

**What To Expect When You're Expecting... To Publish**  
A review of **78 REASONS WHY YOUR BOOK MAY NEVER BE PUBLISHED & 14 WHY IT JUST MIGHT** by Pat Walsh (2005)

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If you have not yet completed your first novel, there are only two pieces of advice of any value:

1. Read a lot
2. Sit down in the chair and write more words

Until that first book is done, you're vulnerable. Plenty of people think they've got the secret to writing books; until you've discovered your voice, you're at risk of trying to follow other folks' recipes. And if you knew the truth – the odds, the statistics – you'd probably quit. There are those who would say that's a good thing, that weeding out as many wannabes as possible in the early stages is a good thing. My own belief is that you won't know whether you've got the drive for the long haul until you have finished a book.

Once you've typed The End, however, you're ready to listen. You should listen. And if you have any desire to be published, you *need* to listen.

Enter Pat Walsh, editor at MacAdam/Cage, a San Francisco-based publisher. Walsh's book, **78 REASONS WHY YOUR BOOK MAY NEVER BE PUBLISHED & 14 WHY IT JUST MIGHT**, lays out the pitfalls, common errors, scams, and myths surrounding the road to getting an agent and, ultimately, a publishing contract. It does it in plain and occasionally brutal language; in fact, one of Walsh's cover blurbs reads "It's a punch in the gut, a slap in the face, and a poke in the eye." Think Walsh is too

mean? Anything less, in my opinion, does a disservice to the aspiring writer: simply put, if you can't take what Walsh dishes out, you won't succeed in the book biz.

Publishing is “an imperfect business fraught with contradictions and injustices but possessing good intentions.”

“When I envisioned this book, I wanted to alert writers to some of the things they're doing wrong that are preventing them, not from being published, but from even being taken seriously.”

A writer who takes to heart the guidance in the book will be a tireless learner, relentless self-improver, and thick-skinned competitor. If you think any of these are anything less than critical, you'll sink like a stone: and Walsh's book explains exactly why.