



2021 CAPABILITIES DECK

THELITERARYLOBBYIST.COM



Dawn Michelle Hardy

Championing for authors since 2002.

Publicist. Agent. Consultant. Enthusiast. Advocate. Speaker.

Dawn Michelle Hardy, “**The Literary Lobbyist,**” is a creative publicity strategist and staunch advocate for self-published and traditionally published authors. She works closely with literary agents, editors, sales and publicity representatives, and publishers to conceptualize, execute, and track marketing campaigns’ success.

For twenty years, Dawn has developed and facilitated multimedia publicity campaigns that drive sales, create fan bases, land lucrative multibook deals, garner book awards and industry honors, that helped leverage the author’s success for on-screen opportunities, corporate sponsorships and paid speaking engagements.

**90% of clients for the past 20 years
are direct or online referrals.**

10 consecutive years in creating and facilitating publicity campaigns that have garnered awards and industry honors for debut authors in poetry, children’s books, women’s fiction, nonfiction sports, and business.



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SERVICE OVERVIEW

Ability and proven track record in developing a self-published or traditionally published book from the initial planning and strategy stages through publication and campaign execution.

Essential services include but are not limited to:

- Award submissions
- Pre-publication endorsements
- Bylines and author profiles
- Podcast tours
- Book roundups
- Trade reviews and features
- Media author interviews
- Social media campaign management
- Virtual and IRL book events and tours
- Marketing partnerships with lifestyle and tech brands, independent and traditional bookstores



OVERVIEW

In December 2020, *The New York Times* published an op-ed piece, revealing that only 11 percent of the books published in 2018 were written by people of color, with an even smaller percentage by black authors. Although diversity in publishing is slowly integrating the predominantly white industry, the multifaceted stories and voices of the black community remain peripheral, leaving many talented black authors underrepresented, or relatively unknown.

Dawn Michelle Hardy, widely known as The Literary Lobbyist, is a book publicist, literary agent and most aptly, a staunch supporter for independent authors, particularly novice black authors. Hardy has been advocating for black writers since her start in publishing in 2002 New York Times best-selling author, Teri Woods ("**True to the Game**").

Hardy insists the major roadblock in BIPOC debut authors finding high level success is not in the quality of content but the lack of a well-executed target marketing campaigns that they receive.

The approach taken by The Literary Lobbyist to get books into the hands of readers is often driven by grassroots community engagement in a budget-conscious, creative and pragmatic way.

"I have never witnessed any book receive such a connective and fluid plug as the media blitz produced by The Literary Lobbyist for this novel. For three days, the solidarity among a reading community was visible. It was awesome witnessing post after post celebrating the book and the author", said Donna Johnson, about the Instagram blitz for the debut self-published novel, "**Black Girls Must Die Exhausted**" by Jayne Allen.

In her roles as literary agent and book publicist, Hardy, a visionary, can see the end from the start. "[Dawn] had a vision for this project long before I was able to see it," said Kent Babb, author of "**Not a Game: The Incredible Rise and Unthinkable Fall of Allen Iverson**" (Simon & Schuster, 2015). "She read my *Washington Post* profile on Iverson in April 2013 and just refused to let me say no to her about expanding the story into a book."

As a creative strategist, Hardy believes for readers to buy and review a book, they first need to discover it. She starts generating publicity by granting readers early access to the author during the book's pre-order season. Curating an inclusive community experience between the author and their reader helps create buzz-worthy book releases. She follows the lead-in approach by using multiple platforms including partnering with social and professional groups, social media, community cover reveals, on-screen interviews and radio tours and podcasts to execute a successful launch.

Hardy's advocacy, innovation and proven track record have made her one of the most sought-after book publicists for debut writers.



SELECT FEATURES & PLACEMENTS

EXPLORE **Parents.**

Mentors for Young Boys May Be the Answer to Countering Toxic Masculinity

While we continue to empower young girls, we may be leaving boys behind. But research shows they are taking their own lives and committing crimes at higher rates. Mentorship may be the help they need.

By **Christine Michel Carter** March 10, 2020

Each product we feature has been independently selected and reviewed by our editorial team. If you make a purchase using the links included, we may earn commission.

POWER: The New Faces of Civil Rig

KERRY WASHINGTON
Hollywood's Her T Block and

Survival Mode

Black Sands Entertainment Focuses on Books, Comics for Black Families

NECOLE CULTURE ▾ BEAUTY ▾ CAREER ▾ LIFE ▾ LOVE ▾ CONTACT US ▾

'Get Over 'I Got It': How to Stop Playing Superwoman, Get Support, and Remember That Having It All Doesn't Mean Doing It All Alone' by Elayne Fluker

Elayne Fluker has been riding for women's empowerment since her days as an editor at some of our favorite publications, from *Martha Stewart Living* and *Conde Nast Digital* to *Essence* and *Vibe* Vixens. Now as founder and CEO of Chic Rebellion Media, where she hosts the *Support is Sexy* podcast, highlighting the stories of *women entrepreneurs*, she continues *building her own legacy*. Her latest book gets into the nitty-gritty of the isolating *superwoman complex* many of us struggle with and digs into how to build strong networks of support for long-term success.

\$17.99

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[COOL JOBS] Dawn Michelle Hardy: The Literary Lobbyist

SHADOW AND ACT FILM

Executive Producer Tressa Azarel Smallwood On Her Unconventional Journey Into The Film Industry

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Beauty CEO and Two-Time Breast Cancer Survivor Chris-Tia Donaldson on Self-Love

The founder of Thank God It's Natural talks about her turning point and being an advocate.

By **Christine Michel Carter** 03/10/2020

LEARN MORE ABOUT A \$50 CO-PAY OFFER AND OTHER WAYS TO AFFORD YOUR PRESCRIPTION.*
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Book Riot AUDIOBOOKS ▾ CHILDREN'S ▾ COMICS ▾ MYSTERY/THRILLER ▾ NONFICTION ▾ ROMANCE

THE NOISY CLASSROOM BY ANGELA SHANTÉ AND ALISON HAWKINS

This is my daughter's favorite book despite the fact she isn't in school yet. This is a great early reader book that even younger kids will be captivated by. Every page is inviting and colorful. You follow a soon-to-be 3rd grader who is scheduled to be in Ms. Johnson's class—the noisy classroom. Ms. Johnson is always singing and playing music with the students, so they can't possibly be learning, right? I love that this book helps younger kids navigate their anxiety with the new

SI NFL ▾ NFL ▾ NBA ▾ NFL ▾ MLB ▾ BEER ▾ SELF ▾ HOCKEY ▾ MEMBERS ▾ SUBSCRIBE ▾ FAVORITE ▾ CHANNELS

Sports Illustrated NOW

ESSENCE 50

How to Be a Man Whisperer

EMBRACE YOUR FEMINE EDGE AND WIN AT LOVE NOW WITH EXPERT ADVICE FROM AUTHOR AND FORMER MISS BLACK USA DEJA DAVIS.



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CASE STUDY

“This juicy page-turner is the ultimate beach read...with characters you'll think about long after the last page. The chemistry is so steamy.” – **InStyle**



“The Perfect Find is just that. This funny, fashion-filled, and fiercely provocative read is absolutely fabulous for the grown and sexy woman.”

– **Niobia Bryant, National Bestselling author of *The Pleasure Trap***



“A page-turner that's epically witty, juicy and irresistible. What a perfect, fresh take on the high stakes that come when we fall, pick ourselves back up, and step unsurely into the future. It doesn't get more real than this.”

– **Denene Millner, New York Times Bestselling co-author of *Act Like a Lady, Think Like a Man, and The Vow***

The Perfect Find by Tia Williams

(Brown Girl Books, 2016)

STARTING POINT: Hailed as “impossibly talented” by *Lucky* magazine and “Carrie Bradshaw with melanin and a blowout” by *Heart and Soul*, novelist Tia Williams is the ultimate style insider who is known for her witty, sexy, tell-it-like-it-is approach. In 2005, the veteran magazine beauty editor (*Elle*, *Lucky*, *Glamour*, *Teen People*, and *Essence.com*) created one of the fashion industry's first beauty blogs, the award-winning *Shake Your Beauty*.

Williams is the bestselling author of *The Accidental Diva* and the *IT Chicks* series and co-writer of '80s supermodel Iman's *The Beauty of Color*. Her blog and books have been featured in *The New York Times*, *Essence*, *Women's Wear Daily*, *The Washington Post*, *Teen Vogue*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Marie Claire*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

CHALLENGE: Williams had not published a book in nearly ten years. She returned to publishing with her latest title, *The Perfect Find*, released by an independent publishing company, a stark difference from the major trade publishers with whom she had previously worked. Although Williams has strong relationships with media mavens and authors, she was unsure how to best leverage them.

SOLUTION: Our team developed a publicity campaign, using multiple platforms and leveraging Williams's career achievements and publishing success to launch *The Perfect Find* multimedia campaign with television and online appearances and peer endorsements to create a more significant impact on her reemergence in the industry.

We started seven months before *The Perfect Find's* release date to reintroduce Williams and her previous works to readers. We secured a pre-publication television interview at the Brooklyn Academy of Music and a live appearance on *Cheddar TV*. We also received author endorsements from three *New York Times* bestselling authors: Denene Millner, Nicola Kraus, Mimi Jean Pamfiloff, and other notable romance and contemporary fiction writers.

After Williams's book was released, our team planned several in-person and VIP events in the New York City area at Barnes and Noble, Twitter HQ, and Bloomingdales. Then we hosted several social media engagements on Twitter and Facebook. We also secured byline and interview opportunities for Williams to share and write on various topics, including parenting, book publishing culture, and beauty and style. Additionally, our team garnered a full-page print feature Q&A in *Ebony Magazine*, a live radio interview with Sirius XM's *Bevelations*, and an open letter for Mother's Day on *Glamour.com*.

IMPACT: Actress Gabrielle Union optioned (*L.A.'s Finest*, *Being Mary Jane*) will star in the lead role in the feature adaptation of Williams's bestseller, slated to premiere on Netflix. Stuart Ford's AGC Studios and Union's production company, I'll Have Another, is financing and producing the romantic comedy. Numa Perrier, whose directorial debut *Jezebel* premiered at SXSW in 2019, will direct the film.



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Black Girls Must Die Exhausted

by Jayne Allen

(Quality Black Books, 2019)

STARTING POINT: Writing under a pen name, debut novelist Jayne Allen launched *Black Girls Must Die Exhausted* in September 2018. The book was available on NetGalley shortly before its official release date and remained on the site for several months afterward. This approach allowed NetGalley reviewers to post their consumer reviews directly on the book's Amazon sales page, creating early reviews and buzz.

After setting up her NetGalley page, Allen ran two Category Spotlights during the book's release month, a Featured Title placement the following month, and two additional Category Spotlights in February 2019. Allen requested publicity support to build the momentum of her book's positive early reviews.

CHALLENGE: Allen self-published her book and was unknown to the fiction reading community. She needed an introduction to a targeted group of readers and a strong social media engagement plan to capture their attention and support to sell more books. However, Allen had no author or book website. She also had no Facebook page and fewer than thirty Instagram followers. Our team realized we needed to build a social media community from scratch.

SOLUTION: Our campaign strategy targeted black women who love to read contemporary novels where the protagonist's life mirrors their own in some capacity. We understood the target audience would eagerly share the book's attractive cover on their curated social media pages. We also knew the story of a black woman who works in corporate media, has close friends, is in a romantic relationship, and deals with fertility issues would be a major discussion topic with book clubs and online readers.

Our team used three engagement sources to connect with ideal target readers: Instagram, book reviews, and book clubs. We facilitated a three-day blitz with twenty-five bookstagrammers, resulting in the book cover's viral sharing, independent bookstore sales inquiries, and more than twenty-five book club appearances. The campaign included a three-city tour with a sold-out launch event at For the Culture Beauty Supply, a black woman-owned beauty supply store in Los Angeles, California. We then booked "in conversation" appearances at Auburn Avenue Research Library in Atlanta, Georgia, and planned a Cinco de Mayo-themed gathering at Mahogany Books in Maryland.

Overall, we succeeded in helping Allen find her tribe through social media and in-person events. Allen continued to engage on social media by doing giveaways and conducting live, weekly writing workshops with other reputable authors on Instagram.

IMPACT: In December 2020, Allen transformed from self-published to traditionally published author, inking a four-book deal with Harper Paperbacks, a division of HarperCollins, in a pre-empting which includes her next book after the series.



CASE STUDY

“Allen writes in a sharp, lively voice that is full of warmth and humor...Tabitha and her friends are well-drawn, and it is the dynamic between the protagonist and the women in her life that propels the story. Touching on issues of professional womanhood, race, and family, the author crafts a novel that is both timely and enjoyable.”

– Kirkus Reviews



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CASE STUDY

“ Funny and delightful! Angela Shanté’s book reveals how the power of a teacher’s creative freedom ignites fun learning for students. Praises to her and all the teachers whose dedication and stamina make them the unsung heroes behind education.”

– Pamela M. Tuck, Author, *As Fast As Words Could Fly*



“The Noisy Classroom is a fun read, full of humor combined with the trepidation as a young student observes the classroom teacher she’ll have next year. Changes are difficult... But, it can also be exciting. If you just give it a chance.”

– Reader’s Favorite

JAYNE ALLEN AND FRIENDS PRESENT
THE CINCO DE MAYO BOOKCLUB CELEBRATION!

FEATURING A SPECIAL AUTHOR CHAT
CHAT ABOUT BLACK GIRLS MUST DIE EXHAUSTED AND WHAT’S TO LOOK FORWARD TO IN BOOK 2!

SUNDAY, MAY 5th | 4 PM

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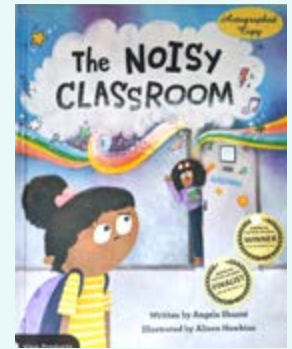
The Noisy Classroom by Angela Shanté (West Margin Press)

STARTING POINT: Angela Shanté is a writer, poet, editor, and educator. Shanté, who has an M.Ed. in elementary education and an M.F.A. in creative writing, taught elementary school for ten years before penning *The Noisy Classroom*, her debut children’s picture book.

CHALLENGE: Shanté is an experienced educator but a first-time author with limited knowledge on how to promote herself and her book successfully.

SOLUTION: After reviewing the book, our team supplied Shanté with a list of ideal awards for independent and debut authors. We started our reader outreach with a mailer to children eight and younger. We understood that adults who followed Shanté on social media would be more responsive if they saw a child posing with the book. So we asked the parents to submit photos of their children with the book to use as social media content and stock photography for author bylines.

While Shanté and her publisher leveraged industry reviews and virtual presentations with schools and youth camps to promote her book, we highlighted her professional experience and searched for timely and relevant opportunities for her to discuss diversity in children’s literature with byline articles, “Tips to Decolonize & Diversify Your Children’s Library” and “Limiting Summer Slide by Strengthening Reading Habits at Home.” *The Noisy Classroom* also garnered inclusion in book roundups with Book Riot and Sheen Magazine.



IMPACT:

Winner, 2020 American Fiction Awards Best Cover Design: Children’s Books

Finalist, 2020 American Fiction Awards for Children’s Fiction

Finalist, 2020 The Wishing Shelf Category 2 Books for 6–8 Year Olds



Shanté announced that West Margin Press will publish her next book, *When My Cousins Come to Town*, in spring 2021.

She and a few educators launched Sunday Dinner Publishing, an independent media campaign to highlight inclusive authentic writing.

Subsequently West Margin Press hired The Literary Lobbyist in 2021 to run the publicity for The Zee Files a 6-part tween series by Tina Wells, sold exclusively at Target and Target.com at publication.



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Counting Descent by Clint Smith III

(Write Bloody Publishing 2016)

STARTING POINT: Clint Smith is the author of *Counting Descent*, his debut poetry collection. He is widely known for his TED Talks, “How to Raise a Black Boy in America,” “The Danger of Silence,” and “Reframing the Narrative Around Our Students,” which have collectively garnered more than seven million views. Smith, a staff writer at *The Atlantic* with a Ph.D. in education from Harvard University, has been published in *The New Yorker*, *The Guardian*, *The American Library Review*, *Boston Review*, *Harvard Educational Review*, among other publications.

CHALLENGE: Promoting poetry outside of the spoken word scene can be challenging, especially for poets who are not signed with a traditional publishing house or have a promotional team or resources. In preparation for future work, Smith wanted our help to expand his audience beyond the poetry community into the mainstream nonfiction readership. He specifically requested us to promote him in independent bookstores across the U.S. and literary magazines who are often booking bigger platformed authors of traditional publishers.

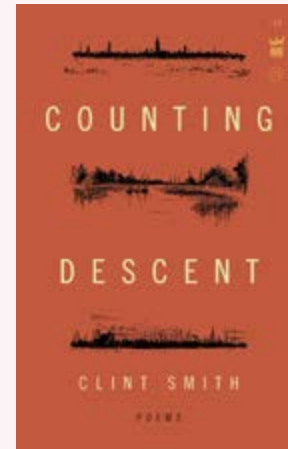
SOLUTION: Our team researched and established relationships with independent and college bookstores, tech companies, and literary magazines throughout the U.S. Since Smith was pretty new in publishing, we used his TED Talks’ popularity, bylines, and education achievements to create the perfect introduction to promote *Counting Descent* in bookstores.

We launched Smith’s book tour with more than twenty appearances across ten cities, selling advanced copies and copies at the promotional events. Six thousand books were sold in the opening six weeks of publication with media coverage in *The Boston Globe*, BK Nation, Salon.com, *Slice Magazine*, WUSA-TV’s *Great Day Washington*, *Cheddar TV* as well as special presentations at Twitter and Pandora headquarters. We concluded the campaign with a two-page photo spread in *Mosaic Literary Magazine* and a ticketed event hosted by The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City.

Since the release of *Counting Descent*, Smith was named in the 2018 *Forbes*’s 30 Under 30 list and *Ebony Magazine*’s 2017 Power 100 list. His first nonfiction book *How the Word Is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America*, will publish in June 2021 with Little, Brown and Company.

IMPACT:

Winner, 2017 Black Caucus of the American Library Association Literary Award
Finalist, 2017 NAACP Image Awards ‘One Book One New Orleans’ 2017 Book Selection



CASE STUDY

“So many of these poems just blow me away. Incredibly beautiful and powerful.” – Michelle Alexander, Author of *The New Jim Crow*



“*Counting Descent* is a tightly-woven collection of poems whose pages act like an invitation to New Orleans, to the spades’ table, to mom’s kitchen, to the kiss on a woman’s wrist, to conversations with hydrants and cicadas...” – Elizabeth Acevedo



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CASE STUDY

“D. Watkins is a very sharp young talent who transformed himself from a dealer on the streets to an adjunct professor, and most important, to a leading voice of his generation who is determined to see justice for the black community. *The Beast Side* is raw, intelligent, and at times humorous—and a necessary narrative in these challenging times!” —**Michael Eric Dyson**, author of *The Black Presidency: Barack Obama and the Politics of Race in America*



“The 21st century Civil Rights era is upon us and one of the most compelling new voices to listen to is D. Watkins. *The Beast Side* is a riveting and important read no matter what your preconceived notions are on the state of race relations in America today.” —**Chuck Todd**, correspondent on NBC’s *Meet the Press*

The Beast Side: Living and Dying While Black in America by D. Watkins

(Hot Books/Skyhorse Publishing 2015)

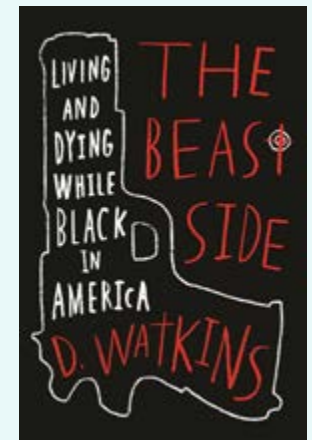
STARTING POINT: D. Watkins, one of the most influential voices in education empowerment to emerge during Freddy Gray’s death, debuted his first collection of essays, *The Beast Side: Living and Dying While Black in America* in 2015 with *Hot Books*. Watkins has appeared on several news outlets in his native Baltimore, Maryland and nationally on *Meet the Press* before the book’s release.

CHALLENGE: Skyhorse Publishing had hit a wall with pre-publication endorsement and requested support to secure praises from influencers in activism, black culture and media.

SOLUTION: Within two weeks of outreach *The Beast Side*, our team delivered five endorsements that were all printed on the book jacket. Skyhorse liked our work and asked us to continue booking television and radio appearances for Watkins. We booked guest appearances on H.I.S. Turning Point on BET, *MSNBC with Melissa Harris-Perry Your Black World*, *Democracy Now!*, *Al Jazeera*, *RT America*, and *Arise TV* during the six-week launch period. We also booked radio appearances on NPR’s *Fresh Air*, SiriusXM’s *The Maggie Linton Show*, and WOL’s *The Bev Smith Show*. The media coverage along with a series of in-person events resulted in *The Beast Side* making *The New York Times* Best Sellers list in race and civil rights.



IMPACT: Since the release of *The Beast Side*, Watkins has written *The Cook Up: A Crack Rock Memoir* published by Hachette Book Group in 2016, which landed on *The New York Times* Best Seller list. He also wrote *We Speak for Ourselves: How Woke Culture Prohibits Progress*, published by Simon and Schuster in 2019. The book was the 2020 selection for One Book Baltimore, a local collaborative that promotes literacy to seventh and eighth graders, their families, and community members by reading the same book and engaging in dialogue.



“Firing off dispatches from that part of the America we left behind, D. Watkins is making a definitive argument for so many men and women ruthlessly marginalized by a society that fails to measure itself on any humane terms. This is a Baltimore voice in angry service of other unheard Baltimore voices, and *The Beast Side* is, by extension, a blunt, eloquent argument for the forgotten in our cities. He has arrived, and by the sound of things, he is here to hold us all to account.” —**David Simon**, author of *The Corner* and creator of HBO’s *The Wire*



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