



Aphrodite's Pen

The Power of Writing Erotica
After Midlife



So Close!

By the time this newsletter reaches you, we will be just three weeks from the launch of [Aphrodite's Pen: The Power of Writing Erotica After Midlife](#). For me, this is one of my key life achievements - not unlike the arrival of a child!

Pen includes activities, interviews with women past midlife who write erotica, and samples of their writing to encourage women to tell our stories. The West Coast launch event will capture all that excitement and more! Contributors to the book will be on hand to read from their stories and interviews. There will be a writing game for the audience, and a chance to ask questions of the contributing writers. And while there will be other book signings, this is your one chance to get a copy of [Aphrodite's Pen](#) signed by several contributors as well!

After the West Coast launch, I'll head back to North Carolina for the East Coast launch at [Flyleaf Books](#) in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Flyleaf is a terrific independent bookstore, and a great place for a reading. I'm thrilled that contributor Mya Thomae will travel from her home in Wisconsin to join me in conversation about the book. We will share writing activities, stories, and

interview excerpts, and discuss how writing our erotic stories pushes back on ageism and sexism by making us vividly visible. It promises to be a fun and thought-provoking evening! Hope to see you there.

You can [PRE-ORDER](#) now and get the book on September 24th, the date of publication. The link on that page will let you order from all the usual suspects, but I'd like you to think about your local bookseller too - give them a call please! Penguin Random House has a [list of stores](#).

Pre-order Information

Let's Party!



A Change of plan....

Octopus is closing :-((

We will now host
the launch party
at GoodVibrations
in Berkeley

Our West Coast launch party will happen on publication day, **September 24, starting at 6 PM**, at [Good Vibrations](#), 2504 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, CA 94702, California.

At our launch party, I will tell the tale of how our movement got started and introduce the contributors to the book. They will read from their interviews and their fiction, and we will all sign your copy. Good food and great company. Come celebrate launch day with us!

The East Coast launch party is set for **October 2nd** at [Flyleaf Books](#), in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Writer Mya Thomae and I will share writing activities, stories, and interview excerpts from *Aphrodite's Pen: The Power of Writing Erotica After Midlife*

It promises to be a fun and thought-provoking evening! Hope to see you there.

Like the newsletter? Please Share it!



Recent Blog Posts.

Here's what I've had to say recently. Check out these articles, click the Read More link and leave a comment, share on social media or email a link to a friend. Please! Pretty Please.



By Any Other Name: The Words We Call Ourselves

When I write about the creative joy of women after



Blonde at 65 or The Tale of the Peacock

What have peacock tail feathers ever done for the peacock?

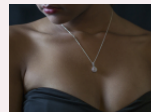
midlife, one challenge is just what to call our cohort of women. When I wrote [Aphrodite's Pen: The Power of Writing Erotica After Midlife](#), I looked at how other authors name us, and found no consensus. "Juicy Crones," "Wise Women," "Women Past Midlife," "Women Growing Bolder," "Ripe Women," "Ageless," "Seasoned Women," all have their adherents. There must be fifty ways to avoid saying "older."

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Sexual Agency Beyond Midlife

In her 2016 book, "[Girls and Sex: Navigating the Complicated New Landscape](#)," [Peggy Orenstein](#) describes the pressure on American women to perform sexually from an early age, and to please young men while doing so. In many cases, their own pleasure is not the focus of how young women view sex. Orenstein believes that how sexuality is portrayed in popular media and online contributes to this problem.



Dress Like You Have Diamonds at the Meeting of your Thighs

"Does my sexiness offend you?"

Does it come as a surprise
That I dance like I have
diamonds
At the meeting of my
thighs?"

— Maya Angelou, "[And Still I Rise](#)"

We have all read those articles, the ones that tell us what **not** to wear at our age.

"No self-respecting woman over *some age* would be

They are heavy, they harbor [ectoparasites](#), and they add nothing to the bird's ability to eat, drink, or move. So why have they persisted, generation after generation? A peacock's tail is a prime example of an elaborate display of reproductive fitness. According to [evolutionary scientists](#), a bird that has so much energy to waste on mere display must have plenty going on as a potential mate; that is the apparent basis for the tail's attraction.

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Studies have long shown that movie and television executives choose to show males as active and females as passive, even in Saturday morning cartoons for children.

[Read More....](#)

seen dead wearing that”.

“Who does *she* think she is?”

Whenever I see such an article or hear such a phrase, I imagine a well-meaning recent college grad, sharing a run-down Manhattan studio with five other twenty-somethings while they all try to make it big, tapping out this stuff at top speed because it seems to sell.

[Read More....](#)

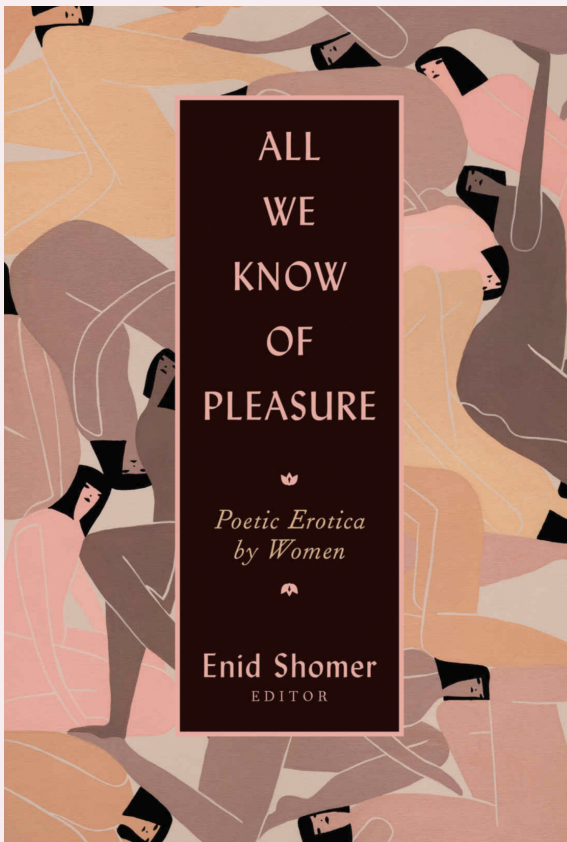
Want to Learn How to Write Erotica?

I've recently launched a **FREE** mini-writing class online to develop a sexy story from start to finish in a week.

Each day Monday through Friday, you'll get an email prompt to write about a different story element – character, setting, sensory experience – and then at the end of the week on Saturday & Sunday, instructions to bring together the elements into a finished story.

It's a fun and easy way to write story, and you can [enroll here](#). Please feel free to share the link with any friends who'd be interested.

What's Stella Reading?



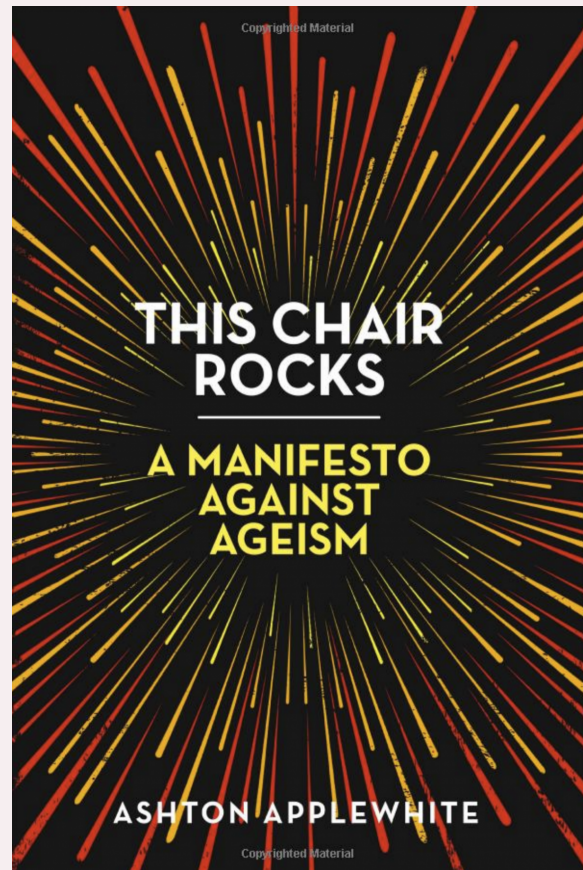
All We Know of Pleasure: Poetic Erotica by Women edited by Enid Shomer

All We Know of Pleasure: Poetic Erotica by Women is a hugely satisfying collection edited by [Enid Shomer](#) and published by Carolina Wren Press. It's intriguing in part because the book is divided by the age of the poets and their subjects.

Part I, The Discovery of Sex, is all about first longing.

Part II, The Ordinary Day Begins, is about sex in the years of active motherhood.

Part III, When this Old Body, is of course my favorite and the part I read first.



This Chair Rocks: A Manifesto Against Ageism by Ashton Applewhite

This Chair Rocks: A Manifesto Against Ageism by the dynamic [Ashton Applewhite](#) is a call to action on many fronts, beginning in our minds. As Ashton writes, "This book is a call to wake up to the ageism in and around us, embrace a more nuanced and accurate view of growing older, cheer up, and push back. What ideas about aging have each of us internalized without even realizing it? How do they play out across our lives, from office to bedroom, in muscle and memory? What can we do, individually and collectively,

“And suddenly, again, I want the long road of your thigh,” writes [Jane Hirshfield](#) of the desire that comes in long knowing.

“our bodies move and join / unbearably. / your face above me / is the face of all the gods / and beautiful demons,” writes Lenore Kandel, reminding us of the timelessness of lust.

“Neither of them was young. His beard was gray... But they kissed lavish kisses like the ocean in the early morning... We couldn’t look away,” writes [Ellen Bass](#) about a couple reunited at the Portland airport.

These fine poems capture what it is to be a woman in love with life across its full span.

to catalyze a radical age movement to make it happen? Let’s find out.”

I first learned about anti-ageism activist Ashton Applewhite through [her terrific TED talk](#). She also led the team that developed [Old School](#), a clearinghouse of anti-ageism resources. The fact that she is out there doing good work, reminding us to include ourselves in the circle of those deserving equality, makes me happy and reminds me once again how important it is for older women to write our sexy stories.

For more of Stella's book (and movie, and web) reviews click here

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