

SELF-PUBLISHING PRIMER

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SELF-PUBLISHING PRIMER
by Maria R. Riegger, Esq.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Sorry, but I have to do this first:

*****Disclaimer: Nothing in this primer constitutes legal advice*****

There. We attorneys always have to cover ourselves.

For the first novel I wrote and published, I learned the self-publishing process as I went along. It was truly baptism by fire. There was no master list I could use to make sure that I had done everything that I was supposed to do. Sure, there are lots of articles on the Internet, some of them very good, but I got easily overwhelmed with all of the information. I had a difficult time finding the information I needed all in one place.

It's almost like having a child; no one tells you how to raise a child. Oh sure, lots of people offer unsolicited advice, but you have to decide what is right FOR YOU.

Now, picture it: You have completed a draft manuscript, finished rewrites, and proofread for grammar. What's next? This goes without saying, but make sure that you have someone copy edit and proofread your work. EVERYONE needs editing, no matter how impeccable your grammar is, and no matter how strict you are about structure. After you have read your manuscript ten, 50, or 200 times, your mind will automatically gloss over some mistakes. It is worth paying a professional copy editor and proofreader, in addition to doing your own proofing. You can never proof enough. And, remember, poor grammar is a serious turn-off for readers.

Ideally, your writing process would look something like the following. At least, this is how it would be for me. Not all of these steps are required in the same order. If you are writing something akin to *The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire*, you would need more editing and fact-checking than if you were writing, say, a 30,000-word romance novella.

1. Write drafts and rewrites. Edit for structure and development.

2. Have several trustworthy readers beta read your book. Beta readers typically provide feedback such as whether you have written a good story and whether the development and pacing are on point.
3. Do more rewrites, incorporating feedback from beta readers.
4. Have a contractor do line edits.
5. Proofread your own work for structure (several times).
6. Proofread your own work for grammar and typographical errors (several times).
7. Do final rewrites.
8. Have a contractor do copy edits.
9. Format for print and eBook, as applicable.
10. Contract proofreader for final proofing (ideally, your copy editor and proofreader would be different people).

Some authors need more structure and copy editing than others. After you've been writing for a while, you will know where to focus your resources.

Line editing and copy editing are not exactly the same thing. Different experts have different opinions on this; the following is a general description of the differences.

Line editing. I typically do line edits myself, about a hundred times (kidding! Although it certainly seems like it). Line edits typically address creative content and writing style at the sentence and paragraph level. The purpose of line editing is to address how the author communicates the story to the reader. A line editor may focus on extraneous or cliché words and phrases; run-on sentences; repetitive description; improving dialogue; showing instead of telling; ensuring that meaning is clear; proper transitions between scenes and chapters; semantics; word choice; pacing; development; clarification of events, etc. An author can learn a great deal from a line editor regarding how to improve his/her writing.

Copy editing. Typically, a copy editor will be the last person to edit your manuscript before it goes into production, that is, before it is formatted for publication. A copy editor will correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, and syntax; and check consistency, e.g. regarding spelling, capitalization, etc. A copy editor will also address overall issues such as internal consistency and structure.

Copy editing also ensures that the ideas the writer wishes to portray are clear and easy to understand. A copy editor typically checks that factual data are accurate, and may raise any potential legal issues.

However, I would advise that if you have questions on legal issues, such as copyright and defamation, that you seek a consult with an attorney specialized in those areas. I see a lot of authors asking legal questions informally on social media, and people answer as if they know. You should be wary of following a stranger's informal advice. Legal issues are jurisdiction-specific, so please consult local legal counsel. I would rather pay a \$300 fee for a consult than face damages due to a copyright infringement that would cost an exorbitant amount of money for legal representation.

Proofreading is the final tidying up of the book after the manuscript is copy edited and formatted for publication. Proofreaders check punctuation and typographical errors, which the copy editor may have missed. They typically will not edit for structure (that should have been done already). Proofreaders also check that the design/layout of the manuscript is OK. A proofreader does not suggest major rewrites; instead, they review for minor text and formatting errors and confirm that the manuscript is ready for publication.

Therefore, when you contract an editor make sure that he/she understands what type of editing service you are requesting. Otherwise, they may assume, although a good editor would confirm exactly what you need.

The best way to find quality editors is to obtain referrals from published authors. Fees can vary widely. I would therefore suggest that you obtain several different quotes, and ask for a sample edit of about five pages.

Thus, you have already finished rewrites, copy edited, and proofread. You are ready to self-publish. What do you do next?

II. SELF-PUBLISHING CHECKLIST

Here are the main things you should do.

A. Decide whether to publish under your own name or a business name

When you self-publish, you have two options. You can publish under your own name; in that case, your copyright will look like this: SELF-PUBLISHING GUIDE © 2018 by Maria R. Riegger.

Otherwise, you can publish under a corporate entity that you create. In that case, your copyright looks like this: SELF-PUBLISHING GUIDE © 2018 by Eighth House Press, LLC. Or, if you create a corporation rather than a limited liability company (LLC), it looks like this:

SELF-PUBLISHING GUIDE © 2018 by Your Company, Inc.

I strongly recommend that you self-publish under a corporate name that you create, for the reasons detailed below.

First, I have read that it looks more professional for a book to be published by an entity rather than by the author. I personally do not hold that opinion, and would not turn down a book merely because it is self-published under the author's name. I have ready many great books that were published that way. However, it is something for you to think about.

Second, and more importantly, the reason I recommend that you create a corporate entity to self-publish can be summarized in two words: LIMITED LIABILITY. You may *think* that you won't get sued, but what if you are at some point? If you publish under a corporate entity, such as a corporation or LLC, then the Plaintiff can only recover the assets of the company, not your personal assets. I strongly recommend that you protect your and your family's resources.

Establishing a corporate entity is fairly easy to do. First, corporate law in the United States is governed by state law. Check with your state's corporation commission for the procedures to establish your company. For example, in Virginia, my home state, you can set up your business online [here](#); it costs about \$100 and takes only a few minutes. Refer to the Virginia fee schedule [here](#). You can use a free template to draft an Operating Agreement and Articles of Organization (for an LLC) or Articles of Incorporation (for a corporation).

Second, make sure that you are not using a company name that already exists. The Virginia State Corporation Commission allows you to check the online company database. This step is important because you would not want to be challenged in court at a later date because you are using another company's name.

Third, you must respect the corporate form. Here is what this phrase means. The two most popular corporate entities for small businesses are the corporation and the limited liability company (LLC). You need to follow the state rules regarding those entities, including timely filings. You should maintain a business bank account strictly for your business, and keep it separate from your personal accounts. Establish a business email address separate from your personal email address. Establish a post office box dedicated to your business to receive mail. You should do these things in order to maintain your business separate from your personal income and expenses so that, if you *are* sued, there is less of a chance that a Plaintiff could recover from your personal assets.

To this end, please consult with a small business attorney in your area. You must also make it clear that your company is a limited liability entity, such as a corporation or LLC. You do this by including the "Inc." or "LLC" after the company name when you publish, on business cards, on contracts, and on promotional material.

These steps are time-consuming and not without expense. However, it is easier to do this work on the front end than pay legal counsel if you are forced to litigate. Further, these business-related expenses are tax-deductible. Make sure you keep organized records and receipts.

B. Decide the format(s) in which you want to publish

Many new indie authors publish exclusively in mobi format for Amazon Kindle. I recommend that you also make your book available in print. You can use Amazon Createspace, IngramSpark, or other print-on-demand services. With print-on-demand, you do not need to store copies (of course, it is always a good idea to have 30 or so copies at home to give away on the spot to those who may be interested).

Here are three important reasons to publish in print:

1. You need print copies to do giveaways of signed copies of your book, which is a valuable marketing tool. Doing a Goodreads giveaway used to be free for authors. Now, Goodreads charges a fee and it's not cheap. At the time of this writing, a fee to do a giveaway of either a Kindle or print book is \$119 for the basic package and \$599 for the premium package. Although I've had much success in the past with Goodreads giveaways, I probably won't pay to do them. Instead, I'll use Facebook, BookFunnel, Instafreebie, and other methods to do giveaways. You can also do giveaways on your author website.
2. Several bookstores around the country carry self-published books (see, for example, www.pipeandthimble.com, which carries my books). Having bookstores stock your books is great exposure for new authors.
3. Many people of all ages still prefer to read in print.

A word here about selling on Amazon. It is a must, because Amazon's presence is far-reaching. However, the big gripe authors have with Amazon (and other sellers such as Nookpress), is that the company does not share any sales data with authors. If you sell your books directly via your website, you can have access to the names, geographic locations, and other important data about buyers. And that helps you to identify your target audience and how/where to market your books. Want to know *how* to sell your print books and eBooks directly from your website? Never fear; that will be my next handbook.

Selling your books on Amazon does not preclude you from selling them via other channels, including your own website (unless you use Kindle Unlimited, which I do not because I want to be able to sell via as many distribution channels as possible).

C. Obtain an ISBN for each format in which you want to publish

A print book will have a different ISBN than an electronic book. You can obtain ISBNs [here](#).

D. Decide what you want on the book jacket

You should have already done the front cover a loooooong time ago. You should have the front cover ready as early as possible, i.e., as soon as you have the idea for the book. The key here is to start promoting as early as possible. Post the cover on your blog, Goodreads, Amazon, Facebook, and other social media sites.

Assuming you already have your front cover, now you need to decide what other text and/or photos you want on the back cover and spine (if you are publishing in print). For example, do you want your author bio or review quotes to appear?

You should include review quotes and a summary of your book on the back cover. I recommend sending Advance Review Copies (also known as Advance Reader Copies, or ARCs) to readers before your book is published, to give you the chance to get reviews that you can quote on the back cover. Further, think about what a reader does when he/she looks at a print book in a bookstore. He/she looks at the back cover to find out what the book is about (or the insert of a hardcover book), so have a summary on the back cover as well.

If you're not sure where to find contractors to create your covers, you can try websites like elance.com and fiverr.com. An author friend of mine found a great contractor via elance.com. I prevail upon the services of a fantastic graphic designer whom I found on fiverr.com. However, others have had negative experiences using these websites. If you decide to use them, proceed with caution and pay attention to customer reviews.

When you are first starting out as a self-published author, websites such as [fiverr](http://fiverr.com) and [elance](http://elance.com) can be extremely helpful and low-cost. I highly recommend not to skimp on editing services. Use high-quality editors and proofreaders. However, if you find an image or images that you like for your book cover via www.shutterstock.com or another source, then using a [fiverr](http://fiverr.com) or [elance](http://elance.com) contractor to do your cover may be a sound financial choice. As an independent author, you need to choose where to dedicate your resources.

E. Decide whether you want to include other text within the body of the manuscript, the “front matter”

Do you want to include a dedication to someone? Do you want to indicate that this is the first book in a series (otherwise, readers may not know)? You will also need to include the title page, copyright page, table of contents (if applicable), and possibly a testimonial page and acknowledgement page, if you choose.

The front matter will include the name of the publishing company. If you are publishing under a corporate entity that you created, make sure you identify the nature of the entity, e.g. Inc. for a corporation and LLC for a limited liability company. Refer to Section A above for further discussion on corporate entities.

F. Format the book for eBook and print, if applicable

For eBooks, you will likely want to format in different types of files. Mobi for Kindle, epub for Nook, and PDF, which can be uploaded to both Kindle and Nook.

Now, a word of caution. You can download formatting tools for a low cost (or even for free), and do the formatting yourself, but the work is painstaking and tedious. I have read several self-published books where margins and indentations are inconsistent/erroneous, and it's a turn-off for the reader. Be careful if you do the formatting yourself.

Alternatively, you can hire someone to do the formatting for you, either via places like elance.com or fiverr.com, or via a publishing group or other company that provides self-publishing services. I pay for someone to do the print and eBook formatting for me because I have a day job and don't have the time or patience to do it myself. It's your call based on your budget and drive.

Get several different quotes for formatting, and get referrals from other authors. I received quotes on print and eBook formatting ranging between \$300 and \$2200.

G. Proof the print and eBook layout when you get it back

This step is essential. I know you're sick and tired of reading the same manuscript, and you just want to start the next project. But you must do this step to make sure that everything is in the right place.

H. Create the back cover and spine

If you haven't done it already, and you plan to publish in print as well as eBook, create the back cover and spine. You will need to know the exact page count of the print book before completing the spine. Therefore, you will do the spine when editing, proofreading, and formatting are complete, and the book is ready for publication.

I. Create a barcode for the back cover

Whoever creates the back cover for you should include space for the bar code. The bar code is typically created automatically when you upload your cover and ISBN to Createspace, IngramSpark, or whatever service you are using for print books.

J. Choose a print manufacturer. You can use Amazon Createspace, IngramSpark, etc.

Do your research on the different options. I would recommend making your print book available on Amazon, because so many readers use it and setup costs are free. I would also recommend listing your book with IngramSpark because they have a great distribution network and setup costs are low. At the time of this writing, IngramSpark charges a setup fee of only \$49 to list a print and eBook.

K. Upload your file to Amazon Kindle, Amazon Createspace, Nookpress, or whatever other platform you're using

Make sure you are uploading the correct, finished version! To this end, make sure that your computer files are organized, so that you can easily find them. I know two authors who uploaded draft versions of their books to Amazon Kindle, and subsequently had to withdraw them and re-publish. Avoid the hassle!

L. Register your book with the Copyright Office

Whenever you create a copyrightable work (such as a book), you have a protectable copyright, without needing to do anything (including register with the Copyright Office). However, the advantage of registering your copyrightable works with the Copyright Office is that the registration permits you to have the option of getting statutory damages should someone infringe your copyright. Thus, statutory damages are not available if you do not register your works.

Having statutory damages available can be advantageous, especially for works that are not commercially successful or have not been released to the market because, for these works, it would be difficult to show what the actual damages were, or the actual damages might not justify a lawsuit to stop the infringing action. Bottom line: once you publish your book, register it with the Copyright Office.

M. Pin down your book launch date, and plan your book launch party!

Have fun and celebrate your accomplishment! I'll have some advice later on how to plan a book launch for maximum benefit.

N. PROMOTE. Please see the next section for details

Remember, no promotional strategy is better than PUBLISHING ANOTHER BOOK. Think about it. When you find an author that you like, what do you do? You read all of his/her books that you can get your hands on.

Have a backlist (a list of previously published books) and promote it. Spend around 90% of your time working on completing your next book, and about 10% of your time promoting your already published books.

If you use paid promotions, do your research and find out what other authors have said about them. Use your resources judiciously.

III. FINDING TIME TO WRITE

How am I supposed to work on my next book? you may think. I don't have time to write!

In all honesty, you **do** have time to write. You either make writing a priority, or you don't. If it's not that important to you, and/or if you're out chasing the third martini every day at happy hour, hey, that's fine. I'm not here to criticize other people's priorities. But if you are serious about your writing, you will make time for it.

And I have some tips to help you.

People always ask me, how do you find time to write with a full-time job and a family? My answer: It's like anything. If it brings you joy, and you want it badly enough, you will do it. It's funny because I also find that people with less free time overall tend to be better organizers of their time than people with loads of free time. There are times when my house is a wreck but achieving my writing goals is more important than making sure that there are no dirty dishes in the sink. Shut yourself in your writing space and get it done.

If you are dedicated to achieving your writing goals, here are some tips that have helped me.

*A. Set a realistic daily or weekly **word goal**, i.e. 500 or 1,000 words a day, and do your best to stick to it*

Do not despair. A successful author I know, who writes fantasy full-time, writes only about 2,000 words a day. That is certainly achievable, even if you are writing part-time.

Even if you are only writing 300 words a day, that's 2,100 words a week, or 8,400 words a month. A 50,000-word novel is thus achievable in a few months.

*B. Write for **ten minutes a day***

Abandon the idealistic notion that everything you write must be perfect as soon as you set the words down. Most of the time it will not be. Just write. For many, it is easier to edit what they

have already written than to write fresh words. Get the words down, and you can go back and edit later.

Even writing for ten minutes a day, you could write a handful of scenes during that time. You would be amazed at what you can accomplish if you hustle.

*C. Write in a dayslong feverish **sprint***

No, seriously. This strategy works if you can dedicate a few days only to writing.

A friend of mine wrote a book called *How to Write a Book in Five Days*. She presents an easy structure in which you can achieve this goal. This strategy is geared toward writing what she calls “dime store fiction,” i.e., romance, thrillers, etc. This strategy will not work if your intention is to write the next *Grapes of Wrath*. At the end of the five days, you end up with a 50,000-word manuscript. Yes, you will write 10,000 words a day, and you will not pay attention to grammar and structure. You will fix those things after you have completed your draft.

I occasionally do a variation of this strategy, depending on my schedule. If I have several evenings free, I will set a goal of, i.e. 1,000 or 2,000 words an evening, and at the end of 5 evenings I have 5,000 to 10,000 words, no small accomplishment.

Shorter sprints are also effective. Set a timer for, e.g., 30 minutes, and write/edit/etc. If you do sprints as part of a writing group, either online or in person, afterward you can report to each other what you have accomplished, e.g., wrote 500 words, edited 5 pages, etc. This action encourages you to get things done; it certainly helps to have accountability buddies.

*D. Carry a notepad, smartphone or other device to **take notes** whenever inspiration strikes you, so you don't lose your creative flow*

Then make time to add your notes to your manuscript. I use this process ALL the time. At the end of the week, I end up with several informal notes on my smartphone. I then transfer them to my manuscript. Often, writing my notes down gets the creative juices flowing, and I can knock out a few scenes in the process.

I've given you a few different methods for getting your writing done. Yes, writing is a lot of work, especially if you're doing it on top of your full-time job and family obligations. Yes, you will forego social gatherings. Yes, you will spend a lot of time indoors instead of enjoying the sun outside. Whatever you choose to do in life is up to you.

I have run into people with whom I had a conversation similar to the following:

Them: Hey, I'm writing a book too.

Me: Oh, you are? That's great.

Them: Yeah, I've been working on it for about ten years.

Me: [speechless].

Ten years is a LONG time to be working on a book, unless you're writing *The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire*. If you are serious about publishing, then at some point you need to make a decision about the book. Publish it or abandon it and move on? It does not take ten years to edit a book. The most (financially) successful authors are usually the most prolific; you need to get that book done and write another one.

So ask yourself, how badly do you want to achieve your writing goals?

Authors, how do you write? Do you use writing sprints? Do you write a little every day or do you devote blocks of days to writing? Let me know at maria@lawschoolheretic.com.

IV. PROMOTION

New independent authors are frequently overwhelmed by all the options for marketing their books. I certainly was, and still am. Here's a list of the big-ticket items, that is, the social media that are worthwhile for promotion purposes. This list is by no means all-inclusive.

Here's one big caveat: to promote yourself as a new author, it is not enough merely to set up these sites. You should connect and interact with other readers and authors. Once you set up your social media accounts, spend a few minutes a day checking the accounts and interacting with people. Likes, shares, and retweets go a long way. Remember, it's not about pushing your books on people. It's about building relationships. The results build on each other and, in time, you will see increased downloads, reviews, and sales. It's a marathon, not a sprint.

You should have:

A. *Facebook Author page*

This page should be separate from your personal Facebook page. On Facebook you can connect with other authors and with writing groups where you can find a ton of free writing/promotional resources.

Follow/make yourself known to other authors. First, authors are readers too! Second, getting to know other authors often leads to cross-promotional work, and that's a great way to get your name out there.

B. *Twitter account*

Maintaining a Twitter account and tweeting at least once a day helps you connect with other authors and readers. You can also discover eBook subscription services, e.g. E-reader news, The Fussy Librarian, which can help you reach more readers.

Tweet about sales, book releases, and other promotional activities. I love Twitter's list function, which allows you to organize followers into authors, publishers, eBook service

providers, and other groups. Many authors cross-promote via Twitter by retweeting your promotional tweets. This is free advertising!

C. **Goodreads** Author page

Once you set up a Goodreads reader account, you can set up an author account. Being on Goodreads is a *must* for authors. While having an author page on Facebook is worthwhile, Goodreads is a specific platform/community for READERS. Not everyone on Facebook reads, but everyone on Goodreads does, and most publish reviews regularly.

On Goodreads you can join groups of all sizes, and there is a topic for everyone. Do you like sci-fi, chick lit, or horror? There's a group for that. I recommend participating in smaller to medium-size groups, so your participation is noticed and you don't get lost in the shuffle (smaller groups are also less overwhelming).

Participate as a reader first. Be involved in group reads. Sign up to lead a group read if you have time. Some groups do regular reads for books written by group members. Make sure you follow the group rules on promotion.

Don't be pushy or insincere. Each Goodreads group has its own rules about authors marketing their books; read the group rules and follow them. Most of all, get to know people, interact, comment, and be helpful where you can. I have met tons of really cool people on Goodreads. Remember, it's about building relationships.

Your Goodreads activity is posted on your feed, so your friends and followers see what you're reading, your new blog posts, and what you've published. Again, free advertising!

The **Goodreads giveaway** is a great marketing tool. When readers put your book on their to-read lists, and you subsequently announce a giveaway for that book, those that have added your book automatically get a notice about the giveaway. Again, it's free advertising. As noted above, the Goodreads giveaway is now costly for new authors. Tools such as Instafreebie and BookFunnel, or doing a Facebook ad announcing a book giveaway, may be more cost-effective.

D. Your Blog

First, make sure your blog is linked to your social media accounts, so that when you publish a blog post, it is automatically posted on your Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Goodreads accounts. Second, make your blog about more than just your books. Post helpful information, interesting articles, humorous stories, whatever you like. Publish posts about writing and publishing that are helpful to new authors. That is always appreciated. Write what you are passionate about and people will be drawn to that.

Definitely read and follow blogs of successful authors. Many “experts” charge for advice that these experienced authors give you for free.

Someone asked me recently, how do people know about your blog? Great question! You must interact/participate on social media. Post your blog address on your other social media accounts so that readers know how to get there. If you write an article or book review on another website, list your bio with your contact information, social media addresses, and blog address. Once you have this system set up, it takes only a few minutes a day to maintain.

E. Amazon Author page

Readers can follow your Amazon Author page, and will be alerted when you publish a new book. You can also set it up so that your blog posts are automatically posted to your Amazon Author Page.

Remember not to get too caught up in your social media time. Nothing is better promotion than publishing another book, so spend most of your time writing and publishing your works.

Help other authors with no expectations; don't help others with the idea that you will get something back *quid pro quo*. Remember, authors are readers too.

Be kind. Don't disparage a fellow author's books publicly.

Do not engage with readers who leave you bad reviews.

Thank readers who left you a review in exchange for a free copy, even if they did not leave a 5-star review. Remember, even famous, millionaire authors like Ken Follett and Stephen King have one-star reviews of their books. If someone criticizes your book and offers constructive criticism, use it to improve your writing. If they were harsh without being constructive, just move on. Not everyone will like your stuff, just like you haven't liked every single book you've ever read. Do not dwell on things. Move on.

V. CONCLUSION

It is my sincere hope that you have found the information in this primer useful. It is certainly not meant to be all-encompassing. Rather, it is intended to give you a headstart when you self-publish your first book. You will at least know what you need to be thinking about and will not be forced to do everything on the fly, like I did.

Please keep in touch with me and let me know how your publishing journey is going. I love connecting with other authors. You can reach me at www.lawschoolheretic.com, maria@lawschoolheretic.com, or on www.facebook.com/lawschoolheretic

Best of luck to you in the Wild, Wild West of self-publishing.

THE END

Thank you very much for reading my Self-Publishing Primer. Please let me know what you think at maria@lawschoolheretic.com. I would also very much appreciate an honest review on Goodreads [here](#). Thank you!

As a thank you for reading the Primer, I am pleased to offer a 50% discount on all books in my online shop at www.lawschoolheretic.com/shop. Use coupon code ISABEL. Whenever you buy a print book from my shop, you get the eBook version of that book for FREE.

Here's what readers have said about [Miscalculated Risks](#), Book 1 of the Law School Heretic series:

“The story is sweet and funny (some dialogue will make you laugh!) and romantic too but well adapted to our modern days. Easy to read and always making you want to know what is coming next!”

“I fell in love with Isabel and Tarek. They are both living in a sort of too shallow and fast world for them but they find their way to adapt because they have brains and use them. The only struggle I see is that they both know what they want and the many possibilities that comes with that realization of knowing plus the logical thinking -being so aware of reality- a mix that makes it all a little more complicated but trust me: super fun for the reader! How everything develops between them is cute and I loved how the author achieved to make it sexy too without recurring to the bad taste of many other love-romance authors out there.”

“The rest of the characters and their personalities are very interesting as well. There was some sort of mystery left hanging in relation to the personal lives of Isabel and Tarek before they've known each other that I hope gets revealed in the next books.”

“Romance is the spice of life and “Miscalculated Risks” is a story of the heart. It's the story of Isabel Villanova, a beautiful, intelligent and hardworking 30ish woman who has put her heart

on hold waiting for someone who can match her strength and passion. Not willing to settle for less, she meets someone who maybe, just maybe can pass all the tests.”

“A light, fun read. I finished it in a couple days, which is quick for me. I kept wanting to know what happens next. The characters are very well written. What I enjoyed the most was how realistic the romance between Isabel and Tarek was. I can't wait for the next instalment!”

“Riegger is at her best when Isabel and Tarek are together--love their dialogue and Isabel's reactions to him! Can't wait to see what happens in the next book!”

“I loved this book! I wasn't sure I would really enjoy a book that had anything to do with law school to be honest but I was pleasantly surprised. When I started reading the book it was hard to put down. I loved the characters Isabel and Tarek. They have this cute flirtation going on the whole time and you just want them to get together already and live happily ever after. It's funny, romantic, thought provoking, and leaves you wondering what is going to happen next. I could relate to a lot of Isabel's thoughts about men and the world in general. I definitely recommend this book!”

“If you like witty repartee amidst a legal background, this book is for you! Quick read set amongst a law school background- it will certainly resonate with law school students. The dialogue is quick and sharp. You'll be cheering for Isabel and Tarek and the tension between them by the end of the first novel in this series.”

“It happens when you least expect it! Miscalculated Risks is an enjoyable debut from Maria Riegger. DC women will relate to Isabel as a smart, strong-willed woman who has fought hard to get what she wants but feels a hint of sadness once she's there. I won't give away the plot, but let's just say you'll be wanting the next book in the series "stat." Well-written with a "slow burn" romance woven throughout the narrative.”