

Write On, Sisters! Voice, Courage, and Claiming Your Place at the Table

Brooke Warner

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Brooke Warner's *Write On, Sisters!* is a detailed study of gender in writing and publishing and an inviting call to action for women who write.

The book begins with the bad news: women face a wide array of challenges when it comes to getting their work in print, as they have for centuries. Gatekeepers, reviewers, award committees, and even seemingly impersonal elements like categories and genre designations are barriers that must be overcome.

What makes this catalog of mindboggling double standards enjoyable and motivating is the nuance and wisdom with which Warner untangles this knot and the frankness with which she addresses stark realities like racism and financial privilege. The book shines when confronting complex issues, such as the tricky balance of opportunity and segregation and the paradigm of women writing for women.

Warner champions the vital nature of women's voices and forwards the wisdom and encouragement that is necessary to overcoming the obstacles. Boldness, grit, and resilience are on the top of the list of traits to embody. Inviting women to fail with gusto and to resubmit their work aggressively, the text's lessons draw upon Warner's experience as the founder of She Writes Press, including the pros and cons of author-subsidized publishing models.

Sharing the inspiring stories of women who've found their voices and chipped away at extant barriers to be heard in spaces where they can change people's lives, the book acknowledges that all of this work requires community. A long list of women-only writing spaces and bookstores will bring that community into view for isolated writers. The book's visual elements—like inviting sketches and graphs showing authors' genders by genre—are interesting and insightful.

Plainspoken, supportive, and positive, *Write On, Sisters!* is a professional guide for women who write and for those who want to champion their voices.

MELISSA WUSKE (July/August 2019)

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