

Hamilton Dramaturgy's E-Newsletter  
ScriptForward!  
August 2009  
Number 17

[“Advance Your Professional Scriptwriting Career Now”](#)

-Quote of the Month:

“...Oh, precious one, grant me the blessings/to recognize my own true nature of my mind.”

[-Free Offer: Send in Ten Pages of Your Script, Get a Half Hour Phone Consultation](#)

-ScriptForward! Articles:

**“Three Easy Steps to Writing Your Way Through The Recession”**

**“Celebrating the Celebrity - Recognizing Our Own Power”**

-Hamilton Dramaturgy List of Services

-Q&A: Burning An[swer] : " I've been playwrighting for a few years and I haven't broken through yet. Should I give it up?"

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Greetings!

Welcome to the August issue of **ScriptForward!**, a specialty E-newsletter prepared for professional and aspiring scriptwriters by Hamilton Dramaturgy. With eighteen years of experience in New York, across the nation, and internationally, we offer this newsletter as a means of support and information to the worldwide scriptwriting community.

Good news! Anne's career was featured in **STAGE DIRECTIONS** magazine (April, 2008). She was named a trailblazer in American dramaturgy. Please access the article through her website at [www.hamiltonlit.com](http://www.hamiltonlit.com)

Anne will serve as Dramaturg for the New Voices student play festival at Muhlenberg College in early October. She finished teaching Muhlenberg's first dramaturgy class in the Spring and is very proud that the Department of Theatre and Dance has been named the #4 undergraduate theatre program in the nation by the PRINCETON REVIEW. Thank you, Muhlenberg, for these opportunities!

This issue of **ScriptForward!** features two articles. The first is a quick three-step guide to writing your way through the recession. The second offers some musings on dealing with celebrity deaths, while recognizing our own power in the process.

Anne has published her fifth “Page and Stage” column in the August/September issue of the **BUCKS COUNTY WOMEN’S JOURNAL**. She has profiled Jenny Kreyl, an award-winning playwright and educator who lives and works in the Philadelphia area. Our Burning An[swer] segment is a feature where you can get your hottest burning questions answered.

In this issue, we answer, " I’ve been playwrighting for a few years and I haven’t broken through yet. Should I give it up?"

We hope that this issue of **ScriptForward!** will be useful to you and we welcome your feedback.

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Read a PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER article about Anne Hamilton’s career at <http://www.lmda.org/blog/archives/2005/8/3/1104946.html>

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Quote of the Month:

A Bon Buddhist tradition Prayer –  
Guru Yoga, Lama Soldeb - Blessing from the Root Kind Teacher,

“...Oh, precious one, grant me the blessings/to recognize my own true nature of my mind.”

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Hamilton Dramaturgy List of Services:

Stage Plays. Musicals. Screenplays. TV Scripts. Production Dramaturgy. Workshops.  
Program Notes. Career Development Coaching. Historical and Literary Research.  
Production Histories. Review Analyses. Post –Graduate Career Coaching.

Free Offer:

Send in Ten Pages of Your Script, Get a Half Hour Phone Consultation  
Click here to take advantage of this offer: [www.hamiltonlit.com](http://www.hamiltonlit.com)

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Article #1

### **Three Easy Steps to Writing Your Way Through The Recession**

By Anne Hamilton © 2009

Everyone is trying to make it through this recession.

Here are three easy steps to getting through the tough times and coming out stronger on the other end of the crisis.

First: Go More Deeply Into Your Own Soul

Playwrights write from the heart. While you may be experiencing “down time” due to lack of production activity, take advantage of the time to go more deeply into your own thoughts, heart, and soul. Your work will benefit.

Second: Listen to Your Intuition and Reevaluate Your Goals

Okay, those are two steps in one, but they work together. Take advantage of the slower pace of things and reflect on your writing. Is there something that you haven’t gotten around to writing about? Try it. Are you truly happy with your body of work? If not, write the story that’s buried inside you. Change directions if you’re not happy with your output. And go deeper if you are happy with what you’re writing about.

Third: Make Product

This one is simple. Just write. Make a pile of scripts and shop them as soon as things pick up. End of story.

Everyone wants to be a successful playwright. But just rest for a minute. Take time to decide your own terms and path. Then write from your rebalanced heart. You’ll be running into the future soon enough.



Testimonial from Judd Ne’eman, Filmmaker, Tel Aviv, Israel

I’m now working on the rewrite of *Stone Dancer*, the film script on which you have given us your consultation, and I want to thank you for having done such an excellent job.

In my filmmaker career I have done that several times before – asking for consultation when I had the feeling that the script I was working on with scriptwriters somehow did not satisfy us. I must tell you that I have not yet received such eye opening and detailed comments like yours. As I now proceed, I find the rewrite so smooth and easy and rewarding when I follow your precise and to the point remarks on almost each and every scene in the script. Your elaborations on scenes, dialogue and film-structure point out to me the strong points as well as the weak sides in character and action building. Your contribution to putting the script on track was highly critical, and I hope very much that when you read the finished draft you’ll see that your effort was worthwhile.

I wish to thank you for being very generous in spending so much time in our phone discussions, until the moment that we both felt that we have exhausted all the narrative options that we could put on the table. You have given me a new spirit to return and do the rewrite, knowing that I can rely on your insightful judgment and experience. I thank you for all that, and for showing me the potentialities to which I was blind, and for inspiring me to go back to the script and wanting to make a film out of it.



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Testimonial -

"I've worked with dramaturgs, and most of them want to 'fix' your play. Anne wanted to take what I had written and make it better. She's very passionate."

-Andrew Barrett, M.F.A., NYC. Staff Writer, **SLEEPER CELL** 2006. 2005 winner of an international residency at the Royal Court Theatre, London. Author of **FLESH AND BLOOD**, and/or, **RAINY DAYS & MONDAYS** (now **CIRCUITRY**) and the musicals **JULIAN PO** and **IN SARAJEVO**. Andrew is represented in film and TV work with Creative Artists Agency. **RAINY DAYS & MONDAYS** (now **CIRCUITRY**) was a hit at the 2006 NY Fringe Festival and has been published by Samuel French.

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**SHORT BIO:**

Anne M. Hamilton, M.F.A., has eighteen years of experience in New York City and is the principal of Hamilton Dramaturgy. Hamilton has consulted with Andrei Serban, the Joseph Papp Public Theater, the Harold Prince Musical Theatre Institute, Michael Mayer, Lynn Nottage, Classic Stage Company, Jean Cocteau Repertory Theater, Leslie Lee, Andrew Barrett, the New York City Public Library's Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, and the University of Iowa Playwrights' Workshop. She worked for James Lipton (host and producer, **INSIDE THE ACTORS STUDIO**) for three years as the academic advisor to the graduate students and faculty at The Actors Studio Drama School in NYC. The Bogliasco Foundation of New York City and Bogliasco, Italy awarded her a fellowship in recognition of her personal contribution to the American theatre. She studied the philosophy of aesthetics at St. Catherine's College, Oxford University and was a NYSCA auditor. Hamilton is a graduate of Columbia University School of the Arts and holds dual citizenship in the United States and Italy. She is available for consultations in script development, production, and career development, through her website at [www.hamiltonlit.com](http://www.hamiltonlit.com).

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Hamilton Dramaturgy's Recent Projects:

- Anne gave two radio internet interviews on the topic "Healing Through the Arts". The first was aired on June 11<sup>th</sup> and she described her healing process during the writing of her play **ANOTHER WHITE SHIRT**. The program, "Healing the Grieving Heart", helps people to cope with loss and gain hope and strength for recovery. A transcript of the interview will be posted on our website shortly.
- The second interview was recorded as an evergreen piece on August 31<sup>st</sup> with host Dewey Davis-Thompson. It will air on a Florida radio station in the coming month. Please check the home page of [hamiltonlit.com](http://hamiltonlit.com) for more information.

- With great anticipation, it looks like we'll soon see the opening of **THE BALLAD OF #49**, George Marcy's one-man musical play in a cabaret. George performed the role of Bernardo opposite Chita Rivera in the original **WEST SIDE STORY**, and Anne happily served as "Dramaturg to Mr. Marcy" during the development of this wonderful show. It will play in New York before Christmas. Once again, check in to our website for more details.
- Anne has signed on to serve as the Dramaturg for the New Voices festival of new student plays running October 7<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> at Muhlenberg College.
- Fran Tarr's screenplay **TOGETHER**, about two young girls growing up in the Lodz Ghetto, was read to a nearly-full house at the Atlantic Theater in NYC on August 3<sup>rd</sup>. Anne has been Ms. Tarr's dramaturg for years, and is very happy to have assisted her with this vivid and deeply compassionate script.
- Anne has been giving ongoing dramaturgical advice to several new clients across the country on many new scripts this Summer. Thank you all for sharing your work with me.
- It's time to study up on theatre history. Anne has been named an Adjunct Professor at Lehigh University in Bethlehem. She will teach a class covering theatre history from Ritual through the Renaissance this Fall. There's nothing like a bit of light summer reading!
- Anne will serve on a panel at the ATHE conference in NYC on August 9<sup>th</sup>. The panel, entitled "Guerrilla 'Turgs: Dramaturgy's Place in Academia", will take place from 3:45pm to 5:15pm in the Gilbert Room of the Marriott Marquis in Times Square. There is an entrance fee for the conference.
- This summer Anne has served as Archival Supervisor of **THE LOOP**, Gary Garrison's e-magazine for playwrights. Three marvelous interns who attended Anne's dramaturgy class at Muhlenberg – Louisa Balch, Samantha Sembler, and Justin Schwartz – have archived over two years of back issues and are currently working on a Table of Contents to make the articles easier to access by author, topic, and date. Thank you, interns! Please sign up for THE LOOP at [thelooponline.net](http://thelooponline.net). It's priceless!
- Finally, the League of Professional Theatre Women has elected Anne to its Executive Board in the position of Co-Secretary. She has been working hard this summer to help create a Mentoring Committee. She looks forward to serving the League Members in the coming year.



Article #2:

**Celebrating the Celebrity - Recognizing Our Own Power**

By Anne Hamilton, M.F.A, © 2009

I was saddened by the news of Michael Jackson's sudden death on June 25th.

We were kids together. We grew up together. We both sang and danced little routines, and had dreams of becoming a star.

Of course, his dreams came true and he became an international star - but he took me along for the ride somehow, anyway. This is why I feel sad and have taken some moments to grieve. I grieve first for my own lack of success, in a way, and also that his genius was lost way too soon.

Michael Jackson was on TV with his brothers when I was a little kid. I watched his TV show every Saturday morning on our black and white TV with rabbit ears that needed to be warmed up in time for the opening song to start.

The term “pop culture icon” had barely been invented. It was solidified when people like Michael Jackson grew up to become who he became.

And Farrah Fawcett was just simply beautiful. She came of age when I was a teenager, and her smile radiated from one end of the country to the other.

The sadness that society feels when one of its icons dies is complex. Primarily, it stems from being reminded that life does not go on forever - for anyone. When there is any kind of sad, accidental, or sensational story attached to the death, we feel the actual shock and sympathy for the icon - and we empathize with his or her suffering.

Thousands and thousands of talented people throw themselves into the entertainment profession, hoping to become stars. Although they may seem to live glamorous lives, often their pain seems magnified. Sometimes they succumb to addictions, or misuse of drugs, alcohol, or painkillers. Sometimes a natural illness occurs.

The key feature of watching and loving a popular icon is that - despite setbacks of many kinds, over many years - they continue to produce meaningful work that touches our hearts and souls, and becomes a part of our everyday lives.

That sense of walking along the same road - although it is a very different daily road for each of us - is ended when the celebrity dies.

I always mourn the loss of the talent, the generosity, and the whirlwind of activity that stops with the death of an admired iconic talent. I always wonder, “What would have come next?” and “Who will replace him or her now?”

However, just as when we experience any other death, this is the time to have faith, to look around and see that there are many other talents surrounding us, giving us music, great performances, a steady presence, and a loving and brilliant contribution to society. Perhaps it's time to find, or support, a new talent. The best thing is that in the cycle of existence, many are born, rise, give their hearts to us, and pass away. And we do the same for them. In a way, we recognize our own contribution to culture and society when a celebrity passes away.

A celebrity gets celebrated. We all need to continue celebrating. The cycle continues, so let's accept the new faces which rise up to meet us. And continue to celebrate the power and genius inherent in our own lives every day.

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Testimonial:

It is my privilege to recommend Anne Hamilton, dramaturg, to everyone. For the past few years Anne's insight, expertise and humanity have guided my screenwriting to new heights! Her perceptions into storyline and characterization have opened new windows for me as a screenwriter. She is a willing and open-hearted mentor whom I trust completely to direct my writing.

Fran Tarr, NYC. Education Director, Atlantic Theater Company, NYC. Finalist - Roy W. Dean Film & Video Grant – BREAKING THE SURFACE and DECENT GIRL; Finalist - Sundance Screenwriting Institute – TOGETHER (Anne dramaturged) ; Finalist - New Harmony Institute – TOGETHER.

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Testimonial:

"Talking to Anne Hamilton is so inspiring! She helped me see all my creative gifts in a new light, and encouraged me with practical advice on how those gifts can better help me make a living as an artist. A conversation with Anne is worth its weight in gold."

Mana Allen. Librettist, Dramaturg, Professor, Actor, NYC.

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Burning An[swer]:

Q: "" I've been playwrighting for a few years and I haven't broken through yet. Should I give it up?"

A: No, don't give up. As long as you have something to write, write it. Many writers and artists don't even become famous until after their deaths. Follow through on any ideas you may have, and continue to expand your body of work. Archive it. You never know what might happen. Also see our article in this issue entitled, "**Three Easy Steps to Writing Your Way Through The Recession**".

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Email your burning question to Burning An[swer] at [hamiltonlit@hotmail.com](mailto:hamiltonlit@hotmail.com).

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The Article: “[Demystifying Dramaturgy: Steps Toward A Free-Flowing, Joyful and Inspiring Collaboration](#)” is now available by request through [www.hamiltonlit.com](http://www.hamiltonlit.com).

Coming Soon! – More informative articles on advancing your scriptwriting career now.

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**ScriptForward!** is a free specialty E-newsletter offering easy and informative tips on how to advance your professional scriptwriting career now. It is intended as a helpful informational tool to those actively engaged in the writing arts. If you have colleagues or friends who would benefit from this e-newsletter, please feel free to forward it to them, as long as you pass it along in its entirety, with all accreditations, references and copyrights. Many thanks and All the Best!

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