

## Interview with Senior Editor **Laura Cifelli**

by Dianna Love Snell, 2007

### **Bio:**

LAURA CIFELLI HAS BEEN A SENIOR EDITOR AT NEW AMERICAN LIBRARY SINCE 2002. PRIOR TO JOINING THE PENGUIN GROUP, SHE WORKED FOR TIME WARNER'S IPUBLISH, HARPERPAPERBACKS, DELL BOOKS, AND AS A LITERARY AGENT. LAURA HAS WORKED WITH MANY WONDERFUL AUTHORS OVER THE PAST 15 YEARS INCLUDING SHERRI KENYON, VIRGINIA HENLEY, KATIE MACALISTER, GERALYN DAWSON, WENDY MARKHAM, AND LYNN VIEHL TO NAME JUST A FEW. LAURA HAS A MASTERS IN PUBLISHING STUDIES AND IS THE EXHAUSTED MOTHER OF THREE.

**What is your publisher name and location:** New American Library, Penguin Group, USA; 375 Hudson Street, NYC 10014

**How long have you been an editor and what was your path to being an editor?** I've been an editor since 1994, prior to that I was an associate literary agent with Richard Curtis Associates. Before I started working in publishing I earned a Masters in Publishing Studies from New York University.

**Sub-genres you are acquiring and if there are any specifics about those genres you'd like the writers to know.** I work primarily with commercial women's fiction and am acquiring romance—historical, contemporary, suspense, and paranormal; straight suspense; and historical fiction.

What do you expect of your authors? I expect authors to meet their deadlines and deliver polished manuscripts.

**How do you prefer submissions based on a conference appointment request?** By traditional mail with an SASE. The submission should be pretty standard: the first three consecutive chapters; a synopsis of up to 10 pages that outlines the story from beginning to end—hitting all the main plot points and answering all the major questions; and a cover letter explaining that we met at the conference and I requested the material and also reminding me who the author is and what the author's background is. The cover letter should also mention if the manuscript has been a finalist or winner in any contests or if the author has lined up endorsements from notable authors.

**What is a pet peeve to do with submissions and/or working with writers?** I love working with writers. I don't have any real pet peeves but I am also very short on patience. That might be more my authors' peeve with me, though... Oh, here's one. I

get annoyed by submissions addressed to me but that say “Dear Someone Else” or that say “thank you for considering my book for representation.”

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