

BONNIE JEAN FELDKAMP

Syndicated Columnist

Holding space for good,
writing stories and working to
make the world a better place



About

Bonnie Jean Feldkamp

Bonnie Jean Feldkamp is a syndicated columnist who has published personal essays in the New York Times, USA Today and newspapers across the U.S. She has also contributed essays to 10 books.

Feldkamp's award-winning syndicated columns are distributed via Creators Syndicate. Her column is "Holding Space For Good" and ties personal experience to current events to help readers empathize, relate and care.

She has been writing, publishing and mentoring writers for more than 20 years. Feldkamp is the former community engagement and opinion editor for the Pulitzer Prize-winning Louisville Courier Journal as well as the former media director for the National Society of Newspaper Columnists. Her [TEDx Talk "Contempt Versus Connection in Online Communication"](#) encourages productive discourse and fosters commentary with compassion.

Contact

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Workshops, panels and interviews for authors, essayists, academics and advocates

How to Promote Your Book by Writing an Op-Ed

Op-eds and essays are a great way to establish your expertise and promote your book but so many writers get it wrong. Submissions tend to be either too self promotional or they come across as a PSA. Learn what makes a good opinion submission and how to strike the right chord for opinion editors. Bonnie Jean Feldkamp will show you how to mine your work for op-ed topics and angles, pitch an opinion editor and share real slush pile examples of successful op-eds from authors. With actionable advice and writing exercises to get you going, learn how to write op-eds and essays that resonate with readers and earn you book sales.

Writing your truth in the age of hate

Writing personal essay or memoir requires courage. Outside opinions and fear of criticism can bog you down. Self care should be built into your writing routine, especially when you're writing hard truths. In this session, you'll learn how to use writing prompts to clear the self-doubt cobwebs and social media static. Together we'll drill down to the story you are so brave to write by getting granular about who you are writing for and why it's important. Learn how to deny the haters access to your heart and take care of yourself so you can take care of your manuscript.

Workshops, panels and interviews for authors, essayists, academics and advocates

Distill your story and get to the point for flash nonfiction and opinion essays

The digital space prefers brevity and publications require you to be succinct. But just because something is short doesn't mean it lacks depth and impact. In this session you'll learn how to distill your personal stories while driving your point home for short nonfiction and opinion essays. Learn which details to choose, where to start your action, and how to trim the fat so you can dive right into your narrative and publish your story as a short satisfying read.

How to establish expertise writing op-eds and guest essays

Op-eds and essays are a great way to establish expertise and showcase your work but so many public relations professionals get it wrong. Submissions tend to be either too self promotional or they come across as a PSA. Learn what makes a good opinion submission and how to strike the right chord for opinion editors. This session shows how to mine your work for op-ed topics and angles. You'll learn how to pitch an opinion editor and read real slush pile examples of successful op-eds. Write guest essays that resonate with readers and earn you followers and customers.

How to advocate for your cause by writing op-eds and guest essays

Op-eds and essays are another way to lift the voices of marginalized populations and advocate for social solutions. In this workshop you'll learn how to identify narratives that illustrate your point without sounding preachy or losing the reader in a data dump. Together, we'll go through published examples of opinion pieces that worked well, inspired readers and caught the eye of opinion editors sloughing through the slush pile. Writers will learn how to mine their organization's advocacy work for op-ed topics and powerful narratives so they can write effective guest essays and op-eds that inspires change for their community.

Moderating Panels and Interviewing Authors

If you have an author or panel of experts you'd like to showcase and want an experienced journalist to lead an insightful interview, I'd love to hear from you. Here are two recordings as examples:

- [Conversations With Olmsted: What happened to Parks for All People?](#)
- [Q&A With Author David Chrisinger](#)



Looking for something not listed?

I frequently develop customized presentations on column-writing, essays, editing, social media, and productive discourse. Please consider this list a sampling, not a complete menu.

Pricing and Logistics

I've been teaching writing and public relations workshops since 2004. In recent years, I've specialized in teaching workshops that help people doing good work share their stories in the form of essays or op-eds for mainstream publication. I also am interested in moderating panel discussions and interviewing nonfiction authors.

My workshops are perfect for anyone who is passionate about improving our world and wants to reach a wider audience. with their ideas, research or personal story. Together we'll explore what it means to elevate their voices for productive discourse. I am passionate about sharing personal experiences that exemplify resilience and provide solutions for the problems our country faces. For this reason, I will not lead a workshop for hate groups or organizations where the mission and purpose do not align with my values.

I am happy to consider speaking at conferences and special events that cater to attendees in the following areas. If you think you're a fit but don't see yourself reflected in this list don't hesitate to reach out and ask.

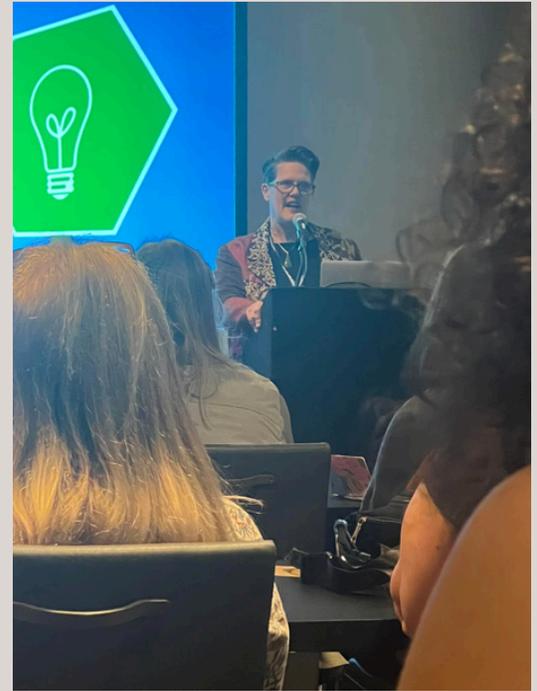
- Activists
- Advocates
- Community engagement specialists
- Educators
- Faculty fellows
- Nonprofit communications professionals
- Public relations professionals
- Researchers
- Scholars
- Scientists
- Social justice advocates
- Special Interest groups
- Students
- Writers

Knows things, will travel

I am open to presenting in person or virtually. If the conference or event is in person, I require that my travel and hotel are covered and that I arrive the evening before I present. Staying for the entire event is always a nice invitation if you are willing to accommodate my stay. I am willing to drive up to three hours distance. After that, train or airfare is expected and appreciated.

I cover my meals that are not provided as part of the event and I will take care of incidentals such as: tips, parking and commute to and from the airport.

I am happy to teach multiple workshops and participate in panel discussions. I also enjoy moderating panels and introducing speakers I know if that's helpful.



What People Say About Bonnie Jean



"It takes courage to tell our stories in an age of contempt and division. But it has never been more important that we tell them. Bonnie Jean Feldkamp gives us the tools we need to be true to ourselves. Her message is wise, compassionate and inclusive."

~Dorothy Rosby

I've heard Bonnie Jean speak several times, and I keep returning for more. She has the ability to tell it like it is, all of life's gritty realism, with humanity. As someone fighting the battles of the freelance world, I have found her guidance extremely helpful.

~Amy McVay Abbott

"Bonnie Jean's workshops are energetic, engaging, and she is an extremely well-informed facilitator. Her passion for communicating important truths through the written word is contagious. She is always solicitous of her audience's contributions to the discussion and makes everyone in attendance feel fortunate to have been part of her presentations."

~John Branning

"Bonnie Jean Feldkamp's workshop "Writing Your Truth in the Age of Hate" couldn't have been more timely, or more on point.

~Daniela Gitlin

"Bonnie Jean Feldkamp is a stellar speaker about writing: to-the-point, engaging, and full of practical information. Anyone who seeks publication would benefit from her guidance. She cares deeply about giving other writers a voice.

~Suzette Martinez Standing