

**Interview with Naomi Douglas Davis,
President of OmI Publishing
and author of *The Write1.com***

How did you come up with the idea of incorporating e-mail interaction in books?

"When I put on my *therapist cap*, my answer is it evolved from my desire for immediate gratification. I want to know what you're thinking, right now, while you're reading. And the only way to obtain that quick of a response from a diverse population is through e-mail.

My non-therapeutic answer is, I just stumbled upon the idea of e-mail interaction as I was writing the book. When I had people read to critique it, I, literally, couldn't wait for them to finish each chapter. In some instances, I'd leave the room and return shortly after to hear comments. I met one of my friends, who is now my husband, at a coffee shop for days and drank hot chocolate as he read. Then I'd probe him for comments.

I wanted to know with each chapter what they thought, how the book made them feel, and if they could relate in any way. As the book got longer and I invited others to read longer versions of it, although, I didn't request it I *wanted* them to e-mail me daily with their comments. I especially wanted their comments when they were favorable or constructive."

Tell us about the title of your new book, *The Write1.com*.

"*The Write1.com* is a play on words. Many of us, whether we choose to admit it or not, are looking or have at one time looked for *The Right One*.

Shannon, the main character, is venturing out to meet men on the Internet. She is hoping to find her *right one* through his e-mail *writings*. She is like many men and women who interact on the web; they're hoping to find someone special."

You pay tribute to some people by using their names as characters in your book. Tell me more.

"Well, it began with thoughts of my brother, Andre' Douglas, who died almost twenty years ago. He was a wig designer, who revolutionized the wig industry. He worked with stars like, Diana Ross, Cicely Tyson, and Chaka Khan. He designed wigs for about half of the cast of the movie, *Hair*. Yes, this was a *long* time ago.

Niagara Gazette reported in 1975 that he was 'the first black stylist to be featured in an Associated Press story that wired across the country. . . and the first black to show people in the Orient how to design wigs . . . his wigs and hairstyles appeared on the covers of Vogue, Mademoiselle, Glamour, Ebony and Essence magazine.' That was a big deal for a young African-American in the 70s.

He created his own line of wigs and a company that still exists today, *It's a Wig*. However, when he sold his company, he kept the rights to his, at the time, famous name.

I believe he was planning to do bigger and better things with his name. But he died shortly after. Thus, the revolution went on without him and his name. I hope to interview some people who knew him in the 70s and 80s and write a book about his life to bring his name the recognition it deserves.

In one newspaper interview, he said, 'You spend most of your life working, so it should be something you enjoy.' He was a talented, young man, who went after his dream. He is my inspiration to be uniquely different. Thus the name, Andre', will probably appear in all of my books."

You mention your brother, Andre', is he your only sibling?

"Gosh no! I am #7 of 8 children, 5 girls and 3 boys. My family is close. All, but me, live in the same city we grew up in. After I married, I kept my maiden name, Douglas, as my middle name, because I didn't want to lose my name association with my immediate family. So I added on Davis, without shedding Douglas." Now I am remarried and preparing to change my last name again, but Douglas remains.

Where do you find ideas for books?

Life. I see it, hear from others, and live it. Sometimes, I'll hear a song and ideas begin to roll. And people, for some reason, are always sharing stories with me, even outside of my profession. I can be sitting at the DMV and someone will sit next to me and begin talking. If it sparks my interest enough, I'll jot down some ideas for use later.