

BROOKE REVIEWS

YA Book Blog


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Interview with Elizabeth Stuckey-French

February 3, 2014 by [brooke](#) — [1 Comment](#)

Meet Elizabeth Stuckey-French, author and professor at Florida State University. She is the author of *The Revenge of the Radioactive Lady* and *Mermaids on the Moon*, and co-author (with Janet Burroway and Ned Stuckey-French) of *Writing Fiction: A Guide to the Narrative Craft*. I've recently had the privilege of meeting both Elizabeth Stuckey-French and husband Ned, ([check out my interview with Ned!](#)) who gave me such [great advice](#) about writing and college. Find out more by visiting her [website](#).



Are you a fan of sharing what you've written during the "early stages," and asking for advice? If so, who has the privilege of reading your first drafts?

Ned reads drafts of everything I write, and I do the same for him. He's my best reader. I think it's crucial for writers to have trusted readers to show their work to, because there many things you just can't see about your own work, especially in the early drafts. Of course, what I really want when I show him something is to be told that what I've just written is amazing! Brilliant! The best thing I've ever written! But after some (inadequate) praise, he will get down to asking questions about the draft and pointing out problems. I don't want to hear it then, but after awhile I always realize he's right and pull up my bootstraps and get to work. (What are bootstraps, anyway?) After he reads a draft, I have a few other trusted writer/reader friends I'll show things to before I send to my agent, who will also give me some advice. Sometime takes awhile to find just the right people to help you, and it's good if you can read their work in return. If someone reads your work and tells you things that make you want to never write another word, that person isn't a good reader for you.

What are the two most important traits writers can possess, and why?

Patience and Perseverance. Because most people just give up when they realize how frustrating and challenging the whole process is. Many people have writing talent, but most of those people aren't compelled or compulsive or thick-skinned enough to keep going. Which is fine. Only keep doing it if you can't not do it.

What is the one piece of advice you wish you had been given when you began writing?

It takes time, and lots of it, to get something into publishable form. It always take much longer than you think it will. Patience and perseverance.



I'm Brooke Harrison - I'm a 20-yr-old writer and voracious reader.

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**How do you believe writers should connect with their local writing community?
Why/why not is this beneficial?**

Writers need each other. Join a writing group or start one! Writing itself is a lonely activity, but we can support each other's work, pass on advice, etc, and make it feel less so. A writing community—either on-line or in person—is essential. I always tell students that they aren't competing with other writers, although it can often feel that way. The only person they are competing against is the part of themselves that is lazy, careless, and just wants to do what's easiest.

What do you believe is the greatest myth about succeeding in the writing/publishing world?

That once you're a published writer everything is smooth sailing. Not true. It's always a struggle. You always doubt yourself and wonder if you'll measure up. And the publishing industry is simply a business, and a fickle business at that. A friend of mine won Pulitzer Prize and his next novel was turned down by a number of publishers before it was accepted. You can't count on anything, so enjoy the process of writing, when you have your own little world to disappear into. That's the only really satisfying part of the whole process.

What do you enjoy most about being a professor?

I have had some amazing students, many of whom have gone on to publish books. It's always so exciting to work with students who are in love with writing and watching their progress. And I feel so lucky that I get to go into a class and talk about what I love most in the world. How great is that?

*Thanks so much, Elizabeth!



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Hi! I'm Brooke, and I'm an author. I love writing; I always have, and I love anything that has to do with words and poems and reading. I also like to sing, act, swim, and laugh (a lot.) [Read More...](#)

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