

CANVASREBEL

Meet Lynne Golodner



We were lucky to catch up with Lynne Golodner recently and have shared our conversation below.

Lynne, thanks for taking the time to share your stories with us today Do you wish you had started sooner?

While I began my career as a journalist in New York City, writing every day, and really began writing professionally even earlier, in high school, for a local newspaper, I wasn't doing what I'll call creative writing as my main focus until my 50s. Here's how my career has unfolded: I graduated college (University of Michigan), moved to NYC 3 weeks later and started working as a journalist at a daily newspaper. That job moved me to Washington, D.C., and I started my MFA in Poetry at the same time. My master's thesis was a poetry manuscript ready for publication and a publisher gave me a contract in time for my graduation, so I arrived at commencement with a box of books. I was 25 years old.

That was a huge success! I'd wanted to have a book published by the time I was 30 and I beat that dream by 5 years! Still, my day job, my income-earning, came from writing stories-for-hire, not creative, from my imagination. I spent five years employed as a journalist in New York, Washington, D.C., and Detroit before going freelance at the age of 27, which catapulted me to

earning six figures and working from home. I have worked from home ever since! My MFA enabled me to teach writing at the university level, so I did that, too.

Between 1996 and 2013, I wrote and had published 8 books, all by small publishers. I spent 15 years as a journalist and then in 2007-2008, created a marketing company called Your People LLC. I simply took my journalistic skills and translated them into marketing-with-meaning and storytelling and built an incredibly successful business with clients on three continents.

Still, I'd always wanted to write novels. I wrote one in 2000, but it was rough. I needed to mature as a writer, and as a person, to get the point of writing good novels. That happened in my late 40s, when I decided enough was enough, and I wanted to spend my days writing creatively. I shifted everything, firing clients and shrinking my business so I could spend the first half of each day writing, and I returned to teaching writing so that everything I do involves creative writing. I kept 2 marketing clients for bread-and-butter income, and now I only take on clients who are authors in need of marketing help – if I take them on at all.

I also decided in this process, after studying the publishing industry, that I didn't want to jump through hoops or amend my writing to make other people money. So I created a publishing imprint, Scotia Road Books, to help women over 40 with strong voices find a publishing outlet for their books. That's how I publish my novels, too, and I'm committed to writing a book a year for the rest of my life. My first novel, *Woman of Valor*, came out in September 2023. My second novel, *Cave of Secrets*, comes out in August 2024. I'm nearly finished with a first draft of my third novel, which I hope to have out in the world in 2025.





Lynne, before we move on to more of these sorts of questions, can you take some time to bring our readers up to speed on you and what you do?

My mother says I wrote my first story when I was 6. I keep a corduroy-covered journal from my elementary school years on a shelf behind my desk, to remind me who I've always been.

I write to make sense of the world. To figure out what I believe. To process experiences. To make meaning and spark conversation and thought. I love playing with words!

I just never believed I could do it for a living.

So many people feel this way! Many of the women who come to my writing classes say something like, "I always wanted to write but..." There's a story about how someone said it was a nice little hobby or they couldn't make any money at it or whatever. But their souls, like mine, were screaming to be creative. And it took a retirement from a career or kids leaving the nest to find the courage to just try to write. I'm really teaching confidence, as I'm building my own.

I absolutely love writing and publishing. I am surprised by how much I love every step of the publishing process!

I grew up in suburban Detroit, the eldest of three siblings, to an entrepreneurial father who was my best business advisor, and a stay-at-home mother who supported us all. I couldn't wait to leave and went to University of Michigan for undergrad, then fled to New York City and lived in Washington, D.C., before returning home to build a life in metro Detroit. I always wanted to be

married and have kids, and I married my first husband really quickly and had 3 kids in 4 years. I also became Orthodox in Judaism in my 20s and spent a decade in that religious milieu before leaving it and my husband.

I feel like I came alive, came into my own, was finally confident and independent, at 37. I met and married a great man a few years later, and we've been together ever since, blending our kids and lives. My ex and I are friends now, and our kids are pretty amazing. They're all grown but still hang around a lot. And I don't really mind that.

I created my author brand around the work I'd already been doing for most of my career. I say that I write emotional novels about compelling Jewish characters who fill their lives with passion, purpose and food. Yet, my books are interesting and provocative for any reader, not just Jewish ones! My Jewish identity is important to me, and I'm proud to incorporate it into my writing.





Have you ever had to pivot?

I've had two big pivots – from journalism to entrepreneur/marketing CEO and from that role to full-time author and writing coach. Pivots are hard, but exciting. I planned it all out far in advance and gradually transitioned from one state to the next.

There have been times I've been worried about money – would I have enough, would I lose a client, what if my books wouldn't sell? My father was a great guide for me while he was alive, and I miss him terribly. But he taught me some important lessons, like, do the work in front of you and you'll always have work. And to not get too emotionally attached to a client or a project – do the work and take the money.

But I've taught myself important lessons, too, like do what you love and the money will come (I didn't originate that, but I live it). That no one will love my books more than me, so embrace the marketing and build it over time. That success as an author is a slow burn. That to be a career-author means writing book after book after book and not putting all my hopes and dreams and expectations on any one book.

I remind myself that most authors don't make a sustainable living from their books until they have 5 or more in the world. I'm happiest writing, so I'll keep going and it will pay off in time. I've had to learn patience in this career!



For you, what's the most rewarding aspect of being a creative?
I get to do what I love every day!

Also, I teach my kids – and others! – that it's possible, and preferable, to be my true self all the time, not just secreted away for some day.

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