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## Bet You Missed It-What do gold and musicians have in common?

Bruce Strauch

*The Citadel*, [strauchb@citadel.edu](mailto:strauchb@citadel.edu)

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**The Self-Publishing Phenomenon**  
*from page 1*

ing conclusions. The decision to self-publish or not depends upon the nature of the materials as well as the goals and skills of the author. Self-publishing may be the only option for niche materials without a large enough sales potential to interest a commercial press. The author may choose self-publishing to have full control of the material or if the author's reputation is sufficient to assure the desired level of sales. The physical or digital quality of the publication is no longer a significant factor because self-published works can look as good or even better than those from commercial publishers (though, for varying reasons, they often don't). Several companies sell services to authors for both print and digital materials that publishers normally provide such as copy editing and choice of art work, but several writers advise against these services because of the additional cost. Several writers assert that the main advantage of commercial publishing is marketing and sales. Publishers know how to manage marketing campaigns and get their publications included in the national network of bibliographic control so that they are more likely to receive reviews and be included in approval plans and blanket orders. Nonetheless, self-publishing can generate reasonable sales and be the first step toward commercial publishing as was the case with *Fifty Shades of Grey*. At another conference, I had the owner of a printing firm tell me that two of the self-published authors who use his services had become millionaires.

My final comment is that companies like **Amazon** are luring authors to self-publish with them in digital, print, and audio. **Amazon** can offer higher royalties since the middleman, the publisher, is eliminated. **Amazon** and the other online book vendors also don't have any limit to the number of items they stock as did bookstores and can therefore benefit from the long tail.

In conclusion, I am of the opinion that academic and public libraries will be forced to develop collection development policies that take into account self-published materials or they will run the risk of not providing needed materials to their patrons. 🐾

**Bet You Missed It**

**Press Clippings — In the News — Carefully Selected by Your Crack Staff of News Sleuths**

Column Editor: **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

**Editor's Note:** Hey, are y'all reading this? If you know of an article that should be called to *Against the Grain's* attention ... send an email to <kstrauch@comcast.net>. We're listening! — **KS**

**AN AUTHOR'S TRASH IS GOLD**  
 by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

And it's not just an author's scribbles and rewritten manuscripts that are of value. **Tim Leary's** Nintendo Power Glove is preserved by the NY Public Library. **Norman Mailer's** bar mitzvah speech can be found at UT-Austin.

The prices? **Woodward and Bernstein** sold 83 Watergate boxes for \$5 million. **Norman Mailer** got \$2.5 million for 1,062 boxes of whatever.

And even with digitization, there is value. Poet of light verse, **Wendy Cope**, made a recent sale to the **British Library**: 40,000 emails for \$50,000.

See — **Barry Newman**, "As Trash Goes, Author's Clutter In the Right Hands Is Very Bankable," *The Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 3, 2013, p.A1.



**MUSICIANS AMONG US**  
 by **Bruce Strauch** (The Citadel)

Let's read about the musician in society. (1) **Arthur Loesser**, *Men, Women and Pianos* (1954) (European & American social history via the piano); (2) **Ralph Ellison**, *Living With Music* (2001) (high-ballin' trains and lonesome guitar chords — delving into history of jazz); (3) **Thomas Mann**, *Dr. Faustus* (1947) (Faustian spin on musical mind of Arnold Schoenberg — the artist as "other"); (4) **Dimitri Shostakovich & Solomon Volkov**, *Testimony* (1947) (composer trapped in confines of Soviet desolation); (5) **Bruce Chatwin**, *The Songlines* (1987) (Aboriginal beliefs on totemic beings who sang the earth into life — those on "walkabout" are on a spiritual journey recreating creation).

See — **Stuart Isacoff**, "Five Best," *The Wall Street Journal*, March 23-24, 2013, p.C10. **Isacoff** is the author of *A Natural History of the Piano* (Knopf).