



EDITORIAL POLICIES



Harmony Ink



Harmony Ink

Harmony Ink Press is an imprint of Dreamspinner Press publishing LGBTQ+ Teen and New Adult fiction. Contact Executive Editor Anne Regan at anneregan@harmonyinkpress.com with specific questions.

Confidentiality

- Confidentiality and Contractors

A contractor may publically identify him/herself in general terms as a freelancer serving in a particular capacity for Harmony Ink Press—but *not* in conjunction with specific works unless specifically allowed as outlined in this document in the Confidentiality section.

- Confidentiality and Contractor Identification

Harmony Ink Press utilizes a form of blind editing. Project editing is coordinated by a senior editor. Support editors are identified by an approved name/pseudonym; however, the author does not have direct contact with support editors. Any communication is conducted through the senior editor. This preserves contact information confidentiality for both parties. Support editors are not privy to any author information other than what name is listed in the working document (see Confidentiality and Authors/Manuscripts). Authors may recognize editors on their project by using the name/pseudonym presented during editing.

- Concerning Contractors Posting Reviews

Contractors may post personal reviews of Harmony Ink works in their own name; however, we require it be post-publication, the review cannot be attributed in any way to the publisher, and the contractor cannot specifically identify him/herself as having worked on that particular publication. These measures protect the contractor's confidentiality as well as shield the contractor from any possible backlash should negative concerns about the story arise. Failure to comply with confidentiality contract measures is grounds for immediate termination of any contractor relationship.

For specific questions, please contact anneregan@harmonyinkpress.com.

Editors: In practice, authors are aware of at least a pseudonym for each editor who works on their book. Over time we have found that some authors do wish to acknowledge their editors, both in posts and in their books. Thus these rules are currently being applied: For editors, posting your connection to a work may be a critical offense if the author has not approved public acknowledgment of it. You may post reviews, but not until after release, and you are not allowed to personally connect yourself to the project without the author's expressed approval. Posting a review prior to the book's release is grounds for immediate end of working relationship, no matter how established you are with us.

Proofreaders: Violation of these rules is an immediate critical offense. Authors do not receive any information about your work on their books. You may post reviews, but not until after release, and you are not allowed to personally connect yourself to the project. Posting a review prior to the book's release is grounds for immediate end of working relationship, no matter how established you are with us.

- Confidentiality and Authors/Manuscripts

We strip all personal information off all manuscripts (MS). The MS, along with any associated information and the fact that a contractor is assigned a particular MS, is not shared or discussed with anyone but the author and editorial staff. We make every attempt to keep all identities similarly confidential, keeping references limited to approved names or pseudonyms. As such, individual contractors are not in direct contact with an author. *Proven trespass on confidentiality issues is cause for Harmony Ink Press to immediately and permanently discontinue association with a contractor.*

- Use of pseudonyms

Harmony Ink Press will honor any contractor's wish to use a pseudonym of choice.

Editing

- Editing Standard

We follow industry standard *The Chicago Manual of Style* in editing its publications. <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org>

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- Spelling Convention

We require use of American English spelling convention regardless of use in narrative or dialogue, and regardless of character nationality or setting of story. We allow word or phrase convention exceptions for slang and words reflecting local flavor (lift instead of elevator, car park instead of parking lot, arse instead of ass). Only aural differences of spoken word in dialogue may retain spelling differences (towards instead of toward). Any other exceptions are at the Editor in Chief's discretion. Spelling convention must be consistent throughout the body of the work. This includes titles of works.

- Spelling Standard

CMOS's first choice in spelling is Merriam-Webster, <http://www.m-w.com>. In questions of disparate results, CMOS takes precedence. A secondary resource is Dictionary.com, a Random House product. <http://www.dictionary.com>.

Questions of Legality

Harmony Ink Press cannot provide legal advice of any kind. All links are from official resources available publicly online at the US Copyright Office website.

- Fair Use

Defined at: <http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html>

While we recognizes the existence and possibility of application of Fair Use doctrine as outlined at the link above, we interpret the doctrine to be a defense, not a right. We believe the safest and most professional course of action is to limit reproduction of copyrighted material in the manuscript.

- **Twenty words maximum from any one work.**
- **Quotes may **not** be used from works shorter than 10,000 words, specifically song lyrics and short-form poetry.**

The US Copyright Office states at the link above: "The distinction between what is fair use and what is infringement in a particular case will not always be clear or easily defined. There is no specific number of

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words, lines, or notes that may safely be taken without permission. Acknowledging the source of the copyrighted material does not substitute for obtaining permission. ...

“The safest course is to get permission from the copyright owner before using copyrighted material. The Copyright Office cannot give this permission. ...

“When it is impracticable to obtain permission, you should consider avoiding the use of copyrighted material unless you are confident that the doctrine of fair use would apply to the situation. The Copyright Office can neither determine whether a particular use may be considered fair nor advise on possible copyright violations. If there is any doubt, it is advisable to consult an attorney.”

More information is available in these official US Copyright Office documents:

Fair Use

<http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl102.html>

<http://www.copyright.gov/help/faq/faq-fairuse.html>

Useful Articles

<http://www.copyright.gov/fls/fl103.pdf>

US Copyright Law § 107: Limitations on exclusive rights: Fair use

<http://www.copyright.gov/title17/92chap1.html#107>

- [Seeking permission to reprint copyrighted material](#)

Harmony Ink Press cannot provide legal advice of any kind. Authors wishing to quote more material than our policy limit allows are welcome to pursue specific and confirmed permission from the copyright holder. We will not provide any services associated with obtaining permissions to reproduce copyrighted works. If permission is obtained, that permission and legal facts associated must be printed on the copyright page of the work.

Copyright Basics

<http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ01.pdf>

How Long Does Copyright Protection Last?

<http://www.copyright.gov/help/faq/faq-duration.html>

How to Investigate the Copyright Status of a Work

<http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ22.pdf>

How to Obtain Permission

<http://www.copyright.gov/circs/m10.pdf>

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- Quoting works in the public domain

It is legal to reprint portions of material that is in the public domain. We recommend avoiding this to preserve the integrity of your substantive original work. We cannot provide legal advice of any kind and cannot guarantee any research about public domain status. Authors should be aware that copyrights may be purchased after the initial expiration and even made retroactive.

Certain Unpublished, Unregistered Works Enter Public Domain

<http://www.copyright.gov/pr/pdomain.html>

- What is not protected by copyright

Defined at <http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ01.pdf>

As stated by the US Copyright Office: “Several categories of material are generally not eligible for federal copyright protection.” Authors should be aware that some of these items may be trademarked, which is not covered by copyright law.

Blank Forms and Other Works Not Protected by Copyright

<http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ32.pdf>

Copyright Protection Not Available for Names, Titles, or Short Phrases

<http://www.copyright.gov/circs/circ34.pdf>

- Copyrighting personal material

Harmony Ink Press staff are not lawyers and cannot advise you on whether to copyright your work. The resource we can point to you for official information and forms for American authors is the US Copyright Office: <http://www.copyright.gov/forms/>.

If there is a violation, you can only initiate a lawsuit if you have an official registration of your copyright. You can register your copyright at a later time—even after the violation—but it isn’t as easy to prove if you don’t have the work already registered.

For authors outside the US, you can file for a copyright in your country and it will cover the same work in the US if your country has a reciprocity agreement with the US for copyright.

- Printing web addresses

Web addresses are not protected by copyright and may be printed in your publication. However, we caution that many web addresses are fluid

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and may change, leaving them incorrect in your publication. These links are not eligible for correction and reprinting. We reserve the right to disallow links to copyrighted or possibly copyrighted material unless permission from the copyright holder is provided, in case we believe the material posted is a product of piracy or copyright infringement.

- Depiction of Real Personages/Institutions/Businesses in Fiction

There is no legal reason that “real” personages, institutions, or businesses cannot be directly included in fiction. Within a story, an author can talk about and even portray public figures (singers, actresses, politicians, sports stars) as characters. If the person portrayed is still alive, there is the possibility of liability if the author is presenting the work as factual, but as it is fiction, authors have a lot of latitude.

This disclaimer is included on every copyright page: *This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents either are the product of author imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events, or locales is entirely coincidental.*

Questions may be raised if the author portrays real personages, institutions, or businesses in a particularly negative light or if the character, institution, or business doesn't need to be a real person, institution, or business for the story to succeed. Negative representations of real personages, institutions, or businesses could lead to a defamation suit. If those conditions don't apply, names should be fact-checked as historical data.

- Sex between Underage Characters

Sex between teenagers is not pedophilia and is not illegal. All content, graphic or otherwise, will be evaluated for age-appropriate suitability.

- Digital Rights Management

We choose not to DRM our eBook titles as a part of our desire to provide superior customer service. DRM doesn't stop thieves and causes endless headaches for the customer. We have two major problems with DRM: functionality and privacy. Books (even eBooks) should be read again and again and kept for as long as they provide enjoyment. The technology that supports them is ever changing, and the eBooks need to stay functional across devices. To compound this problem, most DRM systems and proprietary formats require the reader to register to access the

books they have purchased. Many deposit a tracking module that documents activity (downloads sites and titles read) without adequately informing the customer or giving them an option to opt out. With the prevalence of discrimination against people for sexual orientation, a choice to read anonymously is not just a convenience, but a necessity, at least in our genre. Ultimately, happy customers buy more books, and the type of reader who seeks out free pirated titles isn't going to buy them in the first place.

Content

Harmony Ink Press publishes teen and new adult fiction featuring at least one strong LGBTQ+ main character who shows significant personal growth through the course of the story. Identifying as LGBT can be part of the growth process depicted in the book. We are looking for stories in all subgenres, featuring primary characters between the ages of 14 and 18 that explore all the facets of teen and new adult life. Sexual content should be appropriate for the characters and the story. Manuscripts may contain any level of sexual content; however, excessive, crude, or extremely explicit descriptions will be rejected. Sex between a minor and an adult (whether consensual or abuse) will only be accepted if it is implied, off page, has realistic consequences, and overcoming the occurrence contributes to the growth of the character in a positive way.

All content decisions made by the Editor in Chief are final.

- Bestiality

Defined as: sexual relations between a human and an animal.

We will not publish any depiction or reference to bestiality in a non-paranormal context. Content involving paranormal creatures will be evaluated for suitability.

- Graphic Violence

We will evaluate all depictions of graphic violence for suitability in connection with the themes of the story. Examples: torture (not BDSM/Kink-related), abuse, multiple and graphic deaths. Gratuitous content will not be published.

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- Gratuitous Sexual Content

Defined as: sexual content included for the express purpose of shocking the reader.

We will evaluate all depictions of gratuitous sexual content for suitability in connection with the themes of the story. Examples: necrophilia, autoerotic activity, heavy and/or graphic BDSM/Kink.

- Incest

Defined as: sexual intercourse between persons so closely related that they are forbidden by law to marry.

We will not publish any depiction of incestuous sexual relations. Statement of occurrence will be evaluated for suitability.

- Pedophilia

Defined as: sexual desire in an adult for a child.

We will evaluate all depiction of pedophilia to determine what is necessary to the story. We will not publish any graphic depiction of pedophilia. We encourage authors to evaluate whether actual depictions are necessary when statement of occurrence is enough to support the plot.

- Rape

Defined as: the unlawful compelling of a person through physical force or duress to have sexual intercourse.

We will evaluate all depictions of rape to determine what is necessary to the story. Gratuitous content we deem *rape for titillation* will not be published. We encourage authors to evaluate whether actual depictions are necessary when statement of occurrence is enough to support the plot.

Stories that fall into the category of *rape for titillation* are stories where content is presented in a positive tone or content is presented with no repercussions or positive repercussions resulting from the act, such as the old captive falling in love with his rapist because he secretly loved it scenario. It isn't about keeping rape out of books or even off page, it is about how it is dealt with as part of the story.

- Sex between Underage Characters

Sex between teenagers is not pedophilia and is not illegal. All content, graphic or otherwise, will be evaluated for age-appropriate suitability.

- Sexual Assault

Defined as: illegal sexual contact that usually involves force upon a person without consent (rape) or inflicted upon a person who is incapable of giving consent (such as because of age or physical or mental incapacity) or who places the assailant (such as a doctor) in a position of trust or authority.

We will evaluate all depictions of sexual assault to determine what is necessary to the story. Gratuitous content will not be published. We encourage authors to evaluate whether actual depictions are necessary when statement of occurrence is enough to support the plot.

- Sexual Relations and Safety

The choice to depict safe sex in a story is the author's.

We support the practice of safe sex, does not promote the gratuitous depiction of risky sex, and may choose to suggest edits or not accept fiction for publication that glorifies the purposeful practice of unsafe sex. We encourage authors to evaluate whether actual depictions of unsafe sex are necessary to support the plot.

- Statutory Rape

Defined as: sexual intercourse with a person who is below the statutory age of consent.

We does not publish stories with sexual content between adults and minors (under the age of consent in the US or the age of 18) unless the total age difference is less than three years. This is a standard mitigating clause for statutory rape laws dealing with sex with an underage partner (often called a "Romeo and Juliet" law). Example: High school sweethearts continue their relationship when one of them goes to college.