

Seven Ways to Get Your Site in Shape

October 25, 2013

First, a little about me.

- **Publishing is the common thread of my career—I've been an editor, author, Web director, and Web designer (pretty much in that order).**
- **I've worked with dozens of authors, publishers such as Chronicle Books, Harper Collins and agents like Frances Goldin Literary Agency.**
- **I've seen how a well-designed site can elevate an author's work in a variety of ways.**
- **For a Web platform, I work primarily in WordPress (and highly recommend it).**

A few reasons why your site probably needs a tune-up

- **You launched it more than 2 years ago.**
- **And... you haven't updated it since.**
- **There is missing or outdated content.**
- **When you Google your name or your book titles, you don't come up on the first page.**
- **It's in Flash (shudder!).**
- **You aren't using social media—or if you are, social media isn't integrated into your site.**
- **Your publisher isn't providing the marketing resources it once did.**

Bluntly put...

Taking control of your online presence will help you connect with readers, increase sales, and propel your career forward.

**Tip One:
You are a writer. So write
your site content.**

Avoid marketing copy

- **I often find authors sites that have content cut-and-pasted from their publisher's marketing materials.**
- **Your site is another opportunity to bring your voice to your readers.**
- **Everything from the author bio to the homepage copy should be crafted by you.**



Robert L. Forbes

CHILDREN'S BOOK AUTHOR



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About Bob

"He spends a lot of time looking out the window," read one of Robert Forbes' seventh grade report cards. Even so, he managed to graduate from school and university, and joined the family business in 1975 where he now serves a Vice President as well as president of the lifestyle magazine *ForbesLife*. After twenty-five years in New York City and six in London, he and his wife currently reside in Florida. He enjoys his work, writing poetry, and he still cherishes time spent looking out windows.



com

Robert L. Forbes Author bio: robertlforbes.com

Personal

A friend once asked me, "Doing Web design must be tough. I mean, you have to sit in front of a computer all day."

When I thought about it, I realized this is what I would be doing anyway. I love it. I love seeing the democracy of information online (admittedly, much of it is crap, but it's nice to see what turns up), see news as it's breaking, and experiment with the different things the medium can produce.

I choose to do everything from my food shopping to my banking to listen to the radio online. I don't keep photo albums anymore, I just post them all online. I **write** and read blogs, and usually prefer email to phone calls, and I even watch TV shows I've downloaded on my iPad while at the gym.

Just because I would be doing Web design even if I wasn't getting paid for it doesn't mean that I do it for free. But it does mean that I will love doing it, which means my clients get work that is inspired, creative, meticulous, and clean. I work from home with NPR piped in through my computer.

A few years ago, I relocated from the San Francisco Bay Area to Chicago, IL. I live in a charming house that is more than 100 years old with my **creative genius husband**, **precocious second-grader**, **indomitable pre-schooler** and mangy mutt. I do break away from the computer screen sometimes and when I do, it usually has nothing to do with computers.

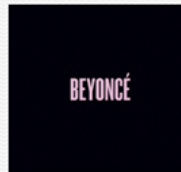
I love being outdoors, exercising, **cooking**, **reading** and watching really lousy television. Earlybirds, take note that I **teach spinning** at the Irving Park Y at 6am on Tuesdays and Thursdays. I **also teach yoga various places**.

What I'm Reading
The Goldfinch



Boris might be my favorite fictional character.

What I'm Listening To
Beyoncé



If I wasn't a Web Designer, I'd totally want to be Beyoncé.

What I'm Watching
Friday Night Lights



Buddy Garrity himself doesn't like this show as much as I do.



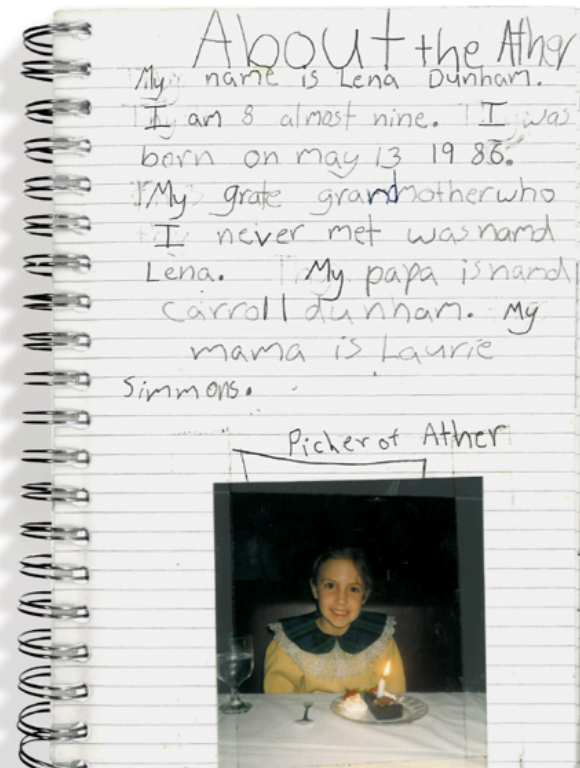
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On Social Media





**Tip Two:
Get Comfortable with
Social Media**

Social media is less scary than you think it is

- **Even if you don't like social media, you should be on it.**
- **Social Media is an easy and free way to connect with your readers.**
- **When people “like” your Facebook page or follow you on Twitter, they are inviting you into their personally curated online world.**
- **Commit to posting at least once a week to keep your content fresh.**

Vicky Vlachonis MSc Ost.

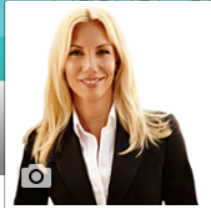
Pain Expert and
Author of *The Body Doesn't Lie*



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ABOUT

Vicky Vlachonis is a pain expert with a Masters of Science in Osteopathy. She is the author of *The Body Doesn't Lie*, now available: www.vickyvlachonis.com

<http://www.vickyvlachonis.com/>

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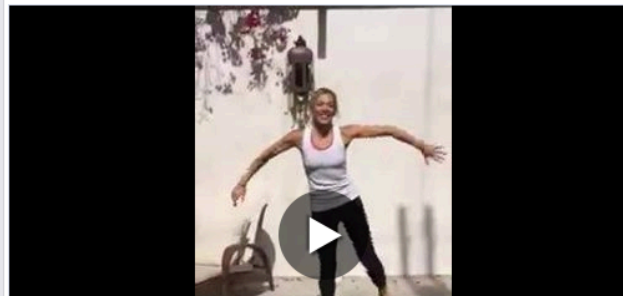
What have you been up to?



Vicky Vlachonis MSc Ost

Posted by Adela Ayala [?] · about an hour ago

Jumping on the #trampoline is so much #fun and great for your cardiovascular #health. The mini-trampoline can also improve your balance and coordination. #Jump away! #exercise



Author Vicky Vlachonis: vickyvlachonis.com

John Green @johnngreen

I write books, including Looking for Alaska and The Fault in Our Stars. (Books are the heavy, except maybe I also make videos with my brother.)

Indianapolis, IN
[@johnngreen](#)
 Joined December 2008

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John Green retweeted
Chris Orsina @TurFu · 15m
 The White House's first website launched 20 years ago this week. And it was amazing. [video on YouTube!](#)

John Green @johnngreen · 15m
 A new video: Ebola IS terrifying. [youtube.com/watch?v=c5A_sH...](#)

John Green @johnngreen · 2h
 As you will see in today's vlogbrothers video, my pre-Paper Towns movie beard has made substantial progress.

John Green retweeted
Phon Lee @PhonLeeJae · 2h
 Single watching [@PhonLeeJae](#) World History with [@johnngreen](#) via [@vlogbrothers](#) - so good - [vlogbrothers.org/humanbeats](#).

John Green @johnngreen · Oct 20
 Signing 6,000 copies of the LPA 10th anniversary edition for independent bookstores around the US... [instagram.com/p/nP4R6g2R](#)

John Green @johnngreen · Oct 20
 The new [@lpa](#) store is up and running and BOY IS IT BEAUTIFUL.

Who to follow: [MudChimp](#), [LiamChap](#), [Keremca](#), [Serg The Tiger](#)

Trends: [#ProudtoBeGay](#), [#ProudtoBeGay](#), [#ProudtoBeGay](#), [#ProudtoBeGay](#), [#ProudtoBeGay](#)

John Green's Twitter @johnngreen

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LOOKING
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AN ABUNDANCE
OF KATHERINES



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PAPER SLIPS

Ebola: What IS Terrifying

by on OCTOBER 21, 2014



In which John discusses the ebola outbreaks in the United States, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia, and how best to deal with them. Sources and resources below:

This Economist story is a great introduction to where we stand with the epidemic:
<http://www.economist.com/news/international/21625813-ebola-epidemic-west-africa-poses-catastrophic-threat-region-and-could-yet>

The WHO's weekly situation report update: http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/136645/1/roadmapupdate17Oct14_eng.pdf?ua=1

Interview with Bill Gates I paraphrased: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/03/bill-gates-ebola-shutting-down-healthcare-system-african-countries>

Oxfam expresses concern that ebola could be "the definitive humanitarian disaster of our generation." <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/oct/18/oxfam-call-for-troops-ebola-west-africa-world-health-organisation-accused>

Join the community at <http://weirdfiction.com> & <http://effersandeffertex.com>

John Green's site: johngreenbooks.com



**Tip Three:
Get Comfortable With
Self-Promotion**

Your site is no place for humility

- **Include all your (good) press. If you spent time on a best-seller list, mention it.**
- **Make it clear how to buy your books.**
- **Set up affiliate accounts with online retailers to get your cut.**



JOJO MOYES



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Me Before You



Louisa Clark is an ordinary girl living an exceedingly ordinary life—steady boyfriend, close family—who has barely been farther afield than her tiny village. She takes a badly needed job working for ex-Master of the Universe Will Traynor, who is wheelchair-bound after an accident. Will has always lived a huge life—big deals, extreme sports, worldwide travel—and he is not interested in exploring a new one.

Will is acerbic, moody, bossy—but Lou refuses to treat him with kid gloves, and soon his happiness means more to her than she expected. When she learns that Will has shocking plans of his own, Lou sets out to show him that life is still worth living.

Me Before You brings to life two people who couldn't have less in common—a heartbreaking romantic novel that asks, *What do you do when making the person you love happy also means breaking your own heart?*

For reviews on Jojo's books [click here](#).

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Watch a video of Trisha and Amy on the Today Show!



Authors of 'Dirty Little Secrets From Otherwise Perfect Moms' Offer Advice on Getting Kids Past Common Speed Bumps
May 5 — GoodNites(R) Brand today declared May "Positive Parenting Month," teaming up

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**Tip Four:
Invite Visitor Interaction**

Your site is an opportunity to connect with readers

- **Consider the different ways you can make that connection.**
- **Include an FAQ section.**
- **Post a discussion guide.**
- **Consider a blog—and enabling (approved) blog comments.**
- **Make it easy to find your contact information.**
- **If you are feeling really daring, you can offer to Skype with readers in a discussion group.**

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My current emphasis: how to make good habits and break bad ones (really)

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- What makes you feel right? What values do you want your life to reflect?
- How can you build an atmosphere of growth—where you learn, explore, build, teach, help?

New York Times
BESTSELLER

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paperback now.



How we can make home a place of
greater simplicity, comfort, and love?
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Gretchen Rubin



Gretchen Rubin is one of the most thought-provoking and influential writers on habits and happiness. Her books *Happier at*

Our Blog Compelling News and Articles of Interest specifically for the Christian Community

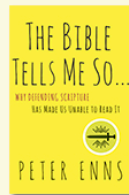


An Excerpt from *The Zimzum of Love* by Rob and Kristen Bell

OCTOBER 9, 2014

We're for marriage, and we want to give you a new way of understanding marriage. We call this way The Zimzum of Love. Which of course raises the question, what's a zimzum? Zimzum (originally tzimtzum) is a Hebrew word used ...

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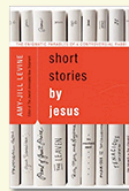


Daring to Tell the Truth About the Bible

OCTOBER 9, 2014

In Deuteronomy 34, Moses dies. This was a problem. As a new convert, I was an "all-in" evangelical, even attending an "inerrancy" weekend conference where I was indoctrinated into the belief that God's people (us) were in a war with ...

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The Greatest and Oddest Book Ever Written

AUGUST 25, 2014

Imagine the most valuable book you have ever encountered, one that you cherish so much you wish everyone would read it. What would you take as a sign of its worth and prestige in the world? That it remains a ...

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What's "Left Behind" by Domsday

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**Tip Five:
Make It Easy To Get Your
Work Reviewed**

Courting the media

- **Many reviews never get written because the journalists don't have the information needed to write reviews.**
- **Include a press room on your site.**
- **Include both a long and short author bio (written by you, not your publicist).**
- **Include a press release, including a version as a PDF.**
- **Downloadable hi-res images for print and Web.**

Julia Sweeney

FOR THE MEDIA

Julia Sweeney Bio

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Julia Sweeney is best known for her four seasons on "Saturday Night Live," (1990 - 1994) in which her most famous character was androgynous "Pat." She is also known for her critically acclaimed one-woman monologues, "God Said, Hai" and "Letting Go of God."

"God Said, Hai" played on Broadway at the Lyceum theater in 1996. This show chronicled Julia's brother Michael's diagnosis with cancer, and her experiences as his caretaker. During this time, Julia was also diagnosed with cancer. Miramax released the film version of the show in 1998 which was produced by Quentin Tarantino. The CD version of the show was nominated for a Grammy.

"Letting Go of God" also was performed in New York and Los Angeles. It was made into a film, which aired on Showtime. This show is about Julia's search for a God she can believe in.

Julia has worked as a writer on several TV shows including "Sex & the City" and "Desperate Housewives." She has also appeared in several TV shows including "Frasier" and "Sex & the City" and in many films, including "It's Pat: The Movie," "Pulp Fiction" and "Stuart Little" as well as the mother in "Beethoven 3" and "Beethoven 4."

Julia's book, "If It's Not One Thing, It's Your Mother" was published by Simon & Schuster in April 2013.

Julia has voiced numerous animated characters. The most recent was for the voice of Mrs. Squiggles in the Pixar movie, "Monsters University."

For seven years Julia performed with her friend Jill Sobule, the rock/folk musician. They did a show called "The Jill & Julia Show." They are no longer performing, but you can see the film they made of one of their last performances on YouTube.

Julia is not currently performing on stage. She has turned her attention to her writing.

Julia lives just outside Chicago in Wilmette, IL with her husband and daughter.

Image Downloads



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Press Page for JuliaSweeney.com



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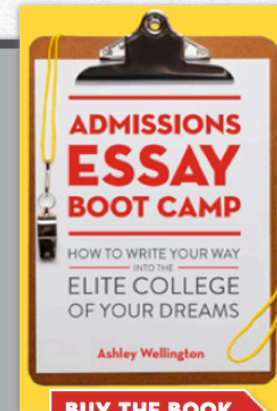
Publicity Contact: Daniel Wikey • 510-285-2937 • Daniel.Wikey@tenspeed.com

You can download the following items here:

[Hi-Res Book Cover \(PDF\)](#)

[Hi-Res Author Photo of Ashley Wellington](#)

[Press Release \(PDF\)](#)



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WHAT KIND OF STUDENT ARE YOU?

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**Tip Six:
Fully Utilize the Web
Medium**

The Web can do things that print can't

- **Let the Web bring your work to life in the printed page can't.**
- **Video and audio have never been easier to use.**
- **Take advantage of dynamic content.**
- **Make it easy to contact you in the way that you prefer to be contacted.**

JOHANNA STEIN

..... FINE JOCLAR EFFORTS

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- Press the Play button and enjoy.

* Works with any version of the book—both print and eBook.

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A Taste of Life, Part One

Click below to listen to author Sara Paretsky read from *A Taste of Life*. Part 1 of 2.

A Taste of Life, Part One

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A Taste of Life, Part Two

Click below to listen to author Sara Paretsky read from *A Taste of Life*. Part 2 of 2.

A Taste of Life, Part Two

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Critical Mass, Chapter 1

Click below to listen to author Sara Paretsky read from *Critical Mass*, Chapter 1.

Critical Mass, Chapter 1

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Critical Mass, Chapter 2, Part 1



The cold that winter ate into our bones. You can't imagine, living where you turn a dial and as much heat as you want glows from the radiator, but everything in England then was fueled by coal and there were terrible shortages the second winter after the war.

Total Recall



Tip Seven: Give Away Content

When you give away content, it pays off

- **There is a common (and understandable) reluctance to giving away content for free.**
- **Preview the first few chapters and you will draw in your readers, leaving them wanting more.**
- **Your site is an opportunity to include information that didn't make it into your book.**



Vicky Vlachonis

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MSc Ost. / Pain Expert and Author of *The Body Doesn't Lie*

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Pain FAQs

Pain is a signal, a warning from the body that something is not quite right. You might think you got that kink in your neck from the car accident or the slow burn in your lower back from sitting all day in front of the computer. But when you look into that pain you slowly uncover something even bigger: The truth about your life, your relationships, your work, your state of mind.

All pain, every single kind, is both physical and emotional. And all pain, when you learn how to face it, understand it, and let it go, can help clear your path to a better life.

Here are some common questions Vicky hears regarding pain management from her patients.

What role do emotions play in pain? ▲

What role does sleep play in pain management? ▲

How do I locate where my pain is really coming from? ▲

What are some common ways that people hide from their pain? ▲



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Site design by [Lisa Hazen](#)

VickyVlachonis.com FAQs

CRITICAL MASS EPILOGUE

Readers and V herself often are frustrated at the conclusion of one of her adventures because the baddies don't face enough justice. I felt that at the end of Critical Mass, but the book was complete in a literary way, and adding to it would have ruined the balance. This chapter, completely new here for Suspense Magazine, shows what happened after Critical Mass ended. Spoiler Alert: Don't read this if you haven't read Critical Mass—it reveals many details about the novel. You can download this excerpt as a PDF and print it here: [Beyond the Ending](#).

Beyond the Ending: Is it Justice?

I hit the street, arms over my head, when I heard the report. Thunder may sound like a gunshot, but a rifle never sounds like anything else: you know a weapon has been fired.

People were screaming and diving for cover. Twenty-Sixth and California is lousy with cops and sheriff's deputies; they were already swarming, outfitted with riot helmets and assault weapons.

When I didn't hear any more shots, I got cautiously to my knees and shuffled to the curb, huddling behind a parked car. I couldn't tell where the shot had come from, or if anyone had been hit, but the thicket of cameras outside the courthouse, waiting for the verdict in *Illinois v. Cordell Breen*, was trained on the front steps. That was where the cops were heading, too.

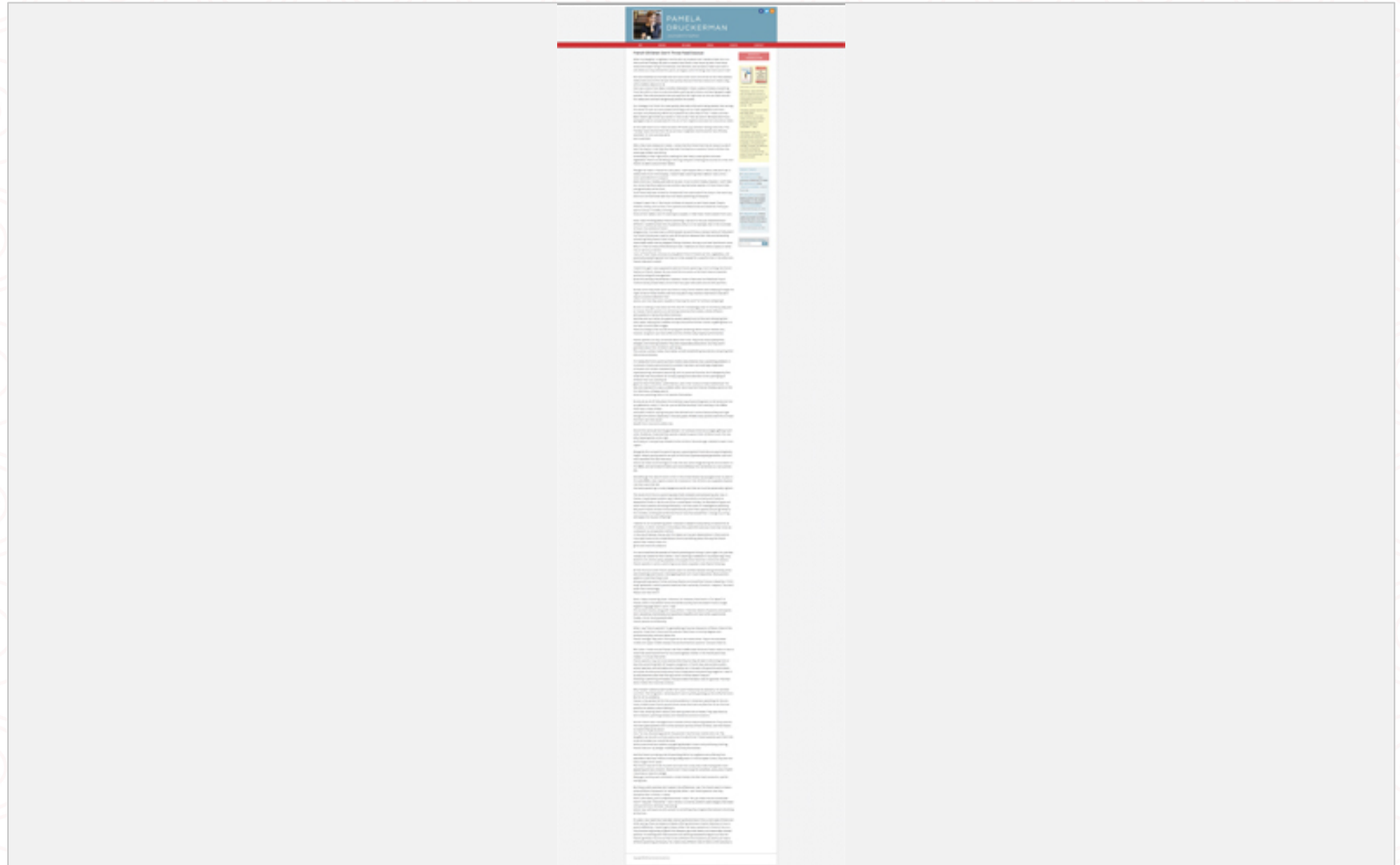
A car honked furiously, rubber squealing as swerved away from the parking strip. The driver stuck his head out the window to swear at me. He had special state plates, some deputy or prosecutor who could park by the courthouse and wanted to run over lowlifes in his path.

"You'd better get out of here before the road is blocked off," I said, getting to my feet, but my advice came too late: squad cars, their goose horns honking angrily, were blocking all the intersections near the courthouse and jails. They also were covering the exit to the parking garage across from the courts. I was going to be here for a while, so I went back to the west side of the street, where the cameras and cops and everyone else were jammed. A crowd was starting to build. Sheriff's deputies began bringing up sawhorses to cordon them away.

When the police cleared a path for an ambulance crew, I followed the stretcher bearers as far as the television cameras. Murray Ryerson had persuaded Global Entertainment to let him cover the trial. He's six-four, with red hair, easy to spot. I used the bruising elbows I'd perfected with my hockey-playing cousin to force people out of my way.

"What happened?" I asked.

Murray glanced at me but kept speaking into his microphone. "Just moments after the jury declared him not guilty on all but one of twenty-seven counts of a criminal indictment, Cordell Breen crumpled on the stairs in front of the Cook County Criminal Courts, an apparent victim of a gunshot. An ambulance crew is on the scene. Global News will keep you updated as events unfold.



French Children Don't Throw Food Excerpt: PamelaDruckerman.com



PAMELA DRUCKERMAN

Journalist & Author



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French Children Don't Throw Food Excerpt

When my daughter is eighteen months old, my husband and I decide to take her on a little summer holiday. We pick a coastal town that's a few hours by train from Paris, where we've been living (I'm American, he's British), and we book a hotel room with a crib. She's our only child at this point, so forgive us for thinking: How hard could it be?

We have breakfast at the hotel. But we have to eat lunch and dinner at the little seafood restaurants around the old port. We quickly discover that two restaurant meals a day, with a toddler, deserve to be their own circle of hell. Bean is briefly interested in food: a piece of bread, or anything fried. But within a few minutes she starts spilling salt shakers and tearing apart sugar packets. Then she demands to be sprung from her high chair so she can dash around the restaurant and bolt dangerously toward the docks.

Our strategy is to finish the meal quickly. We order while we're being seated, then we beg the server to rush out some bread and bring us all our food, appetizers and main courses, simultaneously. While my husband has a few bites of fish, I make sure that Bean doesn't get kicked by a waiter or lost at sea. Then we switch. We leave enormous, apologetic tips to compensate for the arc of torn napkins and calamari around our table.

On the walk back to our hotel we swear off travel, joy, and ever having more kids. This "holiday" seals the fact that life as we knew it eighteen months earlier has officially

BOOKS IN TRANSLATION



SAME BOOK: US AND UK VERSIONS

"Marvelous... Like Julia Child, who translated the secrets of French cuisine, Druckerman has investigated and distilled the essentials of French child-rearing." —NPR

"I've been a parent now for more than eight years, and—confession—I've never made it all the way through a parenting book. But I found *Bringing Up Bébé* to be irresistible." —Slate

"Self-deprecating, witty,

Connect with me:

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Questions?

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