

**THE AGENT CHASE**  
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Everyone seems to want to find an agent. People are desperate because they feel no publisher will look at a book that doesn't come from an agent. (This isn't true of all publishers, but it's a valid concern.) And either their emails to potential agents go unanswered or they're beset by so-called agents, many of them offshore, who turn out to be scammers or plagiarists.

[The Poets and Writers Guide to Literary Agents](#), at a mere \$5, is a great place to start. Good places to find and check out agents online are the [Association of Authors' Representatives database](#), [WritersNet](#), [AgentQuery.com](#), and the [Writer's Digest Guide to Literary Agents](#) which most libraries have. Good places to learn bad stuff about agents (and publishers) are [Preditors & Editors](#), the SFWA's [Writer Beware](#), the [Absolute Write Water Cooler](#), and Google. And contact GCD at [advice@nwu.org](mailto:advice@nwu.org) to see whether any of our members have had experience with the agents you're considering.

Some people feel they should have agents even though they have a publishing contract, because the agent can negotiate a better deal for them. How much of a deal can justify the 15% commission? Contact [advice@nwu.org](mailto:advice@nwu.org) to have the GCD review your contract.

Beware of agents who charge reading fees, refer you to editors of their choosing, or want to represent all your work instead of just one book at a time. Have the GCD review your agent contract, too! We have model agent (and other) contracts, and guides to them, available to members on request from [advice@nwu.org](mailto:advice@nwu.org).