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STELLA FOSSE



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Clothing for the Soul

In February the Grandmother Collective and I launched Crone Authors Together (CAT), a new forum for women writers to collaborate on expanding readership.

During our first meeting, women's reactions to the word "Marketing" included "Panic," "Stress," "Hype and Overhype," and "Terror!" On the other hand, one woman wrote, "It used to be negative, but now I know it to mean that I get to share the good stuff that I know."

Participants expressed great interest in supporting one another's success. This could mean reviewing each other's books, attending one another's events, and much more. To optimize that support, we're getting to know one another including the kinds of books we write and how to find each other online. We will focus on mutual support at our next monthly meeting. And participants volunteered to lead these topics at future gatherings:

- Podcasts: How to find the good ones, how to pitch them, how to prep for them
- Messaging and Connection with Audience
- Blogging to build audience

Other topics that were top of mind for the future included:

- Social Media (including posting tools like PostPlanner)
- Short Form Writing as Promotion

- Amazon advertising (And in that regard, check out Brooke Warner's new Substack piece, "Jeff Bezos is Not Good for Books")
- Book Clubs (Real Ones, not Spammers)
- Reaching Our Audience Even Before Publication

There is much more to explore, including Seasonal Marketing, Creating a Marketing Plan, and How to Tell What's Working. Kudos to all who are tackling this important subject. If you'd like to join CAT, please register [here](#) to be sent invitations to future meetings.

Before our March 31st meeting, we're each taking an inventory of the types of publicity and marketing that especially interest us, including those that come naturally and those that are stretch goals. If that interests you, this article can spur your thinking.

Joy & Woe are woven fine, A Clothing for the Soul divine...

William Blake

I love that quote from Blake because life is such a mixed bag, and this month has been no exception. There is the paradox of privilege, where our individual lives can look just fine while the world goes to hell in a bucket. And closer to home is the contrast between our bodies as we knew them and our bodies today.

Yesterday I read in Sari Botton's column that the challenge of our seventies is to take exquisite care of our bodies while they betray us. And that same day I read an article by a woman in her eighties reminding us that the key thing is not to kvetch. Both of these statements are true. While there's no point in obsessing, we are our bodies (they're not only clothing for the soul). And the ways our bodies change is central to our reality. It's all part of the enigma of aging: growing in perspective and self-acceptance (if we're lucky) even as we lose physical capacity.

In my sixties, as I've said before, I basically felt immortal. No more. I was sitting in church two Sundays ago when a strong pain started in my chest and jaw. A trip to the ER determined it was angina but not a heart attack, so I'll spend one day this week getting pumped full of radioactive crud and scanned for blockages. The comforting denial that protects us from knowledge of our impermanence cannot survive such an event. It's pulled me back to what matters: Time with my partner, my

children and grandchildren; writing what matters most. And yet I'm disappointed to find that I'm still selfish and impatient at times; not the traits for which I'd like to be remembered.

One way I would like to be remembered is through my books, which are both smarter and nicer than I am. Which brings us back to Crone Authors Together. When my latest book published right before my mastectomy, I realized there would be no traditional book launch. Surely there had to be creative ways to market, just as there are creative ways to write. And I believed then, and I believe now, that we Creative Cronos are stronger together.

And by the way, if you have published a book and would like to promote it, please consider writing a related article for the Stella Fosse blog. We publish a guest essay by a woman author over fifty on the tenth of each month. Submission guidelines are here, and you can view past guest blogs here.

Best wishes for all your creative endeavors today and on every precious day.



Keep the pen moving, or the keys clicking.

All the best,

Stella,

stella@stellafosse.com

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This Month's Blogs



Crone Authors Together

Stella Fosse

The issue of "stay small, sweet, quiet, and modest" sounds like an outdated problem, but the truth is that women still run into those demands whenever we find and use our voices.

Brene Brown <

Daring Greatly

We live in a time of massive change, including huge changes for authors. Print on Demand and online sales have upended traditional publishing. Access has opened up, and voices of marginalized people (including older women) are published in greater numbers than ever before. Plus outreach to readers has been transformed. Today's major publicity and marketing venues didn't exist in our youth.



My new boyfriend is AI

Nancy Shenker

Some women love their vibrators.

I love a different type of digital companion...AI.

I'm not a total nerd-girl. I adore flesh-and-blood men too, but my current tech toys and techniques are vital to my work and personal life, giving me autonomy, entertainment, and even stimulation.

How it All Began: My Digital Awakening

My father gave me an IBM Selectric typewriter during college. It corrected my errors and saved me hours, freeing me up to be more creative and prolific. It allowed me more time to party once my schoolwork was done.

And these days every author (regardless of how she publishes) is expected to be an entrepreneur. To be an author now means being both a writer and a marketer.

Women who are well past midlife grew up at a time when girls were raised to be demure, not to stand out or make waves. Now that we're writing and publishing, the idea of reaching out to our audience can be uncomfortable (I know it is for me).

Many older women are voracious readers with a hunger for books by and about their peers. This recent Note on Substack echoes a sentiment I see over and over in reader reviews of books with vivid older protagonists:

My reading tastes have changed as I've aged. I find myself seeking out stories with older characters, not as tropes — plucky older woman — but as fully fleshed out humans dealing with the issues of life in your 50's and beyond.

<Anybody else?

Jennifer Louden

Yet promoting to these readers may not come naturally. Plus, despite our enormous economic

"Do you want a computer?" I was asked by one of the tech managers at my first major financial services job.

When that first clunky and beautiful beast was wheeled into my office, I felt an instant rush of power and connection. I could communicate with other people throughout the building whenever I wanted (The Internet hadn't yet been invented). I also had a wealth of new information and resources at my fingertips. I even learned how to create my own "decks," enabling me to dazzle the higher ups in meetings. They were dependent on their admins to produce charts and graphs.

My tech prowess (which aided storytelling) contributed to my career advancement in an industry heavily dominated by analog dudes.

Fast forward to 2017. Following the loss of a consulting gig and feeling marginalized by a toxic boyfriend, I needed to do something bold and forward-thinking. I wrote a book about AI and marketing. A whole new world opened up to me, and I have matured along with the technology, discovering new creative and analytical skills with

power, older women as a group are largely ignored by marketing professionals—so there isn't a lot of published information to guide us in connecting with our audience.

[Read More.....](#)

my “new digital boyfriend” at my side.

[Read More.....](#)

Stella Fosse



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