



## Hawkwood Books Blog : December 2025

### The Wall

Some of the authors I work with, in fact most of them, put their heart and soul into promoting their books. It makes a difference, of course, but there is always an almost visible barrier between the reach of their efforts and national awareness. They arrange launches, tours, contact celebrities, send out cards, harangue their customers, create web sites, Instagram, Facebook, Tik Tok – you name it, they do it. Still, that wall remains intact.

Mainstream companies have their books automatically displayed in thousands of bookshops on thousands of shelves, but that's a risk for a small publisher. If the books don't sell and are returned to the distributor, that's a lot of money lost. On the other hand, it's a chance for many people not in the author's sphere of marketing influence, to see the book and to see something unusual, even startling. I remember Roald Dahl on a radio show discussing books, extolling the merits of one he'd just read. It was called *The Silence of the Lambs*. The rest is history.

I don't think any publisher knows how to break down this wall between local awareness and national awareness. Wealthy companies pump gold into marketing, and that helps, obviously, but it isn't critical. Readers are intelligent and know the world is full of distractions, lies, economic truths, fabrications, exaggerations and the like. The magic ingredient is word of mouth, and a hidden communication between us that filters through slowly and wonderfully if anything at all stands out as original, insightful, brilliant, memorable and worth spending a little bit of money on.

Considering the nature and extent of modern media, this is quite rare. Every publisher looks for, and sometimes misses, a Harry Potter moment. Occasionally, it's mystifying what breaks through the subliminal wall of recognition. For most of us, we are left stumped by the sudden disappearance of our creative babies. We send them into the world and the world disregards them, unwanted children, poor creatures with no home, sad and lost.

There are parallels in our lives, invisible walls that seem insurmountable. Gurus of one kind or another offer us ways to break them down, but one size does not fit all, and we have to find our own ways of dealing with this imprisoning barrier. Perhaps it is there for a reason. If all our creative efforts reached epidemic proportions, the world would be awash with mediocrity.

Enter Social Media. Here, on the world wide web of words, is a way to apparently breach the wall and tell everyone our thoughts, our ideas, our hopes and dreams, our efforts, our prejudices and brilliant solutions to global problems. The wall does not appear to exist on the web. You can broadcast to your heart's content.

And yet, it does exist still, stronger than ever. Not made of brick or stone, but of a global, communal consciousness. And the more you try to break it down, the harder the task becomes, almost as if you adding another brick to the wall.

Does it matter? The wall is a kind of unspoken censorship, a communal filter for sifting out the wheat from the chaff. I'm not sure whether it works. There's plenty of chaff knocking around, like this, probably, but without it, we would drown in a sea of egocentric screaming, despairing lunges at the mysterious workings of eight billion human minds. But there is always hope! Just like electrons tunnelling their way through impossible barriers, every so often, one gets through.