

Pausing to Get It Right

In Memoriam

AJW

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By the time Antonia Glosby joined the Podcast Circle of WWf(a)C, the group had been infiltrated by Tuesday morning writers. Jenny Stanton was part of the original circle that transitioned from our Radio Show to Podcasting. We were joined by Phebe Beiser, with a promise of chocolate at every gathering. Had we let this information leak out, I suspect our circle would have widened beyond. We also added Charlene Taylor Bales, Carol Stewart and Toni Lackner to the mix.

Little did we know that it was not the technology that produced the wonder called *Women Writing for (a) Change – The Podcast Edition*. The makeup of our circle became essential to its success not only on iTunes, but in creating a transformative, positive experience for the writer, wishing to publish in a non-conventional manner.

While many of us were leaders in our lives, we decided upon a shared leadership model which involved dividing up the duties of host, recording, editing, and what we came to call *shepherdess*, the one who would hold the circle together while the host and guests and words swirled around.

When Antonia joined the group, she was anxious to play an integral role. I knew how difficult the recording and editing aspect was, and while Antonia often offered to learn, I deferred. What she wanted most, after being a guest, was to act as host.

Being a host involved setting the tone for the show. Devising a title and theme. Meeting with the guests prior to the recording. Greeting the writer on the day of. Ensuring a safe environment for her or his voice. And moving the interview forward.

When Antonia was prepared to take on this role, she did so with enthusiasm and nervousness. If Antonia was hosting, we would have to record a several takes for the show's introduction and closing, because Antonia wanted to get it right. She closely followed the practices of WWf(a)C and the agreed upon structure of the podcast, in order to create a safe, enjoyable environment for her guests.

As for her own words, Antonia's writings were extensive. She could have published multiple anthologies of her work. She cherished and rose to the occasion of read-arounds, greenbooks and public events. She never shied away from the light, yet she never sought it out.

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AJW (cont.)

A few years ago, I visited Antonia in the hospital and brought her a book about haiku. The short poems would be easy to digest, easy to savor. She slept off and on during my visit so I picked up the book and began reading. The author of *Haiku Mind* had written, "That crystalline moment in the haiku is a deep reminder to pause and be present....It is a way of being mindful of the ordinary moments of our lives – that I've come to call *Haiku mind*." I read that introduction aloud to Antonia. Her eyes fluttered open and closed, in acknowledgement of the ordinary moment, which had turned extraordinary, between two women in a hospital setting, reading haiku, "*pausing / halfway up the stair – / white chrysanthemums,*" as nurses buzzed and buzzers sounded around us.

In Antonia's life, she fully inhabited the pages of longhand or copies she carried loyally to into each small group, large group or podcast setting. She was always prepared, and ready to begin again if necessary. Antonia worked hard at getting the ordinary moments of her life exactly right.