



2006 Editorial/Freelance Workshops

Guide to AJPA Freelance Writers

2006 Freelance Workshop Attendees

Guide to AJPA Freelance Writers

Sharon Duke Estroff - Internationally Syndicated Jewish Parenting Columnist

Personal Biography: An award-winning Atlanta educator and mother of four - is an internationally syndicated Jewish parenting columnist and author. Her popular edgy bi-weekly articles tackle a broad spectrum of parenting concerns - modern and traditional; Jewish and secular. She uses an intimate, light and engaging tone that is consistently balanced with meaty, practical suggestions for busy 21st century parents. Some of her recent articles include "Oy IM Worried: What Every Parent Needs to Know about Instant Messaging;" "Busting Bad Bar Mitzvah Behavior;" "Modern Playdate Protocol;" "Closing the Book on Homework Wars;" "Show Them the Honey (Rosh Hashanah);" "Reclaiming Perfection and High-Tech Hanukkah."

Sharon Duke Estroff recently signed a book deal with Broadway books, a division of Random House, for the publication of "Can I Have a Cell Phone for Hanukkah? The Essential 411 on Raising Modern Jewish Kids," which will hit store shelves in 2007.

Places Published: *The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles; The Jewish Advocate (Boston); Washington Jewish Week; New Jersey Jewish News; the New Jersey Jewish Tribune; Atlanta Jewish Times; Florida Jewish News; San Diego Jewish Times; About Our Kids magazine; Around the Corner magazine; The Jewish Tribune (Toronto) ; Jewish News of Greater Phoenix; the Arizona Jewish Post; the Texas Jewish Post; The Milwaukee Jewish News; Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle; j. the jewish weekly of Northern California; Shalom Magazine; Jewish*

Independent of British Columbia; American Israelite; Chai Magazine; The Cleveland Jewish News; Life and Style: A Las Vegas Jewish Magazine; The Jewish Journal North of Boston; The New Standard of Columbus Ohio; The Jewish Voice and Herald of Rhode Island; The Ohio Jewish Chronicle; The Dayton Jewish Observer; The Youngstown Jewish Journal; The Connecticut Jewish Leader; The Jewish Community Voice of Portland Maine; and Something Jewish Magazine – London.

Contact Information: Email: estroff@aol.com.

Phone: (770)-552-0507; (770)-310-4400

Address: 4590 LaSalle Ct. Marietta, GA 30062

Tekla Szymanski Senior Editor/Political Analyst

Personal Biography: Tekla is a multilingual foreign editor/writer/analyst who speaks and writes in German, Hebrew, French and Italian. She has 15 years of progressive international and domestic media experience. Her focus is on Western Europe, Israel, German-Jewish relations, American Jewry, foreign media and international relations; she is highly skilled in online media, Web development and content management (<http://www.tekla-szymanski.com>).

Having lived on three continents and witnessed major political events firsthand (the Cold War in divided Berlin, the Lebanon War and the 1991 Gulf War in Israel, 9/11 in New York), her work reflects in-depth knowledge of cultures and societies, languages, foreign media and global politics. As a world citizen, she has observed how political events are shaped and perceived outside the United States, while keeping an eye on international relations and societal, cultural and economic trends that have yet to surface here.

Places Published: She freelances for the German-Jewish magazine *Tribüne*, based in Frankfurt, Germany, where she writes a regular column entitled “USA Diary” on issues

pertaining to American-Jewry, American-Israeli and American-German relations.

She has written for literary magazines, i.e. the Berlin-based *Literaturen*, and the weekly *Freitag*; for *World Press Review* magazine and its web site, www.worldpress.org; for the *Jerusalem Post*, *Globes and Telegraph* in Israel; for the German-Jewish biweekly *Aufbau*; she has also written a chapter on German-Jewish immigrants in New York in the 1930s for the Leo Baeck Institute's Almanac 2006 (Jerusalem).

Contact Information: Website: <http://www.tekla-szymanski.com>, Email: contact@tekla-szymanski.com, Phone: (347) 596-0570

Angela Himsel

Places Published: Angela Himsel has written for the *New York Times*, the *Jewish Week*, the *Forward*, the *Detroit Jewish News*, *Tikkun*, *Sh'ma*, *Lilith*, *Shmate* and *BOOK*. She recently completed a memoir called "I Grew Up With Demons," which details her childhood in a fundamentalist Christian cult and her conversion to Judaism.

Contact Information: Email: ahimsel@aol.com

David Morris

Personal Biography: David Morris serves as associate editor of the *Florida Jewish News*, a weekly established in May 2005 by Avi Frier in South Florida to give the areas rapidly growing population stretching from West Palm Beach to Miami more in-depth coverage of local, national and international Jewish affairs. From June 2004 to January 2006 he was a staff writer for South Florida's *Jewish Journal*. David was not trained academically as a journalist but based on his love of writing, 22 years of living in Israel (1976-1998) and his knowledge of Jewish practice and communal structure, he

has grown into the job as a second career. He received a Bachelors in Social Work from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1976 and graduated Israel's Ministry of Tourism Tour Guide Course in 1983. During his 14 years of active tour guiding and residency in Jerusalem, David also represented Danny Siegel's Ziv Tzedakah Foundation as its Israel agent. He is the father of two Israeli-born, adult children (Noa 22 and Ziv 20) now both living outside of New York City in Danbury, CT.

Contact Information: david@floridajewishnews.com Tel: 954-987-2720, ext. 11. Address: 2632 Hollywood Blvd.; Suite 306; Hollywood, FL 33020.
www.floridajewishnews.com.

Chana Billet

Personal Biography: Chana Billet specializes as a food writer. She is at work on a cookbook--a country-by-country exploration of Jewish food from around the world. She would love to start a magazine dedicated to the burgeoning trend of haute kosher cuisine.

Places Published: She's is a regular contributor to the food section of the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* and has been published in numerous Jewish publications (*The Jewish Week, The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles, The Reporter, Amit's Magazine*, etc.) in addition to other periodicals such as *Pregnancy Magazine* based in New York .

Contact Information: chanabillet@gmail.com
425 Broadway Lawrence, NY 11559. 516-295-1605

Helen Zegerman Schwimmer

Personal Biography: As a baal teshuvah, Helen has lived and traveled in numerous Jewish communities. With friends and relatives who are Orthodox, Reform, “black hat”, converts and unaffiliated, this versatile writer offers a unique perspective on the diversity of contemporary Jewish

life, whether she's relating the story of an Orthodox Yale student battling against enforced coed habitation or the ultimate makeover of a Japanese-American convert.

Areas of Interest: Helen Zegerman Schwimmer's articles reveal the existence of a parallel universe where Jews don't kvetch, they kvell, about their meaningful relationships, their good fortune and their faith. Not a guilt-ridden, victimized, potty-mouthed comedian in the whole bunch. She's written about the rabbi with the long gray beard, dressed all in black who walks into a synagogue and confesses, "I used to be an ordained pastor in the Methodist Church but now I'm a Chassidic Jew living in Jerusalem." And about the man who was ready to take his vows for the priesthood in France when the Cardinal revealed to him that his mother was Jewish and so now he's a "zayde" to several grandchildren. And about the Master Chef who raised dough for the victims of terror in Israel by recruiting an army of volunteers to help her bake and sell one million chocolate chip cookies. These are some of the inspiring, optimistic and heroic people Helen writes about whose stories satisfy the profound craving we all have to see the good guys and gals win.

Places Published: *The Jewish Press*

Contact Information: hzs8@aol.com.

Ron Kaplan

Personal Biography: Ron Kaplan of Montclair, NJ, has been a freelance writer for more than 10 years. His work includes sports, pop culture, and books.

Places Published: Has appeared in such publications as *Mental Floss*, *E Magazine*, *New York Sportscene*, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, *Baseball America*, *Irish America*, *Forward*, *MultiCultural Review*, and *Elysian Fields Quarterly*, among others. Samples of his work are available on his Web site, www.RonKaplanNJ.Tripod.com/rk.

Contact Information: RonKaplanNJ@comcast.net.

Howard Blas

Personal Biography: Undergrad degrees in History and Jewish and Near Eastern Studies; Masters Degrees in social work and special education. At-home father to four children for more than 10 years. Currently director of Jewish special needs overnight camping program. Tutor of Jewish children with various special needs. Howard helps families plan appropriate bar and bat mitzvahs. He moved to New Haven, CT one year ago after 16 years in New York City.

Areas of Interest: Parenting, holidays, Internet, book reviews, Kosher food industry, Jewish education, Jewish camping, special needs, Israel (trips, etc.) bar and bat mitzvahs.

Places Published: *Baltimore Jewish Times*, *The Jewish Week (NY)*, *St. Louis Jewish Light*, etc. Currently, he writes nearly each week for *Connecticut Jewish Ledger*, *JTA* and approximately once a month for *The Jerusalem Report*.

Contact Information: howardblas@hotmail.com; Phone: (203) 397-3040; 1988 Chapel Street New Haven, CT 06515.

Esther D. Kustanowitz

Personal Biography: Esther has ten years of experience working with the Jewish community, including stints at the Jewish Theological Seminary as Director of Publications and editor of *JTS Magazine*, and at *Hadassah*. Esther is a full-time freelance writer and editor whose areas of expertise include dating and relationships, Jewish life, and pop culture. During February's Jewlicious @ the Beach student conference in Long Beach, CA over President's Day Weekend, Esther presided over and participated in a panel of Jewish writers talking about how their Jewish identity impacts their writing. Esther has been quoted as a dating-issues and pop culture expert for articles on MSN's Dating and Relationships page, as well as in Salon, NYMetro and Ad Age. As the author of two blogs--
<http://jdatersanonymous.blogspot.com> and

<http://myurbankvetch.com>-- and a major contributor to a third (Jewlicious.com), she has recently emerged as one of the up-and-coming voices in the world of Jewish blogging.

Places Published: Her singles column, "First Person Singular," appears biweekly in *The Jewish Week* (NY), where she has also published articles about Jewish standup comedy, Orthodox egalitarian wedding rituals, body image issues for teenage girls, and special needs Jewish education. She formerly wrote Sole Searching, a monthly column on Jewish spirituality for GenerationJ.com, a webzine for Jews in their 20s and 30s. Her articles have also appeared in *The Reporter*, *World Jewish Digest*, *Lilith Magazine*, *j. the jewish weekly of Northern California*, *The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles*, *JTS Magazine*, and *United Synagogue Review*, and in several webzines, including JBooks.com, MzVibe.com, and Jewznewz.com.

Contact information: For clips and news, see any of her blogs or visit her website at estherk.com.

Robin K. Levinson

Personal Biography: Robin K. Levinson currently specializes in issues pertaining to family, ritual, spirituality, women, parenting, and general Jewish interest. She also does freelance editing for a variety of companies and organizations. Her latest project is Gali Girls, a series of Jewish historical fiction books for children. The first book, "Miriam's Journey," was just published; book two, "Reyna and the Jade Star," is due out in July. Robin is the winner of 32 journalism awards, including two Rockower awards (1st & 3rd) for feature writing. She has been a professional writer since 1981. Founder of the Professional Writers Alliance of Mercer County, she lives in Hamilton, New Jersey.

Places Published: Robin K. Levinson writes regularly for *Jewish Woman* magazine and *Jewish Book World*. Previous

to writing for these two publications she was a health and science writer for the secular press.

Contact Information: Phone: 609.584.9330

Anne Phyllis Pinzow

Personal Biography: Anne Phyllis Pinzow has been a professional writer since 1979, working her way up from editorial clerk to staff writer and columnist at the local daily newspaper. Since then Anne has edited books, written scripts for industrial and educational video, pamphlets and instruction booklets, press releases, written and sold movie scripts, worked as an acquisitions editor for a small book publisher and produced copy for websites.

Places Published: Anne primarily works for newspapers and has had articles in secular as well as Jewish publications: *The Journal-News, The Bergen Record, The Independent, Our Town, Home and Store News, The Jewish Reporter, The Jewish Focus*. These have been of news events, political coverage, features on individuals of interest, biographies, obituaries, and “Helpline” columns about self help, volunteer and service organizations, and “The New Immigrants,” which dealt with immigrants in the 1980s, their reason for coming to the United States and the issues they faced.

Contact Information: Phone: 845.620.9491

Email: For secular publishers APinzow@aol.com ; For Jewish publications and industry

annepinzow@optonline.net.

Joan G. Friedman

Personal Biography: Joan G. Friedman is a writer of newspaper articles including publications in Arizona, California, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Louisiana, Ohio, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, Washington, Wisconsin and Canada. Joan has had a

byline in local Pennsylvania papers for 18 years. Joan is also the former editor of *Shalom Newspaper* and has four unpublished manuscripts. Her specialties are holidays, grand-parenting, reviews, family issues, simchas, book, travel, home improvement, decorating, interviews, and of course opinions.

Contact Information: Phone: 610.670.3112, Fax: 610.670.3103, Cell: 610.780.5183 Email: joan@friedman.net
Address: 223 Hawthorne Court North. Wyomissing, PA, 19610

Martha Mendelsohn

Personal Biography: Martha Mendelsohn writes on any topic except politics, mostly for *The Jewish Week* in New York. She particularly enjoys doing first-person pieces. But her output this year has been slim; partly because she is working on a piece of fiction--a young adult novel with a Jewish angle set in 1956.

Contact Information: Phone: 212.799.6721
Email: marthamend@aol.com. 55 Central Park West New York, NY

Meira Maierovitz

Personal Biography: Meira Maierovitz Drazin is a freelance writer based in New York City. Among a broad range of interests her area of expertise includes young Jewish families, Jewish non-profits, Jewish activism and education and Jewish communal life. Before leaving to begin a family, Meira was the Communications Manager and Associate Director of Communications at Jewish National Fund where she helped develop and implement the organization's national public awareness program including identifying public relations opportunities, writing and disseminating national and regional press releases to media outlets across the United States, developing and executing crisis management

strategies, writing copy for JNF marketing materials and Website, writing and disseminating fact sheets for staff and lay leader use, as well as writing academic and feature articles for an array of publications in the U.S. and Israel including Jewish newspapers, mainstream community press, websites, newsletters and academic journals. Before beginning her professional work in the Jewish community (where she has also worked at the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee) Meira completed a Masters in English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University.

Places Published: As a freelancer or on behalf of JNF Meira's articles have appeared in *The Jewish Week* (NY), *Washington Jewish Week*, *American Jewish World*, *Intermountain Jewish News*, *Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles*, *Ohio Jewish Chronicle*, *Jewish Image*, *Jewish Herald-Voice*, *Jewish Journal North of Boston*, and *Texas Jewish Post* among several others.

Contact Information: Phone: 917-715-8834

Email: mmdrazin@gmail.com

George Baumgarten

Personal Biography: George Baumgarten is a journalist specializing in the United Nations, Jewish affairs, U.S. and International Politics, and international affairs. He has interviewed numerous world leaders, including Yitzhak Shamir, Benjamin Netanyahu, Javier Perez de Cuellar and Nelson Mandela. He has also traveled to over 130 countries and is familiar with many far-flung Jewish communities. George Baumgarten graduated from Ramaz High School in New York, holds a B.A. in Political Science from Yeshiva University, and has done graduate work in the same discipline at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He lives in New York City.

Places Published: His work has appeared in numerous publications, including *The Jewish Week* (New York), *The*

Jewish Advocate (Boston), *The Canadian Jewish News* (Toronto) and others.

Contact Information: Phone: 212.722.6374;

Fax: 212.722.0719; E-Mail: gabjournalist@aol.com

Address: 1755 York Avenue New York, NY 10128-6874

Lori Silberman Brauner

Personal Biography: Lori Silberman Brauner has written for many Jewish newspapers and magazines, including the *New Jersey Jewish News*, *Hadassah Magazine*, *JTA*, and *Around the Corner* magazine. Currently a part-time copy editor at *NJJN*, she continues to freelance for these publications. She can be reached at LevanaB@aol.com.

Contact Information: Email: LevanaB@aol.com

Jeanette Friedman

Personal Biography: Jeanette Friedman is an editor, reporter, and writes op-ed and profiles. Her areas of expertise include: the general Jewish world, Holocaust issues and issues surrounding Holocaust survivors and the Claims Conference; domestic violence in the Jewish community; the agunah issue and certain areas of popular culture. She is considered the "party" expert by the local Jewish paper and churn out how to throw a great "whatever"--from building your own chuppah to creating your own family Haggadah. She is also good at celebrity profiles. She has interviewed more than a few (approximately 300)--from Robin Williams and Sumner Redstone to David Mamet, Carl Sagan, Stephen J. Gould, George Soros and even Joan Rivers. Designers included Pauline Trigere, Donna Karan and Ralph Lauren--and yes, she did Steven Spielberg and even his favorite agent, "Avner"--aka Juval Aviv. Arik Sharon, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, and a huge list of others, famous and not so, including Jewish leaders like Andrea Bronfman z"l, and Malcolm Hoenlien.

Places Published: *Jewish Standard, Together and Jewschool*, Webmaster for Americangathering.com, the website for the umbrella organization for American Holocaust Survivors and their Descendants.

Website: <http://www.jeanettefriedman.com/>

Contact Information: Thewordsmithy@aol.com

Michele Alperin

Personal Biography: Michele Alperin is a freelance writer in Princeton, New Jersey, and writes feature articles, personal profiles, and web content for Jewish and secular media. Michele has also worked in the Jewish community, as director of the Fabrangens Havurah and the Jewish Study Center in Washington, DC, and as a teacher of children and adults. She has a master's degree in Jewish education from the Jewish Theological Seminary, and is fluent in Hebrew.

Places Published: Her work has appeared in myjewishlearning.com; JESNA e-newsletters; *United Synagogue Review*; *U.S. 1*, a business and entertainment weekly; *Language*; *Adjunct Advocate*; *Feminist Collections*; *United Synagogue Review*; *Agenda*; and YIVO's *Yedies*. She is also a copyeditor for the *Jewish Publication Society*, was lifecycle editor during the initial creation of myjewishlearning.com, and has written for *Drisha*.

Contact Information: Phone: 609-924-6944, Email: alperinma@aol.com. Address: 56 Robert Road, Princeton, NJ 08540.