

Things I've learned from Writers Bloc:
SHOW, DON'T TELL

"So tell me, then!" insisted Mr. Christensen. "You claim to have learned something from your association with Writers Bloc. I think the jury is entitled to know exactly what that was. Would it have something to do with...say...spelling, or perhaps proper use of semi-colons?"

Anna rose. "Your Honor, may I provide my learned opponent with a leash? It will make it so much easier for him to lead the witness."

"Careful, Ms. Spence," cautioned a serious Judge Jeske, "else the bailiff will be *leading you* to my clerk to pay a stiff fine for contempt. I know your reputation and I won't put up with any of your shenanigans here!"

Anna lowered her eyes to the floor. "Begging the courts pardon, Your Honor." She stepped from behind the table to strengthen her argument. "I really must object to the treatment of this witness, Your Honor"

Judge Jeske's gavel came down hard on her desk. "What you really *must* do Ms. Spence is take your seat. This is an informal hearing and I'm willing to grant Mr. Christensen some latitude." Judge Jeske shifted her attention to the witness. "You will answer the question, Mr. Sellers."

"I don't mean any disrespect, Your Honor," Sellers answered cautiously, "but Mr. Christensen is painting with a very broad brush. He may as well ask me how many grains of rice are in a fifty pound sack; if you get my drift?"

"Please address the jury with your answers, Mr. Sellers," advised Judge Jeske.

Sellers turned to the jury. "Well, you see, it's like this. You don't learn one or two things at Writers Bloc. You learn something new at each meeting. And not just stuff to help you write, but stuff to help you get published, as well. Why, we've had real, live authors who've been through it all. And they come and talk to us, see. They tell all they've been through so we can learn how to get an agent, how to find the right publisher, you know: learn the ropes."

"That's all very interesting, Mr. Sellers," said Christensen to the jury, "but how do we know this isn't all a bunch of malarkey?" Christensen turned suddenly and rushed the witness box. Leaning in toward the hapless witness he demanded in his fiercest voice, "Tell the truth, Mr. Sellers. This is all a sham, isn't it? Why, you and all those good folks aren't learning anything at all. This Writers Bloc is just a big waste of time."

Sellers rose from his seat. Grabbing at the opening of his shirt with both hands, he ripped open his shirt, sending buttons flying in every direction. His massive chest sported a golden crest emblazoned with the letters WB.

"So you're with Warner Brothers cartoons," remarked Christensen casually. "What's that got to do with any of this?"

Still holding his shirt open, Sellers turned his head and stuck out his chin as he looked toward the heavens. He shook his head slightly, jostling the golden locks flowing over his shoulder. "No," he said in a deep, resonant voice; kind of like that guy that does the movie commercials, "the WB stands for Writers Bloc." The reporters and photographers moved forward. The lights flashed and the cameras made that little whirring sound as the film advanced from one frame to the next while the shutters clicked

endlessly. Judge Jeske pounded her gavel and insisted, “Order in the court, order in the court!”

“I am the defender of interesting, if not slightly quirky, writing. I am the protector of dreams. I lead downtrodden and forlorn writers whose small voices go unheard by the BIG Publishing industry. I gather them and bring them to Writers Bloc where they can be heard and their skills refined.”

Judge Jeske restored order by threatening to have the courtroom cleared of all media personnel. She turned to the witness. “So you’re saying that Writers Bloc does help writers hone their skills and actually teaches aspiring talent how to get published?”

“That’s right, Your Honor!” proclaimed Sellers. “Why there are countless artists out there who desperately need Writers Bloc to help them fully realize their talents.” Anna placed a small fan on the edge of the witness box, causing the witness’s cape to unfurl and gently flap in the breeze.

“Psst!” Anna’s legal aid had just entered the back of the courtroom and was trying to get Anna’s attention.

Sellers continued, moving slightly to catch a better breeze. “Writers Bloc also teaches us how to self-publish, as well.” A gasp was heard from the gallery.

“Your Honor,” shouted Anna from the back of the courtroom, “I have new evidence that must be heard.”

“Go ahead Ms. Spence,” instructed Judge Jeske.

“We’ve just learned that Mr. Christensen is working for MEGA PUBLISHING and has been sent here to discredit Writers Bloc!”

Christensen made a mad dash for the door.

Sellers pointed his chiseled chin upward and proclaimed, “This looks like a job for Writers Bloc!”

“Can it, Writer Boy.” Judge Jeske said to the caped witness.

“Seize that handsome devil!” Judge Jeske shouted to the Bailiff, pointing her gavel toward the escaping Christensen. She pounded her gavel on her desk. “I declare Writers Bloc to be a useful and necessary tool to aspiring writers everywhere!” she declared.

The reporters rushed out of the courtroom to make the evening deadline. Judge Jeske placed her hand over her microphone and instructed the Bailiff, “Take Mr. Christensen to my chambers. I know how to handle impostors like him.”