

WOMEN SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

how to sell editors on your ideas and, ultimately, yourself.

WHY WE NEED YOU:

- The lack of diversity in women's voices is a serious problem.
- Conformity of messages surrounding sex, abortion, contraception, dating, and marriage is stifling and dangerous.
- Alternative voices are in high demand.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

- Blog posts: usually quick, interesting and short.
- Op-ed: generally a short (700-1500 words) article expressing an opinion or viewpoint on a timely news topic.
- News story: reporting usually only produced by staff writers.
- Essay: more thoughtful and nuanced than an op-ed.
- Feature: lengthy reported pieces chock full of stories and research.

WHEN WRITING A COLUMN:

- Find a news hook
- Know the word limit
- Make a single point
- Avoid jargon
- "Humanize" your article
- Make a specific recommendation
- Draw the reader in, but get to the point
- End with a bang

HOW TO PITCH

- Why should an editor listen to you? Particularly when you're just starting out? How do you establish credibility, interest and the importance of your point?
 - YOUR PITCH SHOULD ANSWER
 - Why now? What's the news hook?
 - So what? Why should people care?
 - Why me? Why am I the best person to write this?

YOUR PITCH SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Your idea in a few lines
- Your relevant credentials
- The finished piece pasted below your pitch
- Your contact information

ASPECTS OF A SUCCESSFUL PITCH:

- Timely
- Well written
- Brief and clear

- Conveys expertise
- Unexpected point of view

WHAT HAPPENS IF THEY RESPOND:

- First off, say “thank you” to any response.
- If “no,” remember this might be the beginning of a conversation than can lead to “yes.”

CONGRATULATIONS

- Your piece has been accepted. What now?
- The editing process is where relationships are made. Editors won't work with reporters who don't accept edits.