ForeWord Reviews

SELF-HELP

A Book is Born: 24 Mom Authors Tell All
Nancy C. Cleary
Wyatt-MacKenzie
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"We laugh that publishing a book is like having a baby—so prepare for the next nine months!" So begins this guide specifically tailored for women with children who have published a nonfiction book or are about to publish—also known as "mom authors." Women—and even men—will find many parts of *A Book is Born* helpful if they are novices in the publishing area.

Divided into chapters dealing with certain stages of publishing, and illustrated by the conceit that a book is an author's baby—from the idea "conception" to the "birth" of the published tome. All twenty-four contributors and their publisher, Nancy Cleary, founder of Wyatt-MacKenzie Publishing, stick close to the metaphor. The contributors are also members of the Mom-Writers Publishing Cooperative, and their books range in topic from infertility to cooking to being a military wife.

The chapters are formatted in two different sections: A narrative in which the contributors give their thoughts on a particular subject, like choosing book covers, how to get on *Oprah* (none have—yet), and their books' rankings on Amazon.com. The other section is called "Tech Talk," and contains tips, definitions, and examples of terms such as *branding*, *platform*, and *ghostwriting*. The text here is snappy and easily processed. Another helpful feature is the illustration of the tools needed for promotion, things like pitch letters, advance review copies (ARCs), and letters requesting back-cover blurbs. There's also information for the twenty-first century author, like how to use the Internet—blogs, podcasts, and websites—to the book's advantage.

The authors don't always agree on what tact to take, especially when it comes to spending money on things like a PR firm. The diversity of opinions can be comforting to a reader/writer because it supports the fact that there is no one, right way to publish and promote a book. Like an online message board of good friends, *A Book is Born* can be an excellent source of support and comfort for a new author.