Author Advisory

The Act of Constant Relevance

Practical marketing for writers

Sean Cranbury

Live today.
Recorded for later.

We will stop and write three times during this session. Each time: 5 minutes of writing, then 5 minutes of discussion.

Watching the recording? Pause at each Writing slide, write, then press play.

After the session: slides and a curated summary of the discussion go up at authoradvisory.com/siwc. Send reflections to seancranbury@gmail.com.

Awareness

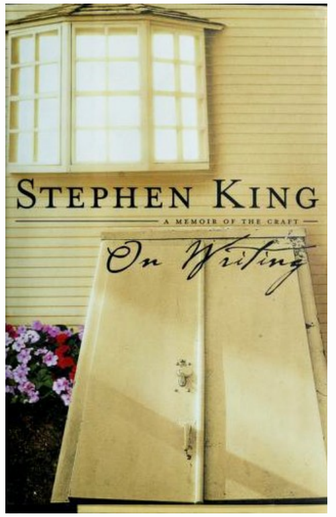
Awareness is a gauge of how many others, especially others that you don't currently know, are interested in you and your work.

Orientation

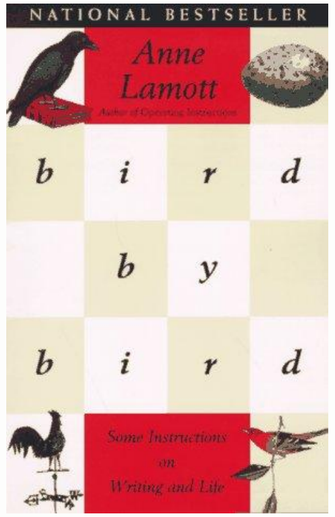
Orientation is understanding the context of your relationship to the industry that takes into account your own assumptions about the process.

SiWC is an excellent exercise in orientation. Be sure to become a curious sponge while you're here. Meet as many people as you can, ask questions, step out of your comfort zone. There is so much wisdom here.

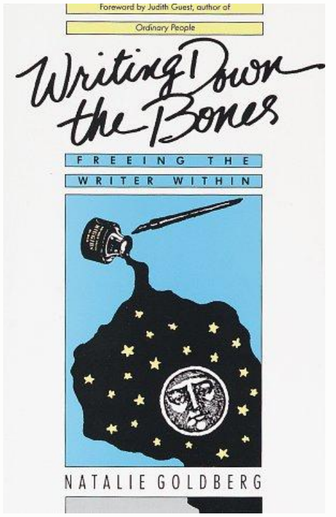
Orientation often manifest in writerly advice. There's an entire cottage industry in books about writing books. Stephen King's On Writing, Anne Lamott's Bird by Bird, and Natalie Goldberg's Writing Down the Bones are three of the best.



On Writing
Stephen King



Bird by Bird
Anne Lamott



Writing Down the Bones
Natalie Goldberg

The problem with advice is that for every piece of advice that someone offers you there is nearly always an equally relevant but opposite piece of advice that folks also share equally as much.

For instance;

ADVICE

Write what you know.

ADVICE

Write what you don't know.

Writing advice is a spectrum and thrives on ambiguity.

CHAT

Every writer has heard various classic pieces of advice about writing. What are some of your favourites.

With that in mind there's one piece of advice that anchors this session:

Control what you can control.

In the process of getting a book published there are far more things that you cannot control than there are controllables.

Short list of some controllable

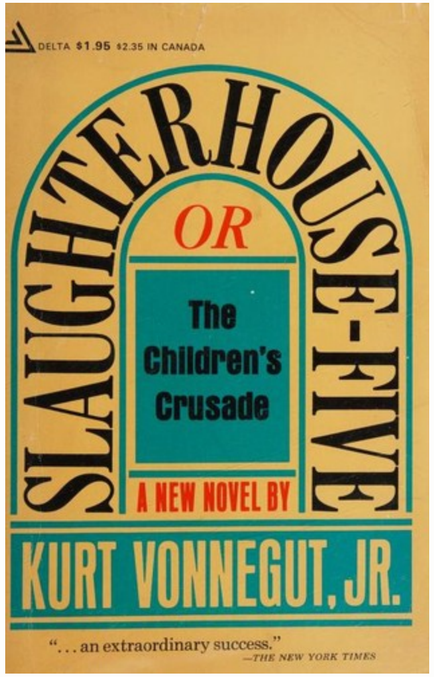
01 Your attitude

02 Your reading - read widely, outside your genre, outside your comfort zone.

03 Your writing - what story you're telling, how you're telling it, the choices you make

04 Making time to write - intentionally make time to work on your writing projects.

As Kurt Vonnegut would say, "So it goes."



Kurt Vonnegut,
Slaughterhouse-Five

But today we're going to talk about

1

Making sure that you carve out time in your daily routine to write.

2

A focus on orientation to the industry, recognizing that publishing, in many senses is an industry of personal relationships.

3

Deciding which options are best for you in terms of website, newsletter, and other options.

1

Act 1

9:55 · 45 minutes

Making sure that you carve out time in your daily routine to write.

Discussion

01 **What takes the hours you would write in?**

02 **What has worked for you?**

Writing 1

Describe a real day this week. Mark the hours when you could write. Say who or what has those hours now, and what you would have to move or turn down to claim them. Finish with one sentence that begins, "Starting tomorrow, my writing time is..."

5

minutes

Watching the recording? Pause here, write, then press play.

Discuss

01 **What surprised you about your day?**

02 **What would you have to say no to?**

03 **What is the smallest protected amount of time you could keep?**

Discussion

01 **Small rituals.**

02 **What you say no to.**

03 **What do other writers do.**

2

Act 2

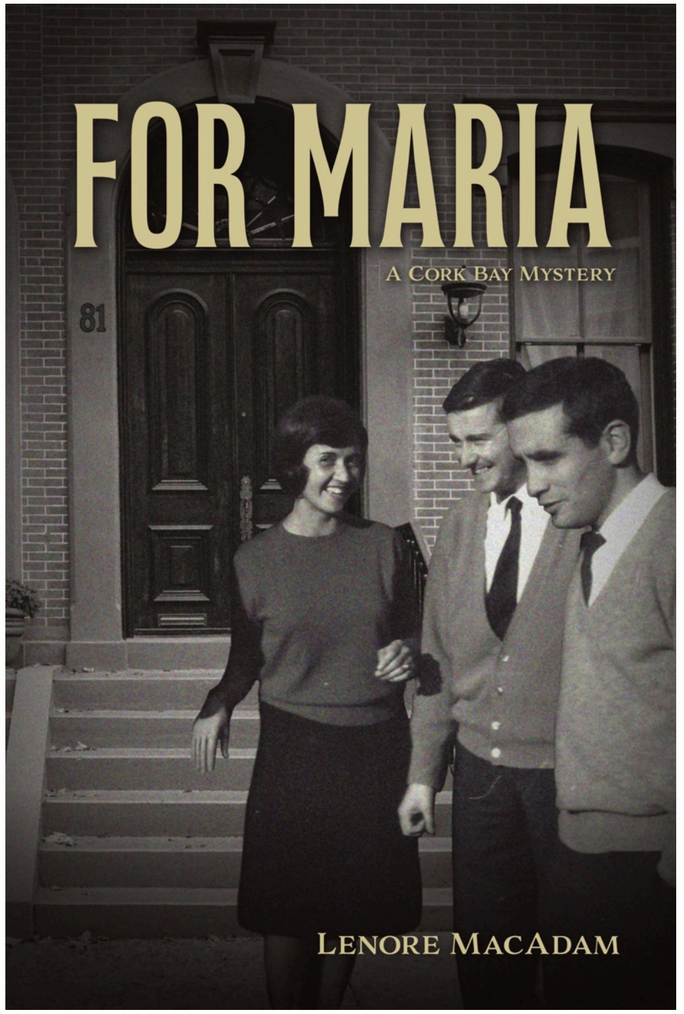
10:50 · 40 minutes

Publishing, in many senses is an industry of personal relationships.

Therefore it is quite helpful to have a spot in a place where nearly everybody in the industry works, i.e. the internet.

Where you can control how people contextualize you and your work, and give them a chance to get in touch with you when they want to.

Lenore MacAdam, author of For Maria.



Context: who she is, what the book is, the facts someone writing about her needs.

A chance to get in touch: one email address.

See it yourself:

lenoremacadam.com/media

Each section has its own link, such as **lenoremacadam.com/media#libraries** and **lenoremacadam.com/media#podcasts.**

Search for a writer you admire.

01 What do they give a stranger?

02 What do you wish they gave?

Writing 2

Someone in publishing, or a reader, has just heard your name and typed it into a search bar. Write what you would want them to find in the first minute: who you are, what you write, and how you would want them to contextualize you and your work, and how they could get in touch with you.

Optional: write what you would not want them to assume.

5

minutes

Watching the recording? Pause here, write, then press play.

Discuss

01 **What did you want them to find?**

02 **What was hard to say about yourself?**

03 **What would a stranger find today?**

Discussion

01 **What feels uncomfortable about being findable?**

02 **What will you put out, and what won't you?**

3

Act 3

11:30 · 40 minutes

Deciding which options are best for you in terms of website, newsletter, and other options.

For every piece of writing advice there exists an equal and opposite piece of advice that may be perfectly applicable in any situation.

This can be quite confusing, especially for writers who are just starting out.

CHAT

What advice have you heard about websites, newsletters and social media?

Does each piece have an opposite?

1

What is it for?

2

What is the smallest version that works?

3

How much time does it cost?

Discussion

01 **Who already has a website or a newsletter?**

02 **What did it cost? What would you do differently?**

Lenore chose:

a website, a mailing list she owns, links out to the retailers where the book is sold.

Left out, for now:

her site has no shop of its own and no social media links yet.

See it yourself:

lenoremacadam.com/#book

for where the book is sold,

lenoremacadam.com/#mailing-list

for the mailing list.

Writing 3

Decide which options are best for you in terms of website, newsletter, and other options. Choose one you will do first, and one you will deliberately leave for now. For the first, write what it is for, the smallest version that works, and the time it would take each week. For the one you are leaving, write why that is fine.

5

minutes

Watching the recording? Pause here, write, then press play.

Discuss

01 **What did you pick, and why?**

02 **What did leaving something out feel like?**

03 **What would you need in order to start?**

Post one thing you will do this week.

Making sure that you carve out time in your daily routine to write.

Control what you can control.

Questions?

Author Advisory

authoradvisory.com