



## SECOND FRONT PAGE

# A dream in print

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**SOUTHFIELD** — After nine years of work, a Southfield mother of three has finally reached her dream of being a published author.

Stefanie Worth, the author of "Where Souls Collide," from Dorchester Publishing, said it was a long time in the making, but she always knew she wanted to write a novel. Worth has a degree from the University of Missouri Columbia School of Journalism and worked in that state in television and radio before moving to Detroit, where she worked at WJLB radio and the Michigan Chronicle newspaper. She now does communications for the American Diabetes Association.

"It's been a long off-again, on-again process," she said.

"Where Souls Collide" is an African-American romance novel based in Detroit, where the heroine works for a community newspaper trying to reinvent itself. The heroine, Navena, is torn between staying at her current position and leaving to work for an old flame, facing psychic nightmares and rekindled love.

Worth said she never thought of writing a romance until she joined a critique group that specialized in romance writing.

"Romance happens to be a huge seller. If you're going to do a genre, it's a good genre to do," she said.

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## Dream

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The group of four unpublished authors met every two weeks to critique the next 10 pages of each others' books. Worth said it was slow going and she dropped out of the group in 1999 to focus on raising her two sons, now 18 and 10. She also has a 5-year-old daughter.

It wasn't until 2004 that she got the impetus she needed to get started on her book again.

"I was in Borders and saw a sign for my former critique partner's book signing," she said. "I was really sick about it, actually. I went to her book signing and it was actually her second or third book, and she looked at me and said, 'You need to come back to the group,' and I did," she said.

Dorchester editors said Worth was

a great find for the company.

"The African-American market is doing very well right now ... and growing," said Erin Galloway, the marketing and publicity coordinator for the publisher who was also an editorial assistant on Worth's book. "Stefanie is one of the authors that we came across that just did have that special spark."

Dorchester publishes 18 books a month, most by different authors.

"We look for someone ... who knows how to tell a story in a unique way," Galloway said. "They have a way with language that the average human being ... does not."

After gutting almost half of her book, Worth said she saw a new release in the African-American line from Dorchester in the bookstore and decided to try her luck with that publisher.

But even though she took such a long break, she said it wasn't time wasted.

"I love being an author and I think the time that I spend not writing the book, those five years I actually worked in marketing and communication," she said. "Publishers don't do a lot of marketing and communication for you. I had critique partners ... (who) never promoted her books until her fourth or fifth book.

"Something that's really, really hard for a lot of authors really came easy to me."

And now, even though she usually doesn't get to start writing until about midnight because of time and family commitments, Worth is already working on book number two.

"I've got my appetite whet," she said. "I'm actually just a few pages from the end of my second book."

"Where Souls Collide" is available at Borders and Barnes and Noble bookstores and Web sites, and at walmart.com, amazon.com and dorchesterpub.com.

## Where Souls Collide Media

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