed.

There's a great article by Huffington Post senior editor, Jason Linkins, titled *How The Huffington Post Works* (In Case You Were Wondering). It's hyperlinked in the complete guide <u>How To Blog For The Huffington Post -- 101 Proven Tips for Getting Published on the Huff.</u>

* * *

Tip #1 (c) -- Appreciate the HuffPost's Magnitude

The Huffington Post is the internet's top dog when it comes to online news and related material. It's one of the world's major media players.

The USA site gets around 3.7 million visitors each day --110 million per month. Worldwide the traffic exceeds 250 million every thirty days and it's growing fast.

Currently, there are fifteen global offices --United States, Canada, U.K., Australia, Germany, France, India, Brasil, Spain, Greece, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Maghreb-Tunise (northwest Africa) and in the Middle East. Expansion plans have fifty offices in mind, shooting for a billion viewers in many languages.

* * *

Tip #1 (d) -- Know the Huff's Demographics

Primarily, the HuffPost targets a younger, English-speaking, educated, and middle-class liberal audience who prefer getting content online. This crowd is tech-savvy -- they prefer delivery to mobile devices. Keep this in mind when formatting posts for submission.

Successful Huff bloggers know this and write to their audience. They ensure their content is interesting, easy to digest, and compelling -- worth remembering, commenting on, and sharing. In common, Huff bloggers have something to say to their targeted demographic and want to know what they'll say back.

* * *

Tip #2 -- Be "The Right Fit"

The Huffington Post truly looks for the "*right fit*" in their contributors. This is hard to describe as submission style and content varies drastically in categories as diverse as

politics to entertainment to minorities' issues. Here's a quote from the Huff editor's cold-call invitation for me to write my first assignment piece:

Hi Garry ~ I wanted to see how interested / available you are over the coming days to tackle a paid writing opportunity for us, for which I think you would be an excellent fit, based on your experience in forensics and the quality of content I see in your blog at www.DyingWords.net.

After getting over the shock of this invite, I thoroughly researched the subject matter (which was on crime scene cleaning) and what the HuffPost expected in format. My first submission raised the editorial staff's confidence that I'd be a long-term "right fit" and that led to the next invite -- becoming a regular Contributing Blogger with direct access to the *Backstage*.

What makes the "right fit"? The combination of everything in this primer and in the complete guide <u>How To Blog For The Huffington Post -- 101 Proven Tips for Getting Published on the Huff.</u>

Tip #3 -- Add Value

A core value at the Huffington Post is "*Idea Is King* -- every move should be predicated on the integrity of valuable ideas and their value in the marketplace."

Bear in mind that publishing is an industry that creates a product just like any other business. That product must have a consumer demand in order to be saleable. It must be valuable to a volume of readers, whether that's for education, entertainment, or enlightenment.

Arianna Huffington has often been quoted saying she likes stories about how you *make life work* -- how you balance work, family, self, and everything else.

When planning to submit a blog post to the Huff, take a good look and ask, "How does it add value to someone else? Not just to please or benefit me, but what it will do for the reader and the Huffington Post corporation? What gift am I bringing to the party?"

* * *

Tip #4 -- Know Why You Want to be Read on the Huff

We all have reasons for wanting to belong to a club, especially one as exclusive as the Huffington Post Blogging Team. But that doesn't mean there's a fee to pay, a small child to sacrifice, or a secret handshake to learn.

Pure and simple, the HuffPost wants intelligent voices with something unique to offer the Huff community through submission of solid content that has the ability to be shared and commented on. A lot of the voice really depends on the motivation that vocalizes it.

Are you doing this for money? Remember as a blogger you're not going to be paid by cash. You'll be paid in **social currency** and that can be worth a small fortune.

Are you doing this to promote yourself and/or your product or affiliation? Take that into account when designing your content.

Do you have a hidden agenda? Be careful about this. The gatekeepers at the Huff are very astute.

Looking back, here's what my motivation was:

- To be recognized as a credible resource by a large audience.
- The potential to profit -- both in money and in self-esteem.
- Networking opportunities.
- Prestige on my platform.
- To build my mailing list through the amplified exposure.
- I had stories and information to share.
- I enjoy helping others.
- To learn from the experience.

The opportunity to blog for the Huffington Post fulfills all this -- more than I ever imagined.

* * *

Tip #4 (a) -- Know What's in it for Them

Blogging for the Huff Post is a 2-way street. It's a win-win. Through the thousands of people worldwide on their Blog Team, the Huff picks up a continuous feed of credible, quality content on every imaginable topic. They figured out the way to do this without putting any money out of pocket, rather they pay their contributors with publicity.

All content providers are looking for the same thing -- interesting perspectives that draw an audience and make them money. There's no secret in getting views. The material has to be interesting and written with a specific audience in mind.

* * *

Tip #4 (b) -- Know What's in it for You

Getting exposure on the Huff Post is priceless and it's done through a thing called a "*Byline*". It's the block at the end of your post where you expand your biography and

link to whatever you want -- your website, social media pages, and your books on Amazon.

This is what my Byline looks like:



Garry Rodgers is a retired homicide detective and forensic coroner, now bestselling crime writer. Garry lives on Vancouver Island on Canada's west coast and hosts the popular blog **DyingWords.net**.



Follow Garry Rodgers on Twitter: www.twitter.com/GarryRodgers1



MORE: Crime, Justice, Murder, Death Penalty, Execution, Punishment, Killing, Legal



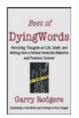
This Blogger's Books and Other Items from...

amazon.com.



No Witnesses To Nothing by Garry Rodgers





GARRY RODGERS

Best Of DyingWords: Provoking Thoughts on Life, Death, and Writing from a Retired Homicide Detective and Forensic Coroner by Garry Rodgers

* * *

SECTION TWO -- WRITING HUFFINGTON POST PUBLISHABLE BLOGS

Tip #5 -- Learn How to Blog Professionally

Here's the reason that disqualifies more submissions than all the others combined -- your post is not written to acceptable, commercially-viable blogging standards, let alone to a HuffPost standard.

Blogging is an entirely different style of writing from novels, non-fiction, essays, Facebook messages, Tweets, recipes, how-tos, and letters to your grandma. It takes a learning curve -- the length depends entirely on your experience and your willingness to learn.

I strongly recommend investing in yourself by taking credible, online training courses in blogging. Not just writing courses. Blogging courses.

You can read all the online tips you want and follow all kinds of more advanced bloggers, but nothing's going to pay better returns that learning in a structured format.

I've taken these two courses and can attest to their exceptional value:

Tribe Writers -- with Jeff Goins of GoinsWriter.com.

Blogging Certification Program -- with Jon Morrow at BoostBlogTraffic.com.

I promise that no matter your level of skill, these courses will make a definite difference and increase your odds of getting noticed by HuffPost editors.

* * *

Tip #6 -- Develop Your Voice

What makes a great writing voice? Here's a definition I put together in a guide I wrote called *How To Self-Edit Deadly Crime Thrillers*:

"Your writing voice is the one thing that's unique to you. It's your most valuable asset -so valuable that you should buy some insurance on it. And it's the one thing you have to
get right. Right from the start. It'd be a bitch to go back and self-edit voice -- if it can
even be done.

But what is "Voice"?

It's your relationship with language -- how you use language. Voice comes from the people you've met, the books you've read, the education you have, and the worlds you've inhabited -- not just in your body -- but in your mind. It's your personality. It's your attitude to your writing. It's how you say things.

Voice is your distinctive way of choosing and stringing words together -- your writing accent, your views, culture, biases, and formal training. It's using some goddam profanity every now and then. It's imagery. Being serious, stuffy, snarky, and sarcastic. Being funny, silly, foolish, and stupid. It's your level of confidence speaking through.

It's your rhythm. Your cadence. Your tone. And your mood.

It's your emotional guts spilling out. It's relating gut to gut -- not brain to brain. No editing in the world can take an intellectual exercise and make it emotional. Remember -- blogs, like crime thrillers, aim to evoke emotion in your reader. Get emotional when

you write and then again when you revise. 'No tears in the writer -- no tears in the reader. No emotion in the reader -- no interest in the story'."

I like this definition by the *Grammar Girl*, Mignon Fogarty, who gave me permission to quote her:

Voice is the distinct personality, the style, or the point of view of a piece of writing or any other creative work. Voice is what Simon Cowell is talking about when he tells American Idol contestants to make a song their own and not just do a note-for-note karaoke version. Many musicians have played The Star-Spangled Banner, for instance, but there's a world of difference between the Boston Pops' performance and Jimi Hendrix's, even though the basic melody is the same.

In writing, the New York Times and the New York Post may cover the same story, but their headlines are likely to be quite different. For example, when Ike Turner died, the New York Times had a straightforward headline: 'Ike Turner, Musician and Songwriter in Duo With Tina Turner, Dies at 76' whereas the New York Post went for a bad pun: 'Ike Beats Tina to Death'.

Is there an ideal voice? Nope. But my advice is to lighten up. Personally, I'm not big on sarcasm or stuffiness. Ever go to a party with lawyers and politicians? I have. They're boring as shit because they're bound by the restraints of graduate degrees and academic correctness. Ever hang with cops & coroners? I have. They're a blast. They're like honey badgers. They don't give a fuck what they say.

I like hearing a natural, open, appealing, and charismatic tone and style that draws me in and binds me with storytelling. Ever read foul-mouthed Chuck Wendig? Hilarious crime writer Meg Gardiner? Listen to quadriplegic blog-king Jon Morrow? Or follow opinionated Johnny B. Truant? Now those folks have voice. Let's face it -- some people are just more interesting than others.

Voice is the way you put things down. The way you say it. It's your personality coming out on the page. It's not the paint on the wall. It is the wall.

For your blog posts to be successful, your reader has to hear your voice telling the story. Nothing else matters if they can't relate to your voice. They want you to sound confident, intelligent, personal, authentic, trustworthy, and even vulnerable. They want to be your friend and follow you around.

So be natural. Don't overthink. And be careful not to cut your own voice's throat by being too careful.

* * *

Tip #6 (a) -- Best Blogging Voice

Here's some of the simplest and best blogging voice advice I've found. It's from a **Teach Yourself** book called **Writing On The Web -- Write Words That Work Online** by Robert Ashton and Jessica Juby. Get it and absorb it if you want an advantage over the thousands of others who are pitching to post on the Huff:

Make it clear -- You need to "say it like it is". Avoid euphemisms or beating around the bush. Just write what's on your mind, or what you want implanted in your reader's mind.

Keep it short -- Words take time to read and people quickly lose interest -- especially online. The fewer words you use, the more likely people are to read, understand, and remember them.

Make it simple -- An expert is someone who explains the complex in simple language that all can understand. It's arrogant to use "industry speak" and it might exclude people you actually need to influence. KISS -- Keep It Simple Stupid.

* * *

Tip #7 -- Know the Huff's Blogging Structure

The Huff's blog structure is no secret. It's much the same as print journalism where there's an old news reporter saying "Don't bury the lede." The what? The "lede". Not the "lead".

Conventional articles are written in a six-part structure:

- Headline
- Lede
- Body
- Solution
- Call to action
- Byline

Same with the Huff. It's critically important stuff to know and practice if you want to blog for the HuffPost. This structure is detailed in the complete guide <u>How To Blog For The Huffington Post -- 101 Proven Tips For Getting Published on the Huff.</u>

* * *

Tip #7 (a) -- Headlines

Your headline needs to be attractive, interesting, and descriptive. Remember this:

- Attractive
- Interesting
- Descriptive

Ask yourself -- Who's the audience I want to attract? What interests them? How do I describe my post?

Then you need to apply this mechanism:

A **Trigger Word** -- This sets the readers' expectations. Use words like how, why, what, or a number like "seven ways..."

A **Keyword** -- The gets the reader's attention as to what it's about. Use words like ways, techniques, causes.

An **Adjective** -- This raises the readers' emotions. Use words like amazing, terrible, funny.

A **Promise** -- This is the objective for the reader, the "what's in it for me". Use words like proven, profit, get.

A **Subject** -- What it's about. Use words like published, money, fame.

There's an art to writing headlines. Jon Morrow has a free, definitive guide called *52 Headline Hacks — A "Cheat-Sheet" For Writing Blog Posts That Go Viral.*

And then you need to formulate it in one of these ways:

Worldview -- Why Every Blogger Should be Published on the Huffington Post.

Authoritative -- How You Really Get Published on the Huffington Post.

Achievement -- How I Actually Got Published on the Huffington Post.

* * *

Tip #8 -- The Failproof Formula

Do the thing that successful Huff Bloggers do -- they know the message they want to deliver and what their niche market wants to hear. Do this and you'll build a large, active following. This comes back to knowing your audience. What is it they're looking for and what do they want to know about it? What's your worldview? You should be thinking about filling in these blanks:

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LIVELY	Silvaia	

My tagline on my personal blog at <u>DyingWords.net</u> is **Provoking Thoughts on** Life, Death, and Writing and my worldview equates to this:

Every <u>person</u> should <u>be a thinker</u>.

My target audience on the Huff is the Crime, Science, and Book crowd, but I've done a bit on the Politics and even the Religion Sections. It depends on who I want to make think.

Expanding this formula to the purpose of this guide, my worldview is:

Every <u>blogger's dream</u> should <u>be to get published on the Huffington Post</u>.

You obviously do, or you wouldn't have read this far in the guide. And there are thousands -- tens of thousands -- maybe hundreds of thousands -- like you and me.

* * *

SECTION THREE -- BUILD A HUFFINGTON POST BLOGGER PLATFORM

Tip #9 -- Know What Platform Really Is

Author / blogger platform is a difficult concept to explain, partly because everyone defines it a bit differently. But one thing's for sure, the Huff Post editors will take a good look at your platform to assess your value before bringing you on board as a member of the Blog Team.

Don't confuse platform with branding or profile. Those are separate things, but still part of your overall package.

I think the best definition of "platform" is your presence before an audience -- what you've accomplished to stand out and attract people to listen/read what you're offering and then be persuaded to buy it. Writing and publishing veteran Jane Friedman says editors are looking for someone with visibility and authority who has a proven reach to a target market. She breaks it down further:

Visibility -- Who knows you? Who's aware of your work? Where does your work regularly appear? How many people see it? How and where does it spread? What communities are you part of? Who do you influence? Where do you make waves?

Authority -- What's your credibility? What are your credentials? (This is more important for non-fiction writers than fiction.)

Proven Reach -- It's not enough to say you have visibility. You have to show where you make an impact and give proof of engagement. This could be quantitive evidence

like the size of your mail list, social media following, website traffic, blog comments, content published, testimonials, and reviews.

Target Audience -- You need to be visible to the most receptive or appropriate audience for the work you're trying to sell.

Friedman also says what platform isn't.

It's not about bringing attention to yourself by yelling the loudest, being annoying, hard selling, or marketing better than anyone else. And it's not built overnight. Building an audience – finding an audience – takes time, It's an organic, yet intentional, process and it's different for every writer. Your platform depends on your unique story and message, your strengths and qualities, and your targeted readership.

These are the common elements of a successfully built platform:

- Strong voice.
- Credible content and message.
- Website with a large readership.
- Blog updated on a regular basis.
- Large backlist of blog posts and other publications.
- Large email list.
- Impressive social media presence.
- Active commenters.
- Guest blogging on hi-profile sites.
- Numerous contributions to other publishers and media.
- History of strong book sales.
- Effective Search Engine Optimization.
- Public speaking appearances.
- Association with influencers.
- Membership in relevant organizations.
- Good imagination and vision.
- Above all, perseverance -- the will and drive to build it.

* * *

Tip #9 (a) -- Brand and Profile

Your brand is a summary of your values. Your profile is how you present yourself in words and in images. The more closely these align, the better your audience will understand what you do and what you stand for.

My brand is crime writing -- both fiction and non-fiction. It's been built by my years of experience as a homicide detective and forensic coroner, now bestselling crime writer. You'll see this in my Byline on my Huffington Post blog pieces. My audience knows I'll

be provoking thoughts on life, death, and writing and that I value a no-bullshit approach.

My profile comes through visibility on my website, social media presence, personal appearances, and in books. I promote myself by exposing my experience and make no apologies for self-promotion. You must do the same if you want to be recognized by a Huffington Post editor.

The Huffington Post Writers Relief Staff have a great article titled *Why Every Writer Needs an Author Brand*. You can find the hyperlink in the complete guide <u>How To Blog For The Huffington Post -- 101 Proven Tips for Getting Published on the Huff</u>.

* * *

Tip #10 -- Your Website

How professional is your website? Does it project an image to be taken seriously as a candidate in having even one blog being published on the Huffington Post, let alone being taken on as a regular contributor?

Know this -- Before a Huff editor will consider letting an unknown in the door, they're going to do four things:

- 1. Google your name.
- 2. Check your social media presence.
- 3. Visit your website.
- 4. Read some of your blog posts.

Remember this -- The Huffington Post treasures its reputation of publishing credible and quality content. Much of this is submitted by its army of bloggers. Just as the Huff won't hire an unprofessional clown as a salaried staff writer, they won't publish material from an unpaid blogger that comes across as a flake.

Your professional platform/brand/profile must come out on your homepage and carry on through.

* * *

Tip #10 (a) -- Work on Your Website Daily

The most important thing you can do in building your platform is to constantly work on your website. Adding fresh content is vital. I use a Wordpress site and routinely update apps, widgets, settings, and content. It's not just to project an active and professional image to your visitors -- it's also about Search Engine Optimization (SEO).

And that's how I got discovered by the Huffington Post. Do what the editor for the TV show *Spotless* article, *The Surprisingly Simple Clues Left Behind at Crime Scenes*, did -- Google "*forensic crime scene writer*" and see who's name jumps out on the first page.

* * *

Tip #11 -- Know Search Engine Optimization

Search engines love fresh content and lots of it. They recognize metadata, keywords, linking to and from, images, header tags, headlines, shares, categories, lists, and word count. Search engines are also very good at spotting plagiarism and will deal you a death blow if caught.

Google isn't the only game in the search engine sport. Know who else is huge that the Huff feeds off?

Amazon.

Amazon is far more than an online bookstore and retailer. It's a massive search engine and the folks at the Huff know and work this. There's a reason why Huff bloggers are allowed to directly link their Amazon products to their Bylines. Amazon's search engines are very kind to Huffington Post Bloggers. Hint – Hint.

The more products you have on Amazon, the more likely you'll be in getting a Huff Post editor's attention -- even if they're only some basic guides or short stories. Consider making a compilation from your own blog's backlist and publishing them on Amazon. But -- make sure that your editing, formatting, and cover are professional.

* * *

Tip #11 (a) -- A Tip From Wikipedia

Any idea why Google searches usually rank Wikipedia articles on the first page? It's because Wikipedia loads their content with hyperlinks and the search engines drool over this technique. Links and click-thru's are really recognized by the bots.

Work this to your blogging advantage, especially when submitting to the HuffPost. Make sure you include at least one link. You're going to have to do this anyway if you refer to any outside information in your article. Use some common sense in this, though, and don't overdo it.

* * *

Tip #11 (b) -- Make Your Website SEO Friendly

Take a holistic approach to building an SEO friendly site. To be easily found, you need to be putting out a continual stream of fresh content that appears in many places. You should link your blog posts so they automatically appear on your other social media sites, primarily Facebook, Twitter, Amazon, Goodreads, and Linkedin. The list goes on and on, depending upon how many mediums you're connected to and the topic of your brand and posts.

Then, it's vitally important to effectively use keywords, metadata, hyperlinks, images, and embedded video in your content. One thing leads to another in the search engine world and it's an active combination of all of these devices that drive your content to the top of the search engine ranking pages.

You never know when some editor at the Huffington Post is going to be Googling around to find a writer for a certain piece and then offer to bring them onboard as a regular contributor because that, my friend, is exactly what happened to me.

* * *

Tip #12 -- Just Show Up

Like so much in life, showing up is most of the battle. It's the same with blogging. In order to reach the professional level of being a regular Huff blogger, you have to do the work. You need to put in the time, stick to your voice, and persistently proceed with a plan on how to achieve your goal of blogging for the Huff. If you do the work, you'll see the results. And you'll have a far better chance of getting noticed by an editor at the Huffington Post.

* * *

SECTION FOUR -- GETTING NOTICED BT THE HUFFINGTON POST

Tip #13 -- The Holistic Approach

The combination of everything you do to improve your blogging skills and presence contributes to increasing the chances of getting noticed by a HuffPost editor. It's a case of the whole being greater than the parts. That's what the tips in this guide mean to help you with. I think it comes down to these factors:

Quality content.

- Unique voice.
- Professional presence.
- Pleasing format.
- Individual style.
- Continual content stream.
- History and pattern of improvement.
- SEO through hyperlinks. keywords, metadata, and imagery.
- Quotes.
- Engaging comments.
- Networking with competent bloggers.

* * *

Tip #14 -- Be a HuffPost Student

The more you know about the workings of the Huffington Post, the more you'll start thinking like a publicist and an editor. Your mindset will mold and get in sync with what's desirable in a Huff blogger. The absolutely best way is to read HP blogs and begin to comment on the blogs that are similar to your topic. It takes time, but the payback is worth it.

* * *

Tip #14 (a) -- Be a Huff Post Commenter

Be an avid, intelligent commenter on relevant Huff Post blogs and you're going to get noticed. Those same editors who cleared that particular blog post are following up once it's published and they're reading the comments. This is part of their business model in building quality content.

Read and understand the Huffington Post's *Community Code of Conduct*. There are features that encourage and reward commenters such as their Badge program.

Huffington Post Social Badges recognize key areas of user activity on the site such as connecting with others, engaging with content, accurate flagging of abusive comments, and writing and submitting well thought-out and exceptional comments. The Badge levels are:

Networker -- Given to commenters who highly-connected in Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Superuser -- Who are the busiest and most engaged in commenting and sharing.

Pundit -- Those who consistently contribute insightful, informative, and engaging commentary.

Pundits are conversation starters who drive discussions, regardless of political leanings. Pundit Badge holders have extra privileges on the site such as HTML formatting and editing on their comments as well as increased post length. Pundits are nearly bloggers themselves and can lead to becoming a regular Contributor.

Be aware that the more traffic editors see to a particular Huff Post blogger's articles, the more they're likely to keep publishing their submissions -- and the more likely the editors are to put that blogger's work as a Featured Post.

* * *

Tip #14 (b) -- Comment on the Featured Posts

Featured Posts are the blogs which the Huff editors feel are the most readable. They're promoted on the left sidebar on each section's front page. These are the posts that really get traction and your comments on the Featured Blogs are going to get far more notice than on lesser ones buried in the individual blogger's profile page.

* * *

Tip #15 -- Develop a Relationship With a Huff Post Blogger

Be assured that every Huff Post blogger is reading their comments. I sure do and I can instantly tell when someone is intelligent or if they're a goof. Don't be afraid to contact Huff bloggers and strike up a relationship.

Make sure you "Fan" a Huff Post blogger that you're interested in or "targeting". That's definitely going to get their attention and might result in guest posting on their personal blog site -- or who knows -- an introduction to a Huff Post editor through the back door.

* * *

Tip #15 (a) -- Use the Huffington Post Back Door

The key to the Huff's back door is guest blogging. Nothing will get you more internet exposure -- therefore more likely Huff attention -- than writing numerous guest posts on influential bloggers sites. Remember, Huffington Post editors are reading many blog sites just like you and I do.

* * *

Tip #15 (b) -- Guest Posting

There is an art to effective guest posting and it's far beyond the scope of this guide. Above all, you have to add value to your host. This is such an important activity in raising your discoverability and building your mailing list.

The best advice I can give you on guest blogging is to learn from people like Jon Morrow and Jeff Goins. Jon has a *Guest Blogging Certification Program* and Jeff has a great section on guest posts in *Tribe Writers*. And, no, I'm not getting any affiliate commission from promoting these guys. They just know what they're doing and I highly recommend you follow their advice.

* * *

Tip #15 (c) -- Consider the Huffington Post as the Ultimate Host

For sheer exposure as a blogger, there's no bigger host than the HuffPost. Like any host, they invite their guests and they expect them to know the rules and act accordingly.

If you write all your material with the mindset that it's going to appear on the Huffington Post, you're going to appear much more interesting when a HuffPost editor takes a look at your content. You never know. That might have already happened... or it might be going on right now.

* * *

Tip #16 -- Build Your Blogging Community

A HuffPost editor is also a publisher and they're going to take a good look at your sphere of influence -- your reach -- before going very far with you. It's vital to build up a community around your personal blog.

Your website traffic is one thing, but your mailing list -- the number and caliber of your subscribers -- is where it's at. After a while of consistently posting quality content, a blog site begins to take on a life of its own, growing organically when it reaches a certain threshold. For me, it really took off when I reached 350 subscribers and again at 1,000. "They" say 3,000 is the magic mark where a blog site is commercially sustainable and 10,000 followers is where you've "got it made".

* * *

SECTION FIVE -- PITCHING TO THE HUFFINGTON POST

Tip #17 -- Cold Call on the Huffington Post Submission Form

The HuffPost has a standard online submission form that's open to everyone. It's the Huff's slush pile, though, and they get hundreds, perhaps thousands of submissions daily. You'd have to do something outstanding to get noticed on it, but it's worth a shot.

This is their greeting and submission criteria on the Huff's webpage *Pitch a Blog on the Huffington Post*:

Welcome! Feel free to pitch any topic you like. We're always looking for posts that are succinct, sharable, and satisfying. Have something to say that no one else is saying, or a personal story everyone will relate to? Send it to us here. Also, please note that like any publication, we cannot respond to all queries and you'll only hear from us if it's something we're interested in running,

Required information is:

Headline -- Under 120 characters.

Pitch -- Attach the final draft of your post. It must be publish-ready and not a proposal, outline, or concept. Required length is between 500 and 1,000 words.

Your Name -- As you want it to appear published.

Bio -- A short personal or professional clip to let them know who you are. Include links to your website and social media.

Email Address -- Where to contact you.

Topic -- Choose from a drop menu.

But be aware -- this is a crap-shoot, but it's worked for some of the Huff's top bloggers.

* * *

Tip #17 (a) -- Tweet @HuffingtonPost or @HuffPost

Another long shot that's worked for some Huff bloggers is to Tweet your pitch directly to one of the Huff's many Twitter accounts. Search them on Twitter to find which is the most suitable for your particular submission.

There is a hyperlinked master list with all the HuffPost editors' contact info, including social media connections in the complete guide <u>How To Blog For The Huffington</u> <u>Post -- 101 Proven Tips for Getting Published on the Huff</u>.

Know that most of the Huff editors work in New York and are on Eastern Standard Time, so time your Tweet pitch to their business hours -- 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. -- weekdays only.

* * *

Tip #18 -- Beyond Your Blog's 8 Practical Tips

Susan Maccarelli is the host of **Beyond Your Blog**, a site that helps bloggers find other sites to expand their reach upon. Susan is a real promoter of the Huffington Post and has a lot of information on her website on techniques for getting a Huff Post editor's attention. Here's a quote from her article **8 Practical Tips For Getting Huff Post To Give You The Time Of Day**:

"If you read 'How I Got On Huffington Post: 5 Bloggers Tell All', you learned first-hand how some HuffPost bloggers got their start on the often difficult-to-penetrate site. Some of those methods involved a little bit of luck, so we're sharing 8 practical tips to help you devise a strategy if the Huffington Post is a blogging goal for you.

The Blog Pitch Form -- The most typical way to pitch HuffPost is to use their form. Although many bloggers claim that it's a black hole, many people have also used the form and had a very quick response/acceptance. It doesn't hurt to try!

Relevant/Current Content -- Many successful HuffPost bloggers emphasize the importance of pitching relevant subject matter on topics that are current and timely, as a key part of having your writing accepted.

Reach Out Directly To An Editor Via Twitter and/or Email -- HuffPost lists all of their editors but it's hard to find. Beyond Your Blog has also put together an email directory for the various sections of HuffPost. It is fairly easy to target the section your piece is for and identify the editor(s) you could reach out to. Arianna Huffington's email address is even obtainable with a little Google-ing. Another way to get contact info is to look up the HuffPost section on twitter. Many sections will show an email address and/or twitter handles for the editors in the description. Here are a few examples:

Present a Complete Package -- When you send your pitch, be sure to provide everything they need: social media links, headshot, short bio and EDITED post (they are not likely to do any heavy editing).

Attend Blog Conferences -- Many bloggers have stories of getting inside Huffington Post scoop at blogging conferences. Whether it is someone meeting Arianna Huffington and getting her personal email address at BlogHer '14, or attendees of BlogU being given a direct submission email address, attendees of conferences with a HuffPost presence often come away with a bit of an edge.

Comment and Share -- While this is by no means sure-fire, commenting on posts and HuffPost social media in your targeted section probably won't hurt. An editor may notice you and recognize your name when you submit, or in the case of some bloggers, an editor may even invite you to submit something based on comments alone. You can achieve similar results with strategic sharing and being sure to tag appropriate

editors. While this strategy won't get most bloggers into HuffPost, it may help a smoother environment for your other efforts

Go Viral and Tell Them -- There are multiple stories of bloggers who went viral and subsequently pitched the post to Huffington Post letting them know its popularity, only to be picked up quickly. In some cases, these bloggers were even passed over for the same post before it went viral.

Immerse Yourself -- Read your desired section daily and note the types of posts they are publishing (titles, topics, writing style, word length etc.). Take that information and model your submission accordingly. For instance, if the top posts in your section are controversial, and hover around 500 words, that might be a good place to start with your post."

Susan also has an interesting podcast interview with Huffington Post Senior Editor Emma Mustich titled *How Do I Get Published On The Huffington Post?* It's an inside look at the Huff's submission process, what they're looking for, and how to improve your discoverability -- a must-listen.

Susan's blog and related articles are hyperlinked in the complete guide <u>How To Blog</u>
<u>For The Huffington Post -- 101 Proven Tips for Getting Published on the</u>
<u>Huff.</u>

* * *

Tip #18 (a) -- Don't Send Email Attachments

Make sure you put all material in the body of an email to the Huffington post. An editor is highly unlikely to open any document attachment for fear of importing a virus. The exception is your headshot and other images. They're okay as jpg attachments.

Also, make sure you include "Submission Pitch" in your subject line.

* * *

Tip #18 (b) -- Pitch to the Right Place

Make sure your submission goes to the right Huffington Post section. Editors specialize in certain departments and will bypass a submission that's not suitable for them but might be certainly appropriate for another department. Be aware of how busy these editors are and that they don't normally have the time to pass a submission on to another editor in a different department.

Take the time to learn all the Huffington Post sections. Go to their homepage and scroll through the top bar and drop down menu.

Also, make sure you're pitching the right country. The biggest site and where most editors are is the U.S., but if your article is country specific you might want to contact that arm directly.

* * *

Tip #18 (c) -- Time Your Pitch

Weekends are the worst time to submit, as your piece is going to get smothered in a loaded inbox come Monday morning when the editorial office is hectic. Submitting on Tuesday or Wednesday has a better chance of getting considered. Friday submissions may be left to drown in the inbox as things tone down for the weekend -- especially long weekends.

* * *

Tip #19 -- The Huffington Post Contact List

These direct hyperlinks to editors, departments, and main social media contacts are available in the complete guide <u>How To Blog For The Huffington Post -- 101</u> **Proven Tips for Getting Published on the Huff**:

- Editorial Staff
- Editor Profiles, Portfolios, and Social Media Contacts
- Editorial Sections
- Blog Pitch / Submission Form
- General Contact Page
- Blogger Index
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Linkedin

* * *

Tip #20 -- Persistence

Persistence pays off -- unless it becomes annoying. Rejection is part of the writing business and it's highly unlikely that you'll be published on the Huff with your first submission.

I probably sent in thirty, forty, or maybe even fifty submissions to the HuffPost (I didn't keep track) and heard nothing back but stone silence. I didn't give up, but I was

absolutely blown away when it turned out that they approached me to join their Blog Team after finding me on a Google search.

It's because all the while I was doing everything in these guides right and worked constantly to produce new content and improve my craft. Ultimately, I made my own break.

And don't be afraid to follow up on a submission, particularly if you pitched to a particular editor or department. Just keep it professional.

* * *

Tip #20 (a) -- Professionalism

This is of the highest importance -- in everything you do. Your platform. Your brand. Your profile. Your posts. Your submissions. Your correspondence. Your bio. Your headshot. And, above all -- Your voice.

The Huffington Post is a thoroughly professional media outlet and they expect the same degree of professionalism from their blog submitters.

* * *

Tip #20 (b) -- Optimism

Remember that the Huffington Post is constantly on the look for new contributors and that thousands of bloggers have successfully been published on the Huff.

Ask yourself, "What did these fortunate writers do, that I have to do, to earn the same thing?"

* * *

Tip #21 -- Believe in Karma

What goes around, comes around is an absolutely true statement. If you consistently strive to produce unique, quality content, eventually you're going to get noticed and will catch the attention of a Huffington Post editor.

There's an extension of karma called providence and it's well captured in this quote by German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe:

Until one is committed, there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back -- always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation),

there is one elementary truth -- the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: the moment one definitely commits oneself, then providence moves too. A whole stream of unforeseen events issue from the decision, raising in one's favor all manner of unforeseen incidents, meetings, and material assistance, which no man could have dreamt would have come his way.

Who? When? Where? I can't answer this.

But, I do know it was my goal to build my blogsite at <u>DyingWords.net</u> into a world-class publication that was worthy of catching a Huffington Post editor's attention. Karma worked for me and it can work for you. Just be aware of how big a thing you're wishing for and treasure it when it arrives.

* * *

SECTION SIX -- LINKS TO HUFFINGTON POST RESOURCES

A list of Huffington Post Blogging Resources is hyperlinked in the complete guide <u>How</u> <u>To Blog For The Huffington Post -- 101 Proven Tips for Getting Published</u> <u>on The Huff</u>. They include:

Huff Post Direct Links

How The Huffington Post Works (In Case You Were Wondering)

Why Every Writer Needs an Author Brand

Community Guidelines

FAQ's On Commenting

Community Code of Conduct

Twitter List

Pitch a Blog on the Huffington Post

Editor Profiles, Portfolios, and Social Media Contacts

Email directory for the various sections of HuffPost

Editorial Staff

Editor Profiles, Portfolios, and Social Media Contacts

Editorial Sections

Blog Pitch / Submission Form

General Contact Page

Blogger Index

Facebook

Twitter

Linkedin

* * *

Books

The Huffington Post Complete Guide To Blogging.

Writing On The Web -- Write Words That Work Online

Blog it! The Author's Guide to Building a Successful Online Brand

Blogging for Dummies

The Elements of Style

Build Your Author Platform -- 14 Steps in Growing Your Audience

On Writing by Stephen King

Think and Grow Rich by Napoleon Hill

* * *

Blogs & Helpful Posts

DyingWords.net

How Bloggers Really Make Money

Think and Grow Rich

Are You a Writer? Then Write!

Why Are We Wired For Story?

6 Elements Of Your Writing Voice

Glossophobia -- Overcome Your Fear of Public Speaking

Public Speaking For Writers

Wordpress Virtuoso -- Best Tips For Wordpress Success

Kat Moon – Read about her experience directly emailing Arianna Huffington

Nomad Mom's Diary

Beyond Your Blog

8 Practical Tips For Getting Huff Post To Give You The Time Of Day

How I Got On Huffington Post: 5 Bloggers Tell All

How Do I Get Published On The Huffington Post?

Is it Fair Use? 7 Questions to Ask Before Using Copyrighted Material

What Does The Huffington Post Consider a Quality Blog Post?

How Do You Become a Writer For The Huffington Post?

How To Write For The Huffington Post and Make Money For Your Work

The Economics of Blogging and the Huffington Post

How To Become a Huffington Post Blogger

How To Write For The Huffington Post

* * *

Courses

Tribe Writers

Blogging Certification Program

Guest Blogging Certification Program

 ${\it 52 Headline Hacks -- A "Cheat-Sheet" For Writing Blog Posts That Go Viral}$

* * *

Resource Sites

Wordpress.org

Mailchimp

Keyword Planner

Google Analytics

SumoMe

Alexa Ranking

Google Page Ranking

Grammarly

U.S. Patent Office

* * *

Please Leave a Review

Reviews are hugely helpful in promoting a writer's work.

I hope you got decent value from *How To Blog For The Huffington Post -- 21 Proven Tips for Getting Published on the Huff.*

If you did, please take a moment to click one of these links and leave a short note to let others know what you thought of this book.

Amazon



Kobo



iTunes



It doesn't have to be much -- just a couple brief sentences are fine. It's the thought that counts!

~ Garry

* * *

About Garry Rodgers

I'm a retired Royal Canadian Mounted Police homicide detective who went on to another career as a forensic coroner for the Province of British Columbia. In my younger years, I served as a sniper on Royal Canadian Mounted Police Emergency Response Teams and was trained by the British Special Air Services (SAS). I'm also a recognized expert witness in Canadian courts on the identification and operation of firearms.

In my second retirement, I've made #5 on the Amazon Best Seller list -- sandwiched between the names Stephen King and Dean Koontz -- with my debut Crime Thriller novel, *No Witnesses To Nothing*. It's based on a true story where many believe paranormal intervention occurred.

I've recently completed a second novel, *No Life Until Death*, that involves international black market trafficking in human organs, and I'm working on more in the *Sharlene Bate* series. The next is *No God Without Gold*, based on the Brother XII cult story, followed by *No Guilt Without Innocence* -- a legal thriller.

I have a life-long interest in the U.S. President John F. Kennedy Assassination (sorry, no conspiracy here) and I've written a true-crime book that looks at the forensic and circumstantial evidence in the highest profile, most thoroughly investigated murder case in history. That manuscript was going to be self-published as *Lone Nuts -- A No BS Guide to the JFK Assassination* but is currently in proposal as *The JFK Assassination For Dummies*.

My biggest writing accomplishment, though, was being invited by the Huffington Post to join their Blog Team as one of their signature contributors. Every Saturday morning I blog on my personal site at *DyingWords.net*, provoking thoughts on life, death, and writing.

Outside of crime writing, I'm a certified Marine Captain and love spending time hanging around the Pacific Ocean, near my home on Vancouver Island on the west coast of Canada.



Email Web/Blogsite Twitter Amazon Facebook Goodreads

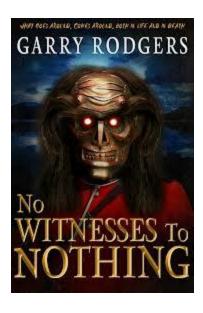
* *

Other Works by Garry Rodgers

If you're interested in checking out what else I've been up to, here's the link to other books and products on my website at *DyingWords.net*.

I've got a mix of fiction, true crime, helpful guides, and lots of blog posts that provoke thoughts on life, death, and writing:

No Witnesses To Nothing is an Amazon Top 10 BestSelling crime thriller with paranormal overtones.



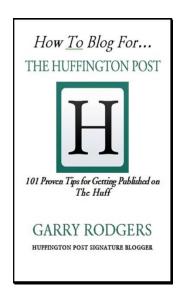
No Life Until Death is a crime thriller ready for publication.

No God Without Gold is a crime thriller at draft stage.

No Guilt Without Innocence is a crime thriller at the outline stage.

Lone Nuts -- A No BS Guide to the JFK Assassination is waiting publication.

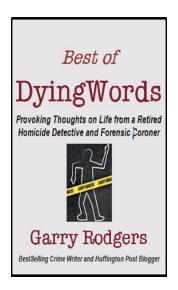
<u>How To Blog For The Huffington Post -- 101 Proven Tips For Getting Published On The Huff</u>



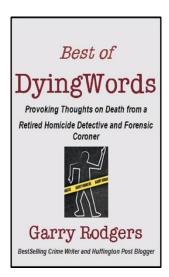
* * *

<u>Best of DyingWords -- Provoking Thoughts on Life, Death, and Writing</u> is a four-part, edited collection of my most popular blog posts. Here're the links to the other shorter <u>DyingWords</u> blog post collections:

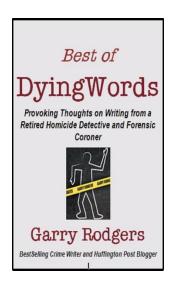
Book 1 -- **DyingWords Thoughts on Life**



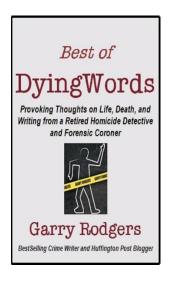
Book 2 -- **DyingWords Thoughts on Death**



Book 3 -- DyingWords Thoughts on Writing



Book 4 -- <u>DyingWords Compilation -- Thoughts on Life, Death, and</u> <u>Writing from a Retired Homicide Detective and Forensic Coroner</u>



How To Write Deadly Crime Fiction is a guide series which gives *101 Killer Tips* on each of eight crime-writing subjects:

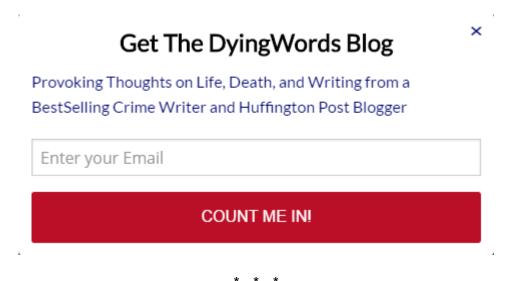


Crime Thrillers

Self-Editing
Crime Scenes
Characters
Dialogue
Forensics
Firearms
Autopsies

* * *

And, please, feel free to count yourself onto my mailing list for updates as to what's going on at *DyingWords.net*.



Follow Garry Rodgers' Blogs

Please "Fan" my blog at the *Huffington Post*.

THE HUFFINGTON POST

THE INTERNET NEWSPAPER: NEWS BLOGS VIDEO COMMUNITY

Please subscribe to my blog at **DyingWords.net**.

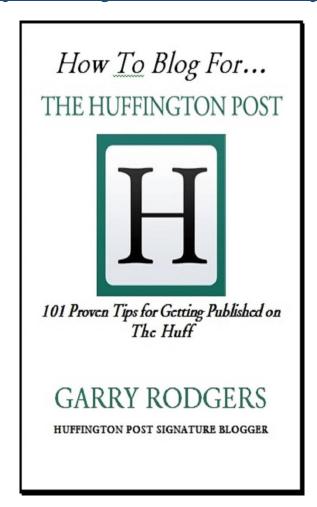


dyingwords.net

Provoking Thoughts on Life, Death, and Writing

Website of Garry Rodgers - Retired RCMP Homicide Detective and Forensic Coroner

Get the more detailed guide <u>How To Blog For The Huffington Post --</u> 101 Proven Tips for Getting Published on the Huff.



End