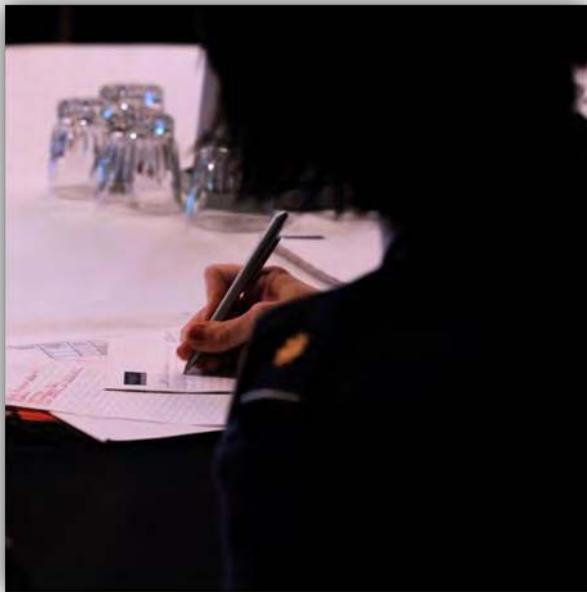


# Reasons to Write

*At a past KEYSTONE Leadership Summit, Major General Dunlap presented an information-packed elective on professional writing. In this edited transcript of his remarks, the Deputy Judge Advocate General shares his experiences as one of the JAG Corps' most widely published authors, and provides an inspirational "how-to" guide on how legal professionals can become better writers and publish their work.*



**T**HERE ARE MANY GOOD REASONS FOR writing. In our business it is a professional imperative. Writing and developing your writing skills will help you professionally. You can make yourself the most valuable player on the commander's team by being a good writer. It also enhances the JAG Corps' image, both in and out of the Air Force. The more you write, especially for general interest publications, the more people will know the quality of people we have in the JAG Corps and the fact that we can speak to many different issues.

## BENEFITS OF PROFESSIONAL WRITING

Writing has opened doors for me to many forums where I would not otherwise have been invited to speak. Recently, I spoke on counter-

insurgency at the Council on Foreign Relations, which was a great opportunity. Often, the reason you may be invited to speak somewhere is because of something you have written which becomes known in the community. Writing expands your opportunity to make an impact. When ideas are on paper, they are more likely to have a long-term impact on policy makers. Colonel John Boyd was one of the great Air Force strategists of the 20th Century. He developed the *OODA Loop*,<sup>1</sup> a decision-making theory that is highly influential in both military and business. Colonel Boyd, however, never wrote an article or book about any of his strategies. The 200-slide presentation he developed is the only real record of his thinking<sup>2</sup> Colonel Boyd could have had a lot more impact beyond just the *OODA Loop* had he captured his ideas and put them down on paper.

Writing can also be a lot of fun, and it can take you in unexpected directions. The article I wrote while in National War College, *The Origins of the American Military Coup of 2012*,<sup>3</sup> is now over 15 years old. Today, at least once a month, I get something from somebody about this article. Also, I received an award for the article, which led to an opportunity to work on a movie. But there was another more practical

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<sup>1</sup> Colonel Boyd's OODA loop consists of interacting actions: Observe, Orient, Decide and Act. Colonel Boyd advocated cycling through the loop faster than an adversary to "get inside" their OODA loop, generating confusion and disorder.

<sup>2</sup> The Internet has given Colonel Boyd's presentation a continued presence, including at <http://www.d-n-j.net/boyd/pdf/poc.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., *The Origins of the American Military Coup of 2012*, PARAMETERS, Winter 1992-1993, 2.

effect: in April of 2006, *Harper's* did a big article on civil-military relations. I was asked to participate, not because I'm the smartest person on this subject, but because of the article I wrote 15 years ago. So many years later, it remains relevant.

## BUILDING WRITING SKILLS

### *Learn by Reading*

How do you learn to write for publication? Dunlap's theory is that the key to good writing is actually good reading. There are two different kinds of reading in my view. One kind is strategic reading. Strategic reading is where you read to learn how to write and to see how others write. How do others express themselves? In my humble opinion, some of the best writing can be found in the *New Yorker*, *Harper's*, the *New York Times*, and *Foreign Affairs*. When I read through these magazines, journals, and newspapers, I look for words or phrases that I don't use. When you use the thesaurus feature in word processing software, you end up using the same words all the time because the thesaurus is limited. But other publications offer fresh ideas. And you don't just have to read heavy duty kinds of publications to get familiar with good writing. *Sports Illustrated*, for example, has some terrific writing.

The other kind of reading is tactical reading, which is reading those publications where you might want to get published. You can kind of see the style, the format, and the phraseology, or the ROE, so to speak, of the particular publication. Study the sentence structure, the phrasing, and the imagery. What is the ROE for those particular publications?

## SELECTING A TOPIC

What to write about? I actually get asked this a lot: "How do you get your ideas?"

### *Personal Knowledge*

To be effective, you have to write about what you know, and often times this will be a legal issue, but not all the time. I think that things that you personally experienced or personally worked on are fertile grounds for writing. That isn't to say that you can't educate yourself about another subject. Some subject that you've never worked on nor experienced,

can you write about it? Yes. But you really do have to educate yourself about the subject. And you have to research it and examine the leading works. I frequently see authors not looking at the classic treatise or the leading work on the subject. For example, John Yoo has a law review article out criticizing JAGs on civil-military relations. Among the many things I don't like about the article is it's very slovenly researched. It does not cite the classic works in civil-military relations in a comprehensible way. He may be given leeway because he's a law professor, and someone will publish whatever he puts out. But if you do not take into account the classic works, especially for a peer-reviewed journal, then you're going to have problems.

### *Passion*

This is the most important thing about writing. You must be passionate about your subject because if you're not passionate about it, it will reflect in your writing. I feel it in myself when I am writing about something that I have to write about versus what I want to write about. If I am not passionate about it, I am not a good enough writer. I am not smart enough to write in an acceptable, publishable way unless I feel passionate about it on some level.

### *Popular Issues*

So one of the things that I do is scan popular literature like the *Early Bird*, newspapers, and magazines. I look for things that I disagree with or don't think they have quite right, and I make notes of it. And believe me, that's a lot of stuff. Almost everything written about the military, there's going to be something that you're not going to agree with. Even in *Air Force* magazine and places like that, they don't quite have it right. So I start making notes.

## RESEARCH

Making notes dovetails into how I research. After I start making these notes, I start identifying areas that I'm interested in. Then I begin assembling materials. I have recently been doing more of this on the computer. Those of you who have seen my office, you always see stacks of items. It looks like I have a completely messy desk, which it is, but there is a rationale to it. Now I try to store things electronically. The *Early Bird* is a good clipping service. I look

through it, and if there is an article that I find of interest or it has something in there that I might want to cite, I put into an electronic file.

With the *Early Bird*, it is not always clear what their source is. Sometimes they will say it's on page one of the *New York Times*, sometimes they will just say *Miami Herald*. I will go and find the original and keep that hyperlink so that I will have a good basis for a citation later on. Sometimes if you let it go and you do not nail it right away, you will never find that darned thing again. It becomes a problem because you don't want to cite the *Early Bird*. It is much better to cite the primary source.

#### *Base Resources*

One of the things that we don't always realize is how many free things you can get your legal offices. Like *Defense News*, they'll pretty much send any military office a subscription, if you want it. Plus, some of these journals, like *Defense News*, are not available electronically except to subscribers. So sometimes there's still a place for those scissors to cut out articles. When you cut out the articles, make sure you put the page and full title and date of publication. With so much practice, I flip through publications and I can almost make an instant judgment now. If there is something in there, I will tear it out. I usually like to get the publications last in our office so that I can freely cut and save articles of interest.

The other thing to do is to check out the base library and see what all that is available there. You might be surprised at how good many of our base libraries are when you go through and see what they have in your interest areas. Many also have excellent electronic collections, which you may be able to access from home.

#### *Building Your Library*

I am a big believer in building your personal library. If you want some ideas, there is a reading list. It's a little bit dated now, but it was in *The Reporter* in March 2006. My mother was a librarian, so it took me about 30 years to get to the point where I could actually mark a book, even one I owned. But when I read now, I mark, highlight, and everything else, otherwise I will never find it again. If there is something of interest, I make a note in the book. That's the

great value of owning books. Building a library is expensive. I know not everyone can do it. But many books offer paperback editions now. And there are a lot of used bookstores, especially when you come to D.C. If you go to a used bookstore in D.C., you will find great military material.<sup>4</sup> Used books offer a way to build your personal library inexpensively.

How do you keep creativity? I have an asymmetrical reading project. So, for example, every now and then I'll read or more likely listen to a non-military book on CD. I listen when I go running. For example, I'm listening to Alan Greenspan's autobiography. It's about something that I don't deal with. As you listen to the themes, you'd be surprised; you just get a snap of an idea related to something maybe in the military. The author may not have meant it, but it will just give you that little bit of creativity. And don't forget about JAG Corps resources. FLITE collects many research resources on legal topics. It is something that I continue to exploit more.

#### *Building Your Contacts*

Another key is to contact the expert in the subject matter area. How do you find out who they are? Well, there are many free lectures downtown at universities or conferences. It's wonderful in Washington. When you go to these conferences, go up and introduce yourself to the expert. They like people who are interested in what they're interested in. You'd be amazed. A great example of this is Dick Kohn, an expert in the civil-military relations area. He's a professor at the University of North Carolina. I didn't meet him at a conference. I was writing in this area, and I just sent him a letter. (I prefer letters, though some people might send an email.) Dr. Kohn sent me books. He would vet my manuscripts and give me feedback. It's really amazing -- they really do want to help. This happened long before I held this rank, so it was not a case of, "Oh, you're a general, of course they're going to pay attention."

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<sup>4</sup> For example, I found the new edition of the History of the U.S. Air Force from 1947. The old edition spanned 50 years, bringing us up to 1997. The new edition goes to 2007. I found a brand new copy in a used bookstore for \$8.00.

Before you talk to an expert, you have to do your homework. It may be that you could contact someone and say, "I don't know anything about this area. Can you give me a list of books?" Be careful about that; they think in terms of 20 books or 30 books. So do your homework because you have to make sure that your idea or perspective is fresh, and that it's going to be publishable. In other words, your work has to take into account what's already been said. You might have a different perspective on it, but know what is out there. You can also use these experts for quotes. It may be surprising at first, but they will almost always give you a quote. When people are speaking in your article, it makes it that much more powerful, and it looks more interesting to people.

## TIME MANAGEMENT

The key to professional writing is time management and multi-tasking. There are people who can sit down and do 2,000 words. That's not me. I tend to think of a phrase or word or concept. So what I do is capture that one idea when I get it. It may only be a line, it may only be a word, it may only be a concept, but I write it down or put it into my PDA. As time goes on, I capture all of these disparate ideas.

You know how sometimes you go to meetings because they just want to have a lawyer there? Well, one advantage of going to law school, and our paralegals have picked up on this as well, is learning to listen with one ear. A lot of times, people see me writing at meetings. In fact, General Hornburg, the commander of Air Combat Command when I was the SJA, once asked me, "Charlie, you were writing so much at that meeting, I'm a little bit concerned. Do we have some legal problem here?" I replied, "No, I was writing something completely different."

Look for other opportunities to multi-task. You may be able to capture snippets when you are in the stands watching your child play soccer. Or there may be certain parts of articles that are somewhat boilerplate that I do while I'm watching TV. You have to capture these snippets whenever they arrive. I'm often just capturing a phrase. When I go running, there's

no phone or paper when I think of that one phrase, so I have to get back quickly and write it down immediately.

Technology can help save time. I use voice recognition software. Earlier versions weren't that great, but now the technology really does work.<sup>5</sup> The funny thing about it is that your spoken word really is different than how you write. Sometimes it's better to go with kind of how you speak and sometimes it's better to go with how you write. Nevertheless, it's a good way of getting a lot of things down on paper.

## *Organizing Ideas*

I have around a dozen articles that I call "under construction." When I get a snippet, I'll put it into the file for that article. I have one article I've been working on for about six years; it's more organized than some of the others. Some articles are currently just jumbles of quotes or ideas. I've come up with my own system, so I know a quote from my own idea. Every now and then I get nervous about that and I want to make sure it's my idea, so I'll "Google" those words before I mark them as my idea.

Another thing to be careful about is plagiarizing yourself. For example, one of the things I do is "article spoking" where I use the same core research to write articles on different aspects of the same subject. I note previous uses of the research in the file and in the publication if the cross-reference will benefit the reader.

## *Editing for Publication*

Another key to good writing is good editing. There are many guides to this with tips on using the active voice and proper grammar, plus checking all of your data.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Speech recognition software can lead to interesting results. For example, if you get a phone call in the middle of speaking and forget to turn it off, suddenly you look at the screen and you see it picked up things you did not intend to record.

<sup>6</sup> Checking your data is fundamental to establishing your credibility as an author. I just read a very important article, and it said 30% of the Army recruits don't have a high school degree. That's simply wrong: I "Googled" it, and it is high but not 30%.

You really must be ruthless in cutting your own writing. Some quick tips that I use:

- Rewrite. There are people who get it exactly correct the first time. David McCullough, who wrote *1776*, writes one time and in longhand. That is his style; most of the rest of us need to write and rewrite. Rewriting is hard because you get so tired of looking at the same article, but it is important.
- When I cut something I often save it. And sometimes what I cut out becomes its own separate freestanding article. But nevertheless, when you edit, less is always more.
- Read your work aloud. Simply reading aloud has helped me realize a particular article still needed work. Your work may look great when you are reading it to yourself, but reading it aloud really does make a difference.
- Use a very talented editor.
- Get a sanity check from a substantively knowledgeable person. You may not agree with her critique, but you need to give it to somebody who really knows the subject matter.

#### *Look the Part*

Many writers simply do not know to ask, "How is this going to look in print?"

If I am targeting a particular publication, I study it and try to fit the style for that publication. This can be as basic as using footnotes. If you put footnotes in an article, it may be un-publishable in certain magazines. Conversely, not using footnotes may make it un-publishable in other publications.

A key to readability is white space. We have all received an email with a very long paragraph. No one reads the whole thing. We start working through it, then we go to the end, and then maybe check the middle for our own name. If you are writing, especially an op-ed, short, declarative sentences help. Most paragraphs should be no more than two or three sentences. This is in Dunlap's view of the world:

**A key to readability is white space. We have all received an email with a very long paragraph. No one reads the whole thing.**

how an article looks visually is one of the most underrated factors in professional writing.

#### WHERE TO PUBLISH

##### *The Art of the Op-Ed*

How do you get an op-ed published? I have gone through this a lot in the past year, publishing nine or ten recently. The opinion piece is a useful way of getting something published without writing 3,000 words. These pieces are between 500 and 700 words. The op-ed can also put your ideas before a very broad audience.

It is also extremely difficult to get an op-ed published. So you might want to look at smaller newspapers, but understand even they receive hundreds of submissions each week. The *New York Times* receives over a thousand each week, and they will publish just 20 or so.

You need to find their author guidelines. Newspapers usually place this somewhere on their website. Follow their guidelines to the letter. If they say the limit is 500 words, they do not mean 501. Unless you are Henry Kissinger, they will dismiss you just for not following the rules.

The *New York Times* has an essay on their website, which talks about how to write an op-ed.<sup>7</sup> Here are a few of the highlights:

- "Move quickly; the news does." This really is true. When something happens and if you want to write an op-ed about it, you need to have it done within 24 hours because of the lead time. You must be able to write very quickly. If you are thinking about an op-ed, my recommendation is to anticipate what may happen. For example, you might think that there will be some kind of natural disaster and the military may be involved. You might have some ideas of what the appropriate role of the military should be.

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<sup>7</sup> David Shipley, *And Now a Word From Op-Ed*, N.Y. TIMES, Feb. 1, 2004, at A11.

You can prepare 80% of the article, then fill in the specific triggering event -- say, "Southern California Wildfires," or "What the Role of the Guard Should Be."

- "Make one argument thoroughly." One of the challenges we have in the Air Force is trying to cover the whole waterfront about airspace and cyberspace in every message. It is better to pick one idea. That is all you can cover in an op-ed. The more detail the better.
- Be original. The *New York Times* recently published some additional insight on the op-ed process, responding to the question of how to have an op-ed published.<sup>8</sup> They mentioned "a soft spot for opinions that run counter to those expressed by the editorial page."<sup>9</sup> They are not going to publish press releases. They want something edgy. Editors like being surprised. They like originality. If everybody is saying it, they can have recognized experts say it. You must be provocative, it has to be about a current issue, and you need some kind of solution. If you are military, they want you to be in some way vaguely self-critical. It is hard to explain in a particular context, but you must be edgy in an op-ed.

Give some thought to where your op-ed should be published. You can "Google" "Top Hundred Newspapers for Circulation" to see a list of the top 100 newspapers.<sup>10</sup> They are not the ones you might think. For example, if you live in Washington D.C., you think the *Washington Times* is one of the top newspapers, but it is not even in the top 50. There are lots of interesting

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<sup>8</sup> Andrew Rosenthal, *Cracking the Op-Ed Page*, N.Y. TIMES (online edition), Sept. 17, 2007, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/17/business/media/24askthetimes.html>.

<sup>9</sup> *Id.*

<sup>10</sup> One such listing may be found at <http://www.cmc.org/oped.html>. It also provides basic submission guidelines and contact information for each listed paper. Another listing focuses on the criteria in 21 top publications, including their guidelines for Op-Eds and letters to the editor, at <http://www.pomona.edu/communications/media/opedguidelines.html>.

newspapers that you might want to look at on that list.

I send op-eds out to all kinds of papers. A secret: many publications want military officer authors. It gives them credibility. Also, military people usually don't write, making you the exception.

#### *Other Publications*

You would be surprised, but you will find some place to publish your work. I have only had one article that I ever really worked on that was never published.

*Writer's Market*,<sup>11</sup> published each year, is the basic source for all kinds of publications, mainly magazines. It tells you how many freelance articles they take, along with contact information.

Here are some specific ideas from my experience. On legal topics, *The Reporter* is a good place to start. *The Army Lawyer* just came out with a joint issue, a purple issue with representation from the different services. *Air and Space Power Journal* is not as competitive as the other ones. *Military Review* is an Army publication, aimed generally at company grade officers and senior NCOs. It is getting tougher to publish in *Joint Force Quarterly*, but it is a military publication looking for military authors. Organizational publications also offer opportunities. Do not overlook your base newspaper. It is a good place to get your first clipping; save your clippings, then start building your curriculum vitae. Also, the American Bar Association's *National Security Law Report* is always looking for articles on legal topics, and it doesn't require a lot of footnotes. The Judge Advocates Association is going to begin publishing *The Military Advocate* again. The Foreign Policy Research Institute provides an example of an e-publication. I don't generally like e-publications, meaning electronic-only publications, but it is a way to get published, particularly as you start out.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> ROBERT BREWER (ed.), *WRITER'S MARKET* (2007).

<sup>12</sup> I distinguish e-publications from blogs. A blog can be a waste of your time because you put in all this effort to write this thing up, and what do you have?

The most friendly military publication to new authors is *Proceedings*. They have a column called, "Nobody Asked Me But." They publish pieces from E-1's through general officers. They look for about six or seven hundred words, and they usually like a specific topic. Also, they have an enlisted publication contest. Many of their contests are limited to the Naval Services, but the enlisted publication contest is open to all services.

Remember alumni publications. One of my earliest publications was in my college alumni magazine, and it was about my experiences deploying for the Somalia operation. They usually like first-person accounts, along with several photos.

The *Air Force Times* will publish an op-ed. You will get feedback, trust me. *Armed Forces Journal* was totally revised about a year and a half ago. They are very open to articles by military authors.

Consider small local papers, especially your hometown. I used to be a lifeguard on a beach community called "Wildwood Crest" in New Jersey, which has a free newspaper. I wanted to write an article about the leadership my original boss, the Captain of the guards, gave me. So I wrote a little guest column about him and my experience being a lifeguard, being on the very bottom of a quasi-military chain. Your hometown paper may love to see an op-ed from you. The key thing here is to get something in print.

Another easy thing to get published is a book report. We discuss clearing publications through Public Affairs in more depth, but note that you do not have to get them cleared through Public Affairs. It is one of the exceptions in the instruction.

Air University has a web-available listing of every DOD publication, for example, a list of safety magazines. I published an article about DWIs in *Torch*, AETC's safety magazine.

Sometimes when I am at Air University, I simply wander through the publications section

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An e-publication is a little different, benefiting from the editing and publicity efforts of the publishing organization.

of their library. I find obscure, hungry-looking publications. This is part of Dunlap's theory, the more you get published, the easier it becomes to get published. The more you have that CV built, the better off you're going to be. You shouldn't hesitate to swing for the fence.

One of the first places I was published was in *The Weekly Standard*. You may not have heard of it, but it is an influential within the Beltway. I sent an article to them, and they put it on the cover. That article -- *How We Lost the High-Tech War of 2007*<sup>13</sup> -- is set in the Middle East against an Iranian backdrop. This was published because I met one of the editors at a conference and just struck up a conversation with him. He said, "Well, you know, why don't you send me something that you wrote?" He knew about the *Coup in 2012* piece.<sup>14</sup> So I sent this to him, and it was that simple.

*Newsweek* has its "My Turn" column. Keep in mind, they get 15,000 essays for that, but if you are published in My Turn, you are on your way.

## PITCHING YOUR ARTICLE

The traditional way is the query letter. I almost never do these. I usually email it. I do not do a query; I do a finished product and I send it.

I try to find the editor's name because that makes a difference. Put your article in the body of the e-mail because they have screening software that will strip off all of the attachments. Tell the editor about yourself. They all want to know if this is being submitted someplace else because they are not going to look at it if it is. Of course, provide them with your contact information.

Be prepared to be rejected. I get rejected all the time, but I usually have a Plan B. I already know the top five places I'm going to submit something. So when I get a rejection, it doesn't even bother me. I cut and paste that same letter to the next publication on the list.

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<sup>13</sup> Charles J. Dunlap, Jr., *How We Lost the High-Tech War of 2007*, THE WEEKLY STANDARD, Jan. 29, 1996.

<sup>14</sup> *supra*, note 3.

### *The Editorial Process*

The editorial process varies by publication. The process will usually improve your article. Most of the time, they are trying to conform your writing to the style of the publication.

Try to see the page proofs. Consider what quotes are set out; sometimes it is not exactly what you want. Sometimes an editor has picked a quote capturing the essence of the whole article. Nevertheless, be sensitive to it. It is important to see the pictures, too. I was burned on this. My article was about how we should not do this "touchy feely" type of counter-insurgency. The editors picked a picture showing a military person teaching kids, as if "Dunlap's saying, 'This is a bad thing.'" They had their own editorial comment through that picture.

Do not spend a lot of time on your title because editors rewrite titles all of the time. They have a whole staff dedicated to headlines and titles. If the editors do pass it back to you, you have literally hours to look at it and get it back. Twenty-four hours would be a long time.

### *Security and Policy Review*

You need to follow AFI 35-101.<sup>15</sup> Your article is supposed to be cleared before it is sent to the publisher. Build in lead time for this review. A tip from my experience: even if I am not going to include footnotes in what I send to the publisher, I usually footnote my articles for the Public Affairs review process. If there are choices of where to get the facts, I usually select a DOD press release. You would be amazed at what can be found in DOD press releases, so I try to have that as my footnote citation.

Include the disclaimer.<sup>16</sup> It is right out of the JER. I do that all the time because it is easier to

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<sup>15</sup> U.S. DEPT OF AIR FORCE, INSTR. 35-101, PUBLIC AFFAIRS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES (29 Nov. 2005).

<sup>16</sup> *Id.*, at para. 15.5: "Originators must ensure disclaimers accompany all publications they authorize in a private capacity. An appropriate disclaimer is: The views expressed in this article are

get yourself cleared if you are giving your own opinion. If you are speaking for the Air Force, there is a much more complicated policy review that you may not want to have. Save a copy of the clearance document.

### *Copyright & Conflict Issues*

The details are spelled out in an Op JAG AF.<sup>17</sup> It says that you can use government resources, if you meet the standards. Basically, you can use your government computer and government time, if your supervisor approves. I have chosen against this because it is just too complicated. I am moving more towards just using my own time and my own equipment.

Editors will want you to sign a publication agreement. Some people shy away from signing these for a variety of reasons. For example, the agreement may state you are being paid. If I see a clause I disagree with, I just change it. I have never received any negative feedback.

One of the things I never sign up to is agreeing to indemnify the publication if someone sues me. I do not have insurance for that, so I do not agree to it. I take that out or I line through it.

### POST-PUBLICATION

After publication, always send a thank you letter. Keep in mind; we're about talking personal relationships here. Even if you are rejected, if you have had a discussion with the editor, send him a thank you note.<sup>18</sup> You're prepping the battlefield.

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those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of the Air Force, the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government."

<sup>17</sup> *Guidance for Writer's Guide*, Op JAG, Air Force, No. 1995/27, (29 Mar. 1995).

<sup>18</sup> When I finally do get a rejected work published, I send a note that says, "Bob, thanks for the input. Sorry it didn't work for you at *USA Today*. I did get it published in the *Washington Post*. Here it is -- thought you might want to see a copy."



## Your work will generate feedback...be prepared, not all of it is going to be nice.

Sometimes e-mail will work, but a handwritten note is best. I think it is best to have your own stationary. I have my own stationary printed up, with 50 note cards for \$8.00. Touting your own work makes some people uncomfortable, but you need to do it. I do it all the time. We are trying to get an idea out there. You must be your own publicist. Every time you have something published, notify your alumni network. They love seeing this. They will publish it in your alumni magazine--guaranteed. A hyperlink will bring readers to your work. Is it self-aggrandizing? Yes, but the fact of the matter is, if you want your ideas to become part of the conversation on a topic, you must do this. Even John Grisham goes on publication tours. He goes on book-signing tours.

I have e-mail lists for certain kinds of publications. If I have something published, I will send it out to people. I simply say, "You may find this of interest." It helps your ideas get out there. Keep a hard copy for your records and keep building your CV. It may seem easy to remember, but the list can quickly grow.

On occasion, people come up to me and say, "General Dunlap, I read your..." and I think, "Oh, did I write that? That doesn't sound like me." I look it up, and find that I did indeed say that. Your work will generate feedback. And be prepared, not all of it is going to be nice. There are people who may write whole articles not just rebutting your ideas, but coming after you personally.

### CONCLUSION

About 10 years ago, I wrote an article on writing. It is in *The Reporter*, in the September 1997 issue. It discusses some of the same ideas that we talked about today. Some ideas are timeless—including my thought that the hard part is getting started. Quoting myself with the added experience of a decade, "In any event, the most important step is the first one. Unless you flick on that computer or open your notebook, you will forever wonder about what might have been."