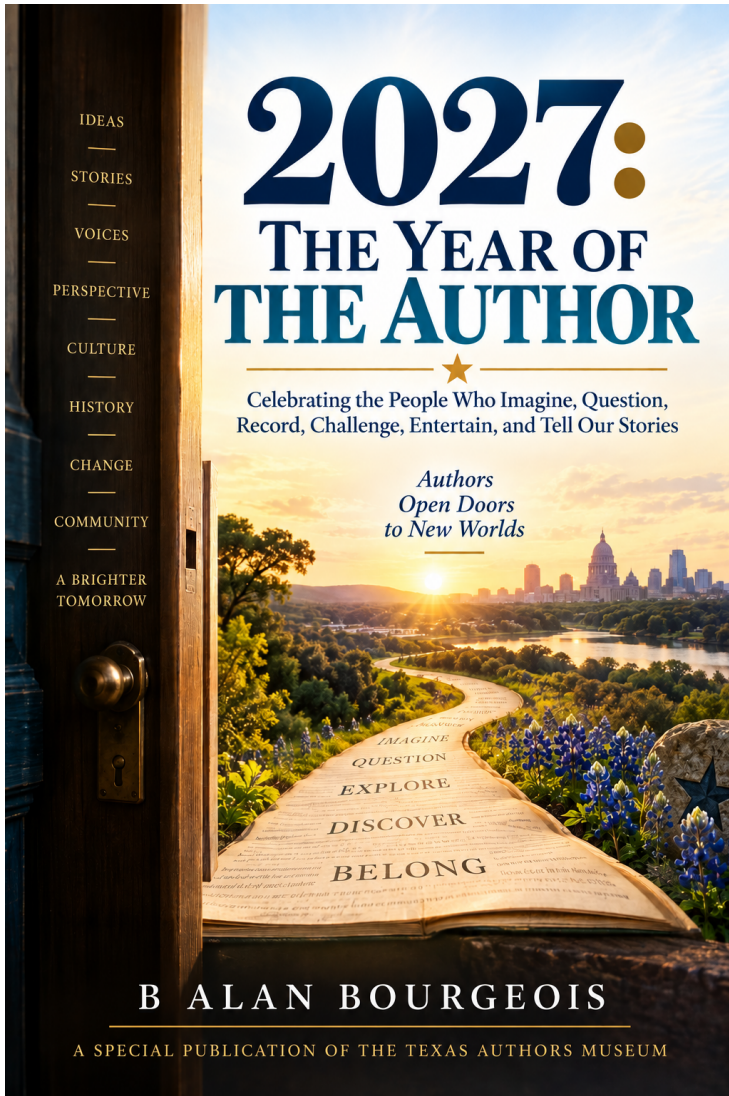




2027: The Year of the Author

Reader Sample

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Opening — Before There Is a Reader

Before there can be a reader, there must first be someone willing to write.

Someone has to face the empty page. Someone has to notice the idea, hear the voice, remember the story, investigate the question, invent the world, preserve the history, shape the argument, build the character, revise the sentence, and decide that what exists privately in one mind deserves the chance to become something another person can encounter.

That person is the author.

Authors are often discussed through everything surrounding the work: sales, rankings, reviews, contracts, platforms, awards, algorithms, advances, followers, publicity, bookstore placement, and publishing models. Those things can matter. But they can also obscure the first and most important fact.

An author made something that did not exist before.

The work may become a bestseller or sell fifty copies. It may be published by a major house, a university press, a small independent publisher, or the author. It may appear as a hardcover, paperback, eBook, audiobook, chapbook, essay, script, classroom text, family history, technical guide, or digital publication. It may reach millions or become profoundly important to one reader.

The scale does not erase the act of authorship.

2027 is the Year of the Author because authors deserve a moment in which the attention is not only on what they should sell next, post next, promote next, or produce next. It is a year to recognize who authors are, what they contribute, and what becomes possible when communities choose to value the people behind the words.

It is also an invitation. Celebration should not become passivity. Authors can use this year to reconnect with their work, their readers, their communities, their professional goals, and one another.

This is not a year for one kind of author. It belongs to all of them.

PART I

WHO THE AUTHOR IS

Authorship is not a single career path. It is an act of creation joined to a willingness to place words into the world.

1. You Are an Author

The title is not reserved for the famous.

Many writers hesitate to call themselves authors. They wait for a contract, a publication date, a certain number of sales, a review, an award, a second book, or someone else's permission.

The hesitation is understandable. Publishing culture has spent generations attaching status to gates: who accepted the manuscript, which imprint appears on the spine, whether the book reached a particular store, whether a critic noticed, whether the work sold enough copies to be considered successful.

But authorship begins with the work.

An author takes responsibility for creating a written work and bringing it to a form in which it can be encountered by others. Publication may validate a professional milestone, but it does not manufacture the imagination, discipline, knowledge, observation, research, vulnerability, or persistence that created the work.

The Word Is Larger Than the Marketplace

A novelist is an author. So is the historian who spends years reconstructing an overlooked community. The poet shaping a collection is an author. The children's writer searching for the exact language that will open a young reader's imagination is an author. So are memoirists, essayists, playwrights, screenwriters, academics, journalists, technical writers, spiritual writers, educators, biographers, cookbook authors, comic writers, and people preserving family or community histories.

Some authors build careers around books. Others publish one work that matters deeply. Some write full time. Many write around jobs, caregiving, illness, school, family obligations, and the rest of life.

Year of the Author begins by refusing to make one author smaller because another author's path is more visible.

Celebrate the Author

Write the sentence without qualification: I am an author.

Now write what makes that statement true for you—not what proves it to the marketplace, but what you have created, finished, investigated, imagined, or shared.

2. There Is No Single Way to Be an Author

Publishing path is not a measure of human worth.

Traditional publishing, independent publishing, hybrid arrangements, small presses, academic presses, nonprofit publishing, digital-first work, commissioned writing, and other models solve different problems for different authors.

A publishing model can be evaluated. Contracts can be good or bad. Services can be professional or predatory. Distribution can be broad or narrow. Economics can be healthy or unsustainable. Those are business questions.

They are not permission slips for authorship.

The Year of the Author should be one of the rare literary spaces where the first question is not, “Who published you?” The better opening question is, “What do you write?”

Different Paths, Shared Work

Across publishing models, authors still face remarkably familiar work: developing ideas, researching, drafting, revising, accepting criticism, making decisions, enduring uncertainty, finding readers, and deciding what to write next.

A traditionally published author may surrender some control in exchange for editorial, production, distribution, and institutional support. An indie author may retain more control while assuming more responsibility. A hybrid author may move between systems. A small-press author may work in a close partnership unavailable elsewhere.

No single path makes every author legitimate. Professionalism is demonstrated by the work and by how the author conducts the career.

Make It Yours

Describe your publishing path as it actually exists today. Then name one strength it gives you and one limitation you need to manage.