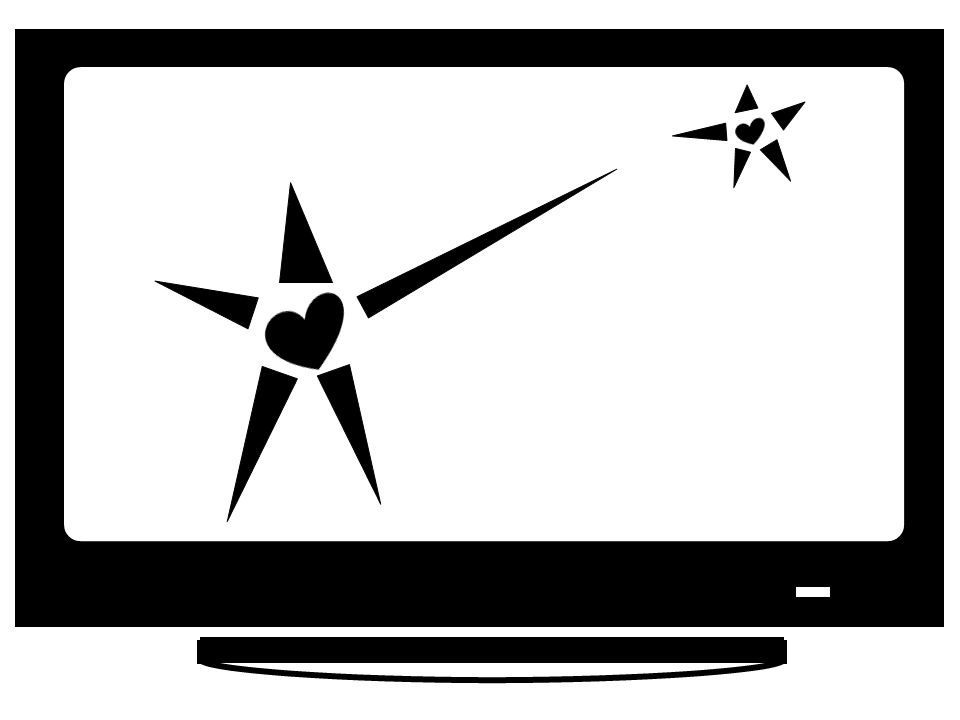
**HOW TO GO**

**FROM FIRED TO FAMOUS**

**THE EVOLUTION OF AN IDEA**

**ROLEMODEL**

**ENTERPRISES**

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By Lisa Schaefer, Ph.D.

http://RoleModelEnterprises.com

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### ROLE Tuesday November 6, 2007

I got fired today. They said it was because the client didn’t like my blog. That was all they said about it. Nobody asked me to remove the posting, so it’s still on the web.

Of course, the idea started long before I got fired. If it hadn’t, I would’ve just gone on to another abusive employer. But I had book ideas brewing in my head since I was 5.

After I learned how to read a book, I thought the next logical step was to learn how to write a book. Children’s books meant they were written by children, right? Why else would they be so simplistic.

So I wrote about someone beating someone up when they crossed a bridge. I learned this from Wile E. Coyote. Like all children’s books, I included illustrations. This book made it quickly into the garbage the next time my mom cleaned the house and saw it lying on the bar.

I also wrote about a mysterious pink house. When I didn’t know what happened next, I threw in a puppet show. It sounded like a fun thing to do. My older cousin laughed. “Why is there a puppet show in this story?” He offered to teach me about plot, but I wasn’t ready for that yet.

I had thought

### Friday November 16, 2008

Had lunch with a former coworker from the contractor I worked for. A bunch of MITRE directors had lunch at the table next to us. I told a former boss that I had just gotten fired for my blog. Just two weeks earlier, I had dinner with one of the directors at a conference. I sat between the government manager who fired me and the government VP who hired him. I had a great conversation with them and everything was going well. The MITRE director was visibly shocked.

At first I saw no story in getting fired for my blog. Fired for sexual harassment, yes. But not for the blog. Seemed unrelated to the anonymous sexual harassment blog I had been writing. So I applied for a few regular jobs again because I still wanted to be in the regular work force. There seemed to be more social dignity in getting groped each day than in staying home and working on projects that my engineer friends didn’t understand.

But then I realized getting fired for my blog was completely related to getting groped in the office. The whole atmosphere was dysfunctional. And not because one drone near the bottom of the totem pole was groping me and possibly other women. Not because I repeated a few jokes at a meeting. It’s because of the way everyone was treated in the office. I was fired to inspire fear in those who couldn’t get fired. As a warning not to speak about what goes on in the office.

I decided there was no way I could go back to another job like that. Like going back to an abusive boyfriend. I’ll have to get serious about starting the role model business I had been thinking about before I started this job.

### Thursday December 13, 2008

Went to the Fairfax Small Business Association to meet with a lawyer. I’m still in business definition mode and probably should’ve waited until I had something more solid to talk about. I thought he’d give me advice that would be useful during business definition. Not the case.

He started the conversation with the assumption that I was trying to be a service for media/story producers to call when they needed someone who could answer engineering questions. He thought they might need engineering support, rather than characters. Why did he think anyone would provide that service? Nobody needs that. When I told him I was producing my own movie, he realized he had the wrong idea.

At least he gave me useful advice about how to choose a legally sound business name and he told me what an LLC was.

I’m not sure why so many people start with the assumption that I’m trying to sell my time for an hourly fee. Wait around for someone else to tell me what to do. Maybe because that’s what the rest of the world does. But isn’t that just a job?

### Tuesday December 25, 2008

Randy bought me a video editing software for Christmas. I installed it and tried a few sample videos. If the client didn’t like my blog, just wait until they see the video.

### Saturday January 5, 2008

Went to a party at Fred’s house. A few MITRE employees were there. I told them I was starting my own business putting role models in media. It’s hard to talk about. That’s not what engineers do. They think I’m nuts. It won’t make any money. They don’t really understand what it is.

I suppose I need to explain it better, but not yet. I don’t even know exactly what it will be yet. They’ll figure it out when they see the story.

### Tuesday February 5, 2008

Went to an event put on by the Virginia Film Alliance. Won $300 worth of hair care products. Met some people from filmrunner.net who work there as a hobby. The young woman told me I could post a casting call on their web site.

Like many of the miscellaneous events I go to, I didn’t know what to expect at this event. It was a lot more fun than I expected. Great food. I ran into someone I knew from volunteering at Fairfax County Public Access cable. There were video screenings and tables to visit to get information about different companies and organizations in Virginia that do work related to film.

### Thursday February 21, 2008

I asked neighbors and the Arlington Small Business Association for their opinions on my logo and decided to use the logo with the stars. The first logo had science symbols put together in the shape of a girl. But after talking with the Arlington Small Business Association, I realized I wanted to brand my company with something broader than women engineers.

I’m getting responses from several actors, but some are out of state. I don’t know why they’re bothering to apply for my project.

One of the potential actors I called had an attitude problem. She called back to apologize because she was having a fight with her boyfriend when I called. A reason, but not an excuse.

This month I found email addresses for several people from my past. One person was Brad, a former student of mine the semester I taught at Scottsdale Community College in 1995. He was really into web stuff and I was just starting to learn how to make web pages. I had my own web site at ASU in 1995, long before most companies had their own site. Some of the graphics on my current site were from Brad. Brad started his own software business a few years ago.

### Wednesday March 5, 2008

I’m now officially a business, according to the state of Virginia. I call it RoleModel Enterprises.

### Thursday March 13, 2008

Signed up for a business bank account at my local Bank of America branch. Free checking with no minimum balance for two years. Also signed up for a business credit card. No interest until next April.

I read a book that mentioned several web sites for outsourcing simple computer work to people in foreign countries. I found a guy in Pakistan through the web site and asked him to post my casting call on any actors web site he could find. And I pay him with my credit card.

### Monday March 31, 2008

I was supposed to meet my first potential actor in Rosslyn for lunch today for an audition/interview. I felt uncomfortable giving out my home address to a stranger. (Pun intended. The guy’s last name is Strange.)

He didn’t show. I guess something came up. It’s not like it’s a job interview, so you have to expect that this isn’t going to by the highest priority on their list. But I wish he would’ve gotten back to me. It’s too bad. He sounded professional and talented. At least I had errands to run on the way there, so it wasn’t a wasted trip. Next time I’m going to make them come to my place.

On Saturday evening, I went to a Fairfax County Public Library mystery night with former coworker Alain and Nicole. We’ve gone to two of these before. But this time I had a brainstorm. Some of these actors could be potential cast members for *Budget Justified*. They all have dependable library jobs. And I’ve already met them and they get along well socializing with people they’ve never met.

Two of the guys on the library cast are gay. And they’re really really good. Perfect for a main character who feels me up. Something I can feel less weird about.

### Wednesday April 2, 2008

I heard back from the Strange actor. But we only played phone tag, so we didn’t set up another meeting.

Finalized a company logo and ordered T-shirts with a logo, slogan, and url. I had designed two different logos with several variations.

Also printed several copies of my book, *Grassroot Hollywood: Brand Yourself as a Role Model in New Media*. Emailed a pdf file to a printer in Kentucky and I had all one hundred copies at my house four days later.

In writing groups, the members pass on the stigma that self-publishing is shameful. It means that no publisher thought your book was good enough to publish it.

In most cases, this is true. Too many people in these writing groups think their sentences are so lovely that The Man of the publishing world will discover them and print a few copies of their book. But most of the stuff in these writing groups isn’t very good.

True literateur writeurs (similar to arteests as in they think they are fancier than writers), don’t read anything self- published. To them, the publishing system is a capitalistic form of peer review, although as in Hollywood they aren’t very good at guessing what will sell. Still, they can’t sell everything written, so they do filter out a lot of stuff so the buying public doesn’t have to.

I don’t need The Man to bless my book. My form of peer review is not one editor or one college intern reader at a publishing company. My reviewers are the press. If they think what I have to say is good enough to write about it themselves, I’ll be able to sell my books. My audience isn’t writeurs. My audience is the working public.

### Sunday April 13, 2008

I gave a talk at a conference today. I sold a few copies of my book and a T-shirt. I also took some video footage incase I want to put some excerpts on YouTube.

I had someone from the outsourcing web site help with the electronic slides. A total disaster. It was like reading a book on a colored computer screen. No logical graphics to organize the information. I had to completely redo the slides. From now on, I’m only giving out tasks that can be completely spelled out exactly how it has to be done. Nothing that requires thinking.

The conference participants weren’t quite my target audience. They were mostly older women, who don’t get this New Media thing. One of them seemed to be opposed to the internet. That computers were bad for people. That all writing was bad if it was in electronic form and only printed information is good. Okaaaaaay. It’s hard to know how to respond to that. I tried to listen to her concern and said something to the effect that some things about the internet aren’t necessarily good.

But most of my message talked about what was good about social networking sites. The point was that if they want to keep the organization going by attracting younger women, they MUST have an internet presence. It’s the only place I look for information, especially about networking organizations. Luckily most of the women were people I knew, so they were sympathetic to my message.

I’ve been reading some books about professional speaking. Most of it is hokey, sounds like a profession about lying about what you do and making up stuff you don’t know anything about. But I’d like to give talks at conferences and universities as part of my business. As long as they’re about truth and things I actually know.

### Friday April 18, 2008

Had another audition at a restaurant and one at my house. I set up that restaurant meeting before the last one cancelled out on me. Turns out she’s union. I can’t have anyone union on my project because I’m not promising payment. Too bad. She seemed good, no weird attitude mishaps.

The guy reminded me of someone I used to work with at MITRE who was really good to work with. Very nice and polite. I’ll have to include him in the project. I asked if he’d be willing to play the sexual harasser character, but he said he’d be way too embarrassed.

I sent a message to find out if any of the library mystery cast wanted to be in *Budget Justified*. The only one interested was one of the gay guys. He is so funny, but not in a typical gay way. I didn’t even know he was gay until someone said he and the other guy were partners.

His day job is doing corporate training and right now he’s working on a sexual harassment training project. How appropriate. But he wants to know more about the project before he commits to it.

### Thursday April 24, 2008

Cousin Aaron’s night-before-wedding dinner was in Salt Lake tonight. I told a few people about my new business, not as weird as talking to engineers about it. At least I’m getting better questions to help explain the idea.

On the drive here from Phoenix, I got back to some potential interns who applied to get some experience for the summer. I had some of the people from the outsourcing web site submit the intern postings on various local university web sites. I figure they can’t mess that up too badly, so let them save me a few hours of work.

### Sunday April 27, 2008

My casting call is all over several casting web sites. I don’t know how they got there. But now I know there are lots of sites for posting casting calls.

Some of the calls say my project is in New York, and other incorrect information. Nothing I can do about that. One even says I’m in Vienna, Austria, and I’ve gotten a few responses in German.

One of the potential actors mentioned submitting a casting call to a local acting blogger. After submitting the call, I got responses from a slew of talented actors.

### Wednesday May 7, 2008

I’ve been casting for my video. Several impressive actors have stopped by. Today I auditioned one who far outshined everyone else I’ve talked to.

Dave Cooperman sent me a nice email a few days ago with links to his previous videos. I don’t know how he found me or got my personal email address. But his work is good, so I wanted him to audition.

I was tempted to ignore his message. I’m not considering too many people from beyond Northern Virginia. I figure DC or Bethesda, MD, may be close enough, but this guy had a 240 area code. The last guy with that area code lived about 70 miles north of Annapolis. No need to go that far to find someone. But with the nice personal email and the links to other videos, I knew I had to talk to this guy.

He was a little nervous, but he was pleasant enough. He seemed excited about my project. He understands that Budget Justified is one of those stories that most government employees and contractors would be afraid to tell. And he thinks it’s great that I’m not too chicken to put the story out there. He seems willing to push himself to work on good projects and do a good job. He understands that life isn’t about taking the easy way out.

### Thursday May 8, 2008

Kevin Mayberry came by today. I liked him the moment he showed up. A really, decent, friendly guy. He was very comfortable with himself and nice to hang out with. He even stuck around to listen to Laura Fischer’s audition. Turns out he knows Dave Cooperman.

I had him audition for three characters. After reading for his first character, he asked if I wanted him to act or just read. I told him go ahead and act. He was there to show me what he can do.

I had a large block of dialogue to read for the opening of the next scene. As I read, Kevin got up and walked around the room. He came over and rested his hand on mine. Then he put his other hand on my shoulder. What the hell. I have this guy come over to audition for a role in a video about sexual harassment, and he puts his hands all over me. What happened in the last minute to turn him from great guy to groper? My husband would be home soon. He’d better not try anything weird.

I went through the rest of my dialogue, wondering what he was going to do next. Then he looked at me lovingly in the eye… and delivered his lines. Doh! He was auditioning for the part of my husband!

Kevin’s that good.

Turns out that Kevin also has a degree in industrial engineering. He is a financial engineer at a consulting firm in Tysons Corner.

A Marymount student came by to interview for a summer internship. Her ride didn’t show up and she didn’t want me to take her to the metro. I ended up making her lunch. Her dad finally came to pick her up about three and a half hours after dropping her off here. Weird. What if I had been a bigger company?

### Tuesday May 6, 2008

I’ve been talking to Brad lately about forming a business partnership. He can do the web and software development and I’d give him publicity. So far we’ve just been brainstorming ideas of what to do with the web site and other business ideas.

Brad was a student of mine

### Friday May 9, 2008

Elizabeth Sibley auditioned today. She trekked through the rain from the metro. And enjoyed it. I appreciate her attitude.

### Friday May 16, 2008

Auditioning is winding down. One more left next week. Today Ted Taylor came by. He works for a government agency and knows one of my long-time friends who works there. He’s older than the rest of the cast, but he’s a friendly guy who’s fun to hang around. Not stodgy.

### Tuesday May 20, 2008

I went to an AAUW press conference today. During the question and answer period, I made a comment about my experience of discrimination in the workplace, versus no discrimination while getting graduate degrees. Several people wanted to talk to me about it afterward. The AAUW staff seemed interested in knowing more about the video series I’m producing.

I found out yesterday that Bruce doesn’t want to play Charlie, the sexual harasser in Budget Justified. Crap. I don’t like asking people if they want to feel me up. I liked the idea of having Bruce in that role because it’s his day job to provide sexual harassment training. But mostly because he’s gay.

The most obvious next choice is Dave Cooperman. He’s got the guts to do this kind of thing. I felt weird about asking him if he wanted that role. I didn’t have anyone audition for it. I didn’t want to send him an email about this kind of request, so I called him. Again, he seemed excited and nervous. But willing. He has a good work ethic. I’m glad he wants to be a part of RoleModel Enterprises.

### Thursday June 10, 2008

I’m in Portsmouth. Got a message from Prebble that she won’t be at the shoot. She asked if she could reschedule. But I needed her there with the whole gang, so I said no. Too bad. She seemed like she’d be good to work with, but I have to go with someone more dependable. So I quickly found a replacement. I was grateful Sydney was able to make it.

### Thursday June 17, 2008

Kimberly came over to help with trying camera angles and making some props. So nice of her to help out. I’m getting short on time and having someone do a few tasks really helps.

### Sunday June 22, 2008

Aak. I had the whole cast here for taping. I was so grateful to have Pete there. He’s a great cameraman. I would have died of a heart attack if he hadn’t been so helpful. I was trying to blow through as many scenes as possible so I wouldn’t have to worry about getting all the right members of the cast together again. Dave had to leave by 2:00, so it was a priority to get his scenes with all other characters out of the way. He didn’t end up leaving until 2:30. I was upset that I didn’t keep my promise to him to get him out of there by 2:00. It’s not a good business practice to fail to come through with what you promise.

Kevin did his thing again. He was supposed to give the camera a dirty look. Pete asked what was wrong. Pete thought Kevin was giving HIM the dirty look!

I didn’t have much chance to socialize, which I regret because everyone on the cast is so much fun. It was nice that Brian Razzino made a point of chatting with me whenever I had the rare opportunity to step away from the set.

In one scene, Dave had to put his hand up my skirt. I was apprehensive about how he would handle that. I didn’t know him well enough to know if he was the kind of guy who would try to stick his fingers in my underwear or what he would try to get away with. I made a point of not shaving my legs that day because I didn’t want to make myself sexy for him. Well, he actually just kind of put his hand near my knee. Probably because he was more nervous about how I’d feel about it than I was. Good for him. Except that the scene doesn’t look anywhere near as threatening as the experience was in real life – where the guy’s hand was so far above my knee that he found a maxi pad.

People are going to think, So what. He touched my knee. What am I whining about.

Right after he touches my knee, I slam down the phone and tell him to stop being a jerk. Dave had real fear in his eyes when I started yelling at his Charlie character. I must have had a moment of good acting. Or maybe he’s just afraid of me in real life. Some people are. And only a few have reason to be.

Between scenes, Dave made a point of asking me how I felt about living in Phoenix. I told him I liked it, but won’t go back because there are so many more interesting people and opportunities in Washington. I was glad he felt comfortable about engaging me in a brief conversation. I’m sure he felt under time pressure too, since he was the one who had to be somewhere in the afternoon.

When the day was over, I was exhausted. I’m glad we did this on the longest day of the year because Randy and I went for a nice long walk to downtown Vienna, listened to a band on the Town Green and stopped at Noodles so Randy could get something to eat. I couldn’t eat. I was too overstimulated to enjoy food.

I can’t believe the talent of these actors and crew. With everything else I’ve ever worked on, people needed their hands held and couldn’t or wouldn’t figure out how to do any task on their own. These people are doing things without me having to tell them. They don’t have to ask how to do anything and they don’t sit around wasting time doing nothing until someone tells them how. They just do what they need to do.

### Thursday June 26, 2008

My air conditioning stopped blowing cold air during the shoot on Sunday, so I had a repairman come by. $300. For a blown capacitor – technical term for battery. Even though the lights were hot and there were sixteen people in the house, it surprises me that we blew the capacitor. Maybe because the lights blew a fuse. But the air conditioner has its own fuse. So I don’t get it.

### Wednesday July 9, 2008

Sydney said we couldn’t use her offices for the shoot. I asked if she could show up at the AAUW building tomorrow, as long as we had access. She said she’d be there.

So I had to quick set up a way to shoot a bathroom scene, clean up the script, get my lines and wardrobe ready, and find some toy roaches. Turns out there were rubber roaches at a new toy store near my house that I located over the internet. How did we ever get by before the internet?

### Thursday July 10, 2008

We had a shoot in the AAUW building for the office scenes. Dave and I talked to Tracy Sherman a little about RoleModel Enterprises. I may want her to get involved at some point. Eventually, I’ll need some people to help run events. She’s smart and a good leader, so she’s an excellent candidate.

Sydney came in making a hissy fit, complaining her ankle hurt. Well, so did Elizabeth’s, and there was no complaining from her. When I sprained my ankle, did I whine that I couldn’t stand up in front of class for two hours and teach that day? No. I went and taught class. Every week.

Jeez, all she had to do was show up. I had to rearrange my whole shoot and set everything up on a moment’s notice. Guess who’s not going to be representing RoleModel Enterprises to customers at future events.

I took everyone to Potbelly’s for sandwiches afterward. Anthony, who plays New Guy, got a call in the middle of our meal and left to go answer it. Just like in the All Minds Meeting.

### Friday July 11, 2008

I was cleaning up the script for future shoots. I felt stuck at the part where Charlie pushes me against the desk. Probably because I don’t have a good idea of how Dave would react in that scene. So I called him up.

I found out that he’s actually ten years younger than he looks. Mustache issue. And the David Lee Roth hair I associated with guys older than me in the ‘80’s. Shocked me at the time, but I think that’s what I needed to know. Now I have a better picture of who he is that makes sense. I also asked him to keep a parallel journal of his experiences with RoleModel Enterprises.

### Sunday July 13, 2008

Andy Kiser came to shoot video in the role of Brian, my fictional husband. I thought I’d feel really weird about the whole thing. Snuggling up in front of Randy, my real husband, playing cameraman.

Turns out it wasn’t that bad. I was too concerned about how the lines and acting were going to worry about feeling weird. It ended up being more like hanging out with a cousin. It wasn’t as though the scenes were romantic. They were more friendly.

### Thursday July 17, 2008

Dave and Kevin are coming over to tape more episodes. Dave is meeting here early so we can pick up my neighbor Laura and another neighbor’s dog, Mesquite, so we can take a picture in the park. We’re using the house in the park because it’s big, and I want to show that his character has a good job and can afford a big house. Laura’s supposed to look pregnant, so she keeps coming over for help with the pregnant look.

Too bad we didn’t do this four months ago when she actually was pregnant. I could’ve had one of the real pregnant neighbors pose instead, however she works for an FAA contractor and I don’t want to put her in that position.

### Friday July 18, 2008

The taping last night was more fun because I didn’t rush through everything this time. We took the time to hang out and joke around. Dave MacPherson came to help out with the camera. Randy had to go to Spanish class, so I was grateful that Dave M. volunteered to help.

The pictures in front of the house turned out well, except for some sun glare I had to edit out. Dave really enjoyed taking Mesquite for a walk. Dave and Laura really looked too cute together.

Dave and Kevin are so awesome. I love watching the footage because they are so funny. Yeah, I did a pretty good job in writing the episodes, but the script is nothing without these guys to make it come alive. I was worried that I may have written their characters to be too similar, but they bring different distinct personalities to the story. Dave M. even said they were great over-the-top characters to counter my straight-woman character.

Kevin is such a great guy to have around. He hung around and chatted in Dave’s “dressing room” (my guest room) while I was getting ready. They were so cute together. I don’t know what they were talking about, but they exchanged contact information and I got the impression they planned to talk later about other projects they’re involved in. Kevin also made an effort to get to know Dave M. and make him feel like a part of the group too.

Kevin is allergic to my cats. I felt bad about that. Unfortunately, Bear and Zeeb are shedding so much lately, I’m surprised they still have fur left. But Kevin had such a good attitude about it. You’ve got to do what you’ve got to do. He put up with it to get our work done – without whining.

I ordered Chinese and the delivery guy kept ringing the doorbell to complain about the tip. Well, he wouldn’t let me put it on my credit card, so he has to take what he gets. I’m not ordering from them again.

I brought out the wedding china since I never have any other reason to use it. Then I used Potbelly napkins. They happened to be on the table and I didn’t want to use the cloth napkins because they’re white and they’d stain. Eh, they’re single guys. They probably didn’t care.

Sometimes I wonder if I cast Tim, Kevin’s character, too well. He said he joined MySpace for the pretty girls. Seventeen-year-olds? I hope not. He’s thirty-eight. What about beautiful, intelligent women? Seems like he’s already been working in his male-engineer environment too long. I don’t think he even noticed the problem.

Kevin has a girlfriend who is putting on a swimsuit pageant. I’ve never met her, so I don’t know what to think of that. A woman who objectifies women? A woman who has grown up in a culture that thinks the purpose of women is for guys to watch them half naked?

He also accidentally called a woman in the script a girl. When he said it, I almost cut him off. Then I realized that’s what Tim would say. I should’ve written “girl” into the script instead of “woman” in the first place.

Then there’s Dave, who is much more of a Nice Young Man than I expected him to be. Not like his character, Charlie. He was supposed to be about to grab me in one scene, just as Tim ran in to our office. When I played back the footage, it looked like he was going to get my hair. Oh no! Not my hair! Now, if my hair was the body part being threatened when I still had my job, I wouldn’t be making this video series.

After we were done taping, Dave stuck around to help put some of the heavy furniture back in its place. What a Nice Young Man. We hung around talking outside until after midnight. That was fun. Like in high school when I’d hang around outside with friends after work at Baskin Robbins. But not in the I-wish-I-were-still-sixteen sort of way. More like being able to appreciate having nice people around that I enjoy spending time with.

### Tuesday July 22, 2008

I promised Brad I’d think about a long-term plan before our conference call today. I decided the steps to meet the long-term goal are dependent upon the costs of implementing real-time interactive TV. Unfortunately, Brad didn’t answer when I called him. He hasn’t done that before, so I don’t know what to think of that.

I talked to Stephen Hodges today about ideas for options for interactive TV. He gave me some good contacts to look into, companies that do the whole streaming thing for you.

I need to talk to Dave to find out how involved he wants to get with the business or if he just wants to be an actor. I could use his help if he has the time. I don’t know how much he’d be able to contribute creatively, but he seems smart enough to be able to contribute intellectual effort. I’d like to have someone to work closely with. It would make the whole business much more fun.

### Wednesday July 23, 2008

Got a response from Dave today. He says he only wants to focus on the “project.” I’m sure he means *Budget Justified*, since he doesn’t really know enough about what RoleModel Enterprises is, beyond the videos he’s acting in. I don’t think he has any idea what he’s turning down. I need to talk to Kenny Ames, a friend from my running group. I think he has the technical skills and leadership abilities.

Steve Rector, a friend from Tempe, showed me a site for live broadcasts called Ustream. Makes me think I could have some live broadcast capabilities at my first event.

### Thursday July 24, 2008

I went to the bank to razz my nice little business banking guy, Kyle. My bank accidentally charged me a fee, even though I’m not supposed to have fees for the first two years. The bank teller made me sign a sheet to get on the waiting list to talk to Kyle.

As I signed in, a phone behind the sign in table rang. What’s a phone doing there? And why was someone calling it? So I answered, “Bank of America.” The woman asked if I was a manager. I said, “No, I’m a customer in the lobby.” She wasn’t expecting that.

Then the woman who had been talking to Kyle finished. It turned out to be my neighbor Laura. I said hi and she asked how the pictures turned out. I said they were beautiful. She probably wondered why I was on the phone. And the woman on the phone probably thought it was weird that I was suddenly talking to my neighbor. The woman on the phone asked if I could transfer her to someone else in the bank. I said I was sorry, but I didn’t know how the phone system worked.

When Kyle came out to get me for my turn, he didn’t even have to look at the sheet for my name. I asked how he knew my name without looking at the sheet. He said he’s good at names and that he remembered my business. He wished he had a better skill, like memorizing sport players. I told him that I’m also a whiz at remembering names and that it’s a good skill for politicians.

I asked him how his girlfriend’s business was going. It was something he mentioned in March when I set up my business bank account. He said she made a video for a friend’s wedding. I told him to refer her to Women In Film and Video if she wanted to find a network of contacts.

### Friday July 25, 2008

If I want to broadcast my first event live, I need to make sure I go somewhere where I’ve already tested my access to the internet.

I don’t know how many restaurants have the ability to let me access the internet. I would think that most of them have some type of internet access on site, but I may not be able to link into it. I could try to work out a deal with Panera where I use only part of their restaurant. The one in Reston Towne Center is pretty big.

How much does it cost to rent the Vienna Town Green? Only problem is that you can’t charge people to attend an open outdoor event. Maybe I could get ad sponsors.

I came up with a clearer idea today of what’s going to happen at the events. I feel better about the business now that I have a better idea of what’s going to happen beyond *Budget Justified*.

There will be a script, perhaps for the episode of *Budget Justified* to be released that night, perhaps for a future episode of a similar video series. Someone from the audience participants would audition for a role in a two-minute clip to be taped that night. The participants would vote for their favorite auditioner in real time. Then the winning auditioner would act out the scene (with their lines displayed on a real wall via projector) with the regular actors and the two-minute clip would be posted on YouTube that evening.

Then the local and remote participants would get into groups and brainstorm ideas for a 30 second script about a role model, perhaps a specific role model. They’d present their ideas, get a little feedback, then spend more time in their groups writing the story. They’d give a preliminary reading or act out their script, and other participants would say what they liked best.

There would be a break, then they’d refine their script and give final readings or skits. During the break, home participants would be screened by volunteers or RoleModels staff. The best three would also present their readings or skits. Local participants would see these on the computer projector. The videos of the readings and skits would be posted on YouTube for voting until the next event, at which the results would be presented. At the end of the event, the next episode of *Budget Justified* would be released.

Food at the beginning, food at break, and food and socializing at the end. Maybe a free-for-all at the mike and the end. And door prizes.

I always liked the idea of interactive books when I was a kid. I remember a book where if you wanted the character to do one thing, you went to page 20. If you wanted her to do something else, you went to page 40. Also sort of like that *Clue* movie in the mid eighties where the audience voted on the ending. Except in those cases, everything was still predefined for the audience. In my idea, you can be in the audience if you want, but you can also be a participant.

### Saturday July 26, 2008

I got another response from Dave saying he is interesting in RoleModel Enterprises beyond *Budget Justified*. But he doesn’t want me to ask him personal questions. So I don’t know what he means. Well, how the hell can you have a business relationship with someone you don’t know anything about? Makes me think he’s hiding something. Jail time?

That’s the problem with trying to communicate by mostly email. No clarification in real time.

Part of the reason I’m baffled is that my business is my personal life. I don’t do anything in my personal life that I’d be ashamed to admit in my professional life. I revolve my personal life around my professional life.

### Sunday July 27, 2008

I read about an interesting business idea in the Post today. It does crowdsourcing, getting a community of people together to define ideas for a business. I want to network with one of the guys involved in the crowdsourcing business. I think that contact is what I need.

The blog for one of the people mentioned in the article references a book called the “Flight of the Creative Class.” It’s about how the increasingly repressive environment of the United States is not encouraging creativity as well as other countries, such as Canada or New Zealand. Repressive. So true of US companies and government employers. Except maybe Apple.

I should try some mini-shows with friends. I’ll practice with Brad on Tuesday to see if he can see me live on Ustream and if he can upload some type of response. Then I’ll get a few more friends in to see if we can all participate. At some point, I’ll hold an event at my house and let the world horn in on the show. After that gets going, I’ll hold events at restaurants and hotels.

The crowdsourcing business gives 10% of its profits to the people who contribute. Sort of like buying stock in a company with your time instead of with your money. I like that idea. It gets participants to emotionally buy into the concept of the business. I should get people to solicit ads and contributions, and sell merchandise.

I also keep reading about a show called *Mad Men*. It supposedly has sexist guys in a workplace in the 1960’s. How is that different than the workplace of 2008? Sounds like every job I’ve ever had.

### Monday July 28, 2008

I looked up an interesting workspace where the crowdsourcing guy works. It’s a shared office for small businesses where you pay a monthly fee for some workspace and phone, internet service. Seems like a great way to work with creative people who have great ideas, while you still have your own business.

But it’s expensive to rent office space. I need to look into cheaper networking opportunities for small business owners.

### Tuesday July 29, 2008

I talked to Brad today and tried out Ustream. He suggested that I try stickam.com. The broadcast for Stickam worked much better, although the recording for Ustream is better than Stickam’s. However, people logged in and watched my Stickam broadcast. That didn’t happen when I was playing with Ustream.

I downloaded some music composition software. I threw together some random notes and tried different instrument imitations to experiment with the sounds. Turns out I liked my random note arrangement with a wood percussion and slowed down the same note arrangement and played it with another drum sound. Then I put in a series of whole notes, each successive note decreasing in pitch, and set it to an instrument called reverse cymbals. Sounds like an alien. When I put all three together, it made an interesting opening theme for *Budget Justified*. I used just the wood percussion for transitions and closing theme.

Then I came up with two eerie violin measures and a bass string measure. I listened to Alanis Morrisette’s *Uninvited* to get an idea for how I wanted the eerie measure to sound. I tried out a series of simple minor notes on the piano then transcribed them in different keys into the music composition software and set the instrument to violin. Then I used the decreasing-pitch whole notes and set the instrument to bass string.

Voila. Quick movie music. Took barely over an hour once I knew how to deal with the software and convert the midi files to a wav format that my video editing software could recognize. Turns out piano lessons in second grade were good for something after all.

### Monday August 4, 2008

I’ve been working the past several days on defining how my business will work. I’m going to try to build a fan base on Stickam before taking the events out to hotels or restaurants. I also need to get going on putting together my Coalition of Organizations, Board of Consultants, Board of Participants, and Founding Members.

Talked to Dave today. I don’t think he gets what I’m trying to do with the business. That’s OK. He can still help out with some things. But he is going to let others determine his career for him by not making opportunities for himself.

I sent him an email saying this: “Technology is changing the business of acting. Pay attention for more powerful opportunities that don't fit current paradigms. If you're smart enough, you can create the change - instead of waiting until someone else moves your cheese.” He’ll probably wonder what the hell that means.

### Tuesday August 5, 2008

Yesterday I read in the Post about a businesswoman who believe in constantly raising capital for her company. I don’t raise financial capital. I need to raise labor capital. Instead of getting a few big The Mans to support RoleModel Enterprises, I need to get lots of little The Peoples to support my efforts. I suppose that’s another way of defining crowdsourcing.

### Wednesday August 6, 2008

Took footage at the track tonight. Mark Kline seemed very interested in helping. He’s a retired engineer from IBM. He likes taking still photos of our running events. Perhaps he’d like to assist at shoots at my house or at events.

### Friday August 15, 2008

Dave and Kevin came over to tape the last episodes where they appear together. Dianne King and Pete Hartzler came over to help with camera and the set. Dianne will interview me for the “AAUW on the Go” cable show later this year, so it would be good for her to attend a taping.

Dave and Kevin are so cute together. They even chose to share one of the bedroom dressing rooms, even though they could have each had their own dressing room. They chattered away with each other, so excited to share each others’ company. It was so sweet and intimate, I wish I could have captured the moment on tape. No, they’re not gay. I wish I could have observed them more to better understand what the dynamic was between them so I could describe it better.

Kevin is so friendly with everyone. He engaged Dianne in lively conversation while they were waiting for Dave and Pete to arrive. That’s a good sign, because he’ll need to do that at events in the future. He’s so honestly interested in getting to know about others and makes everyone feel welcome and comfortable. That’s why I liked him immediately when he walked through my front door the first time.

Kevin is so great with improv. He sucked his thumb in the part where he’s asleep on the desk. That was not in the script.

Pete was awesome with the lighting and camera again. I’m so glad he’s willing to help out. I’m not sure what his story is. I think he’s divorced and lives alone. He has a great sense of humor, but he’s tough to get to know. He’s sort of distant and a know-it-all. I think it would take a while to get to know him, but I bet if I did, I’d see a much more vulnerable side to him. I think he’s glad that I appreciate the quality work that he does, but even more he feels good that I’m grateful for the time he spends working with us.

### Monday August 18, 2008

I spent some time trying to play a RoleModels game on stickam.com today. It went OK, not many people joined the chat and they all left before we could make up stories about their role models. Next time I should try it with friends at a predetermined time to make sure there’s a critical mass of people who stay in the chat room to play.

Someone left their shoes here on Friday. I think it was Kevin. I left him a message to try to arrange a time for him to pick up his shoes, but he hasn’t gotten back to me yet. He’ll have to wait until I get back from Wisconsin to get his shoes.

### Thursday August 21, 2008

A Metro employee made a nice comment about the RoleModels T-shirt I was wearing. I gave her a business card so she could look up my web site.

Went to Creatives DC a happy hour last night at LeftBank restaurant, put on by Nick Takamoto, the crowdsourcing guy I read about in the post. Seems like a nice enough guy. Not especially outgoing, energetic, or smooth; just normal. I expected he’d be more of a leader, but he mostly blended into the crowd.

Nick said that crowdsourcing works best when the business is something that many people are really interested in or passionate about. When the community cares. Like a local vegetarian restaurant. But in the case of RoleModel Enterprises, the community isn’t limited to a few local people. Anyone with an internet connection can join in.

It seems like most of the people who “try” crowdsourcing are using it in an amateur way. As if it were just a fancy new word for focus group or conducting surveys. But I intend to actually outsource RoleModel Enterprises work to a crowd, to the masses. Instead of a salary, I offer material or service incentives, such as free admission to events or free T-shirts. Of course, I have to do this only with the work that isn’t mission-critical, the work that develops products and services that would be nice to offer, but the company wouldn’t grind to a halt without them. Like alignmints. Or a logo and photo calendar.

I didn’t know anybody, so I just went around introducing myself to people and chatted. Didn’t meet anyone whom I thought was an obvious business collaborator. Most of the people there were involved in some type of artsy profession. But some of the professions were only part artsy. I met a lawyer, a guy who is trying to be a screenwriter, a magician, and others who were guests of their more artsy friends.

I met two cute young physicists. One was telling me about a light spectrum project he was working on at NIH. I asked him if he had a PhD in physics. He said yeah, who told me. I just guessed. He was surprised I was able to figure that out.

In addition to Nick Takemoto appearing in the Post, one of the women there will be featured in the Post Magazine next month. So some people in the group seem to be well-connected.

After a brief performance by the magician and announcements by the restaurant owner and an artist, they asked people to give a one-sentence description of their artistic/entrepreneurial endeavor. Only three people did. I told them I was starting a company with the goal of putting positive role models in new media and that it was going to be an interactive internet TV show. People seemed to like that idea. The restaurant owner is interested in having RoleModel Enterprises hold some of the live broadcasts. They have wireless internet access and a seating area with a large screen TV.

Sometimes people are shy about announcing what they do in front of a crowd. Others feel like they don’t really belong there. I think one of the young physicists felt that way. He related his work with light spectrums to paintings. He’s not an artist, so he may have felt like he was intruding on someone else’s party, as though he wasn’t really invited. Like a male engineer at a Society of Women Engineers meeting. Or like a woman engineer at any engineers meeting.

I don’t feel uncomfortable being at a “Creatives” happy hour in spite of being an artist. I had an agenda and a reason to be there. Plus I’m used to appearing at events where I don’t fit the typical profile of the attendees. When I first went to writer events, I felt silly because I was an engineer. But then I found out that nobody else there was really a writer either. No one was a writer, and yet everyone was a writer. The vast majority of them had other day jobs. Writing was more their hobby than their profession. You don’t need a Ph.D. in engineering to do it. Turns out I’m the one who plans on making writing part of my serious profession.

I met a guy who was trying to be a literary agent. But he didn’t really seem to know very many people in the business. He wanted to talk to me about being my agent. But I’m not looking for a publisher. They aren’t going to do my publicity. I don’t need them to do my printing. I can find someone else to take orders and do distribution. So why do I need a publisher?

Someone asked where I got the money to start the business. I don’t take out loans. I don’t need to. I live below my means. I told him I got the money from working as an engineer for years. And investing.

I tried a little mentioning that that I had been fired at my job and it inspired me to start this business. It’s the kind of topic that would make engineers walk away from you if you mentioned it. Eew. Don’t be associated with that. The reaction wasn’t too bad. I haven’t decided yet if it’s something to say to catch interest, or if it makes me look like there’s something wrong with me.

They’re having another happy hour next month. Last night’s party was the night before my trip to Wisconsin for cousin Jayne’s wedding. The next happy hour is the night before I go to Phoenix. I’m planning on going. Maybe I’ll get a better idea of what I want to accomplish or who I want to meet next time.

### Friday August 22, 2008

I’m trying to pay attention to personal productivity. I do well with low brain-intensive activities during the first two hours after I wake, then work out, then get into the high brain-intensive work of the day. When I have a regular day job I try to fight that by working out first, but my body can’t handle the workout right away, so I procrastinate getting on the Nordic Track.

I splat out writing ideas first thing in the morning while I’m alone and don’t feel social yet.

### Sunday August 24, 2008

Yesterday was cousin Jayne’s wedding. I saw several cousins that I hadn’t seen for over twenty-five years. I can’t believe it’s been that long. Makes me a little sad. I was glad to get their email addresses so I could keep them updated on what I’m working on.

Today I went to Aunt Judy’s house in Sheboygan. I told cousins Jean, Larry, and Tom about the new business I’m starting. I didn’t mention the sexual harassment part, just that my movie was going to be about what really happens in government offices.

Cousin Larry said his son, Dane, hired a business intern from a local college to help out with his hookah bar business. I think the typical intern in Sheboygan is a little different than the typical intern in Washington. There are many more opportunities here and they expect to work in a big business. There are no big businesses in Sheboygan, so their expectations aren’t as grandiose. College students come to Washington to be grandiose.

Tom asked if I might be found in some car “accident” after this gets out. I told him I just might.

Although I know that’s a risk, I think the chances of that happening are slim. If the people who would want me dead were too chicken to fire me to my face, they’d be way too chicken to kill me. They don’t have enough money for it to be worthwhile to kill me, and they don’t have enough power to get someone else to do it for them for free. Plus, people would know who did it.

### Monday August 25, 2008

Before going back to Milwaukee to catch our plane, Randy and I stopped at cousin Scott’s landscape business. I told Scott about my business. He thought it was cool, like Michael Moore. Good analogy. I really identify with Michael Moore. And Bob Woodward and Erin Brockovich. Except I refuse to use cleavage. (As Brockovich did, not Woodward.)

Sometimes I feel like my story is going to be talked about by everybody. That it’ll get really famous and it will be more than I’ll be able to handle. Other times I feel like I’m a fool to put my eggs in this basket. It will be a blip in the blogosphere and it will die out before anyone hears about it.

### Thursday August 28, 2008

Yesterday I spent the whole day on my presentation and flyer for my talk at ASU. I also created a Yahoo listserv group for RoleModel Enterprises and added lots of people from my hotmail address book to the list. Over the past three years I’ve made a point of keeping an organized email address list. I take every opportunity to collect addresses for people in groups I belong to. Occasionally I google for addresses of people I knew long ago.

Today I spent the whole day completely redesigning my web site. My site had been a modification of the one I created in 1995. I figure I’d better have a good web site if I’m going to talk to college students.

I wanted to get the web page crowdsourced. I don’t want to spend my time on tasks that someone else could easily do. It would take at least a day to find someone else to do my site. However, I will eventually need someone to maintain it. Once people start purchasing merchandise and memberships, I’ll need someone who can program the site to automate those functions. Perhaps I can get the functions crowdsourced onto a demo site, then Brad or some other trusted tech person could implement them on my server. I don’t want just anybody to have access to change my real site.

### Saturday August 30, 2008

Since cousin Scott mentioned Michael Moore, Randy and I decided to watch his documentary *Sicko* last night. As a former statistics instructor, I don’t necessarily fall for all his scare tactics with anecdotal evidence, but he does make several interesting points.

Such as the way to have power over people is to create fear. That Americans won’t speak out against poor health care coverage by their employers because they’re afraid of losing their jobs if they speak up. That unions don’t help workers like they used to. And that when they feel discouraged and hopeless, they don’t get civically engaged and won’t go out and vote for politicians who make sure the public gets what they need.

The part about not speaking up against employers struck me. That is what our country has become.

I’ve been disenchanted with unions for awhile. They no longer exist for the labor they represent, they exist for themselves, to make the union leadership feel powerful. Just as bad as the management. But I wasn’t sure what the solution was.

Now I do. The air traffic controllers should brand themselves as role models. Bitching from the union doesn’t help, just gives the controllers license to be lazy and do things the way they’ve been doing them since the 1950’s. Not what a role model would condone.

Instead, the controllers should get together with someone talented who can help create a video series about how the management treats them. Then they appear on my *New Media Role Models* show. People get to interact with them, hear their side of the story. A PR fiasco for the management. Much more powerful than union bitching. This is what the internet is for.

This could be big. An important part of what RoleModel Enterprises should be and will become. These will be the most interesting role models. What kind of leadership is each role model instituting from the bottom up, with corrupt management, at any level, as the antagonist. This could lead to a political platform, *RoleModel Enterprises* leading political reform.

### Thursday September 4, 2008

I’m going to try my first live broadcast tonight. Here’s what I’ll talk about.

Welcome, students, to the first semester of *New Media Role Models*. I’m your host, Professor Lisa.

OK, so this isn’t quite a TV show yet. I don’t have a script and actors, though there will be some of that eventually. And this isn’t a class either. You won’t be graded. But since I’ve taught several semesters of college classes, I wanted to draw on that experience. Especially the part of class that I liked best, and so did my students, which was the in-class exercises. That was the part of class where I shut up and let the students get into groups with their friends to solve problems.

The problems we’re going to solve on this show aren’t math problems. Instead, we’re going to focus on societal issues. Note I say focus on, not solve. We can’t solve society in half an hour. And different people have different priorities, so I don’t intend to assign value or a hierarchy to each audience participant’s contribution, or to sway any of you to agree with any particular cause. The intent is to get people together to think. A community of people interested in putting role models in new media.

Possibly a different form of social networking. I have some long-term ideas of how this may evolve into more in-person interaction in addition to live broadcast, where you get together with friends, in your home or a college activity room or dorm. And I get my own group together at a coffee house or internet café. But I want to try smaller, manageable activities first and build an audience before growing this show into something bigger.

So tonight is like the first day of class, not because it’s the week after Labor Day, but because it’s a low-key, introductory session where we get together to introduce ourselves and the purpose of this gathering.

Before we begin, I’d like to get an idea of who’s watching. My screen says we have x people tuned in. Is there anyone in the audience tonight that has never met me in person? You can type your name in the chat if you wish.

People usually ask me what I mean by role model. I figure it’s anyone who isn’t doing anything illegal. Each of you could be role models. Like the title of my book, *Brand Yourself as a Role Model in New Media*. Because of the internet, and because of the way managers treat employees, a lot more people will be launching themselves as entrepreneurs.

I do want to refrain, however, from becoming an outlet to prosthelytize, either for any particular religion or political issue. I’m sure there will be a fine line between good work or deeds and prosthelytism in some stories. Perhaps I’ll need to define some guidelines if this becomes a problem in the future.

How I intend for this to go is to have several of you tell us something about your role model, or any role model. Let us know who their antagonist is and what cause they are working for, or why that person could be considered a role model. As a group, we’ll vote for the role model that could potentially be most interesting. I have a survey link at the bottom of my Live Streaming web page, we’ll see how well that works.

Then we’ll try to collectively write one or two very short story scripts about that role model and his or her antagonist. I’ll paste the dialogue into a file on my local computer and at the end I’ll act out the scripts.

Now it’s time to enter something about your role models into the chat.

Let’s vote for one of the role models.

Now we’ll write the story. I’m going into this knowing full well that this is going to be ridiculous. I’m OK with that. These first live broadcasts are mostly for practice, to get the bugs out of the process, and to build an audience. As the show matures and we build a regular audience, I expect that some people will come in with a very short story already written and we’ll have real actors act them out. But for now we’ll try this.

Who can tell me what is the conflict between RoleModel and Antagonist? What’s the difference in their agendas?

What’s the setting where the role model might have a conflict with the antagonist?

What just happened to trigger this encounter in this setting?

How will this encounter end? How does RoleModel win?

What steps, or story beats, happen to lead to this end?

What might RoleModel say to the antagonist? What might Antagonist say to RoleModel? – continue until we get to the End.

Tune in next week to find out how RoleModel beats Antagonist.

If anyone asks about *Budget Justified*, tell them they have to tune in to a future episode to find out.

### Friday September 5, 2008

The live broadcast went OK. It’s still in practice mode, so I didn’t expect it to be great. There are a lot of glitches to work out. I think next week will be more fun if I have someone in the video with me on my end.

The video was jerky, but the sound was fine. I think ustream is just as bad and people can’t join in with their video.

One of my friends had his kids around and some guy was typing obscenities. I told him my mother-in-law was in the chat. So my friend left the chat. Luckily that was before the naked guy uploaded his video. Weird. Would he walk into a restaurant naked?

Sometimes people ask me if RoleModel Enterprises and the videos I’m creating are for kids. Definitely NOT for kids. Would you show a movie about what really goes on in your office to kids?

No, kids get to hear lies from adults about how great their jobs are. That’s what companies hire them to say. It’s their duty. The media I create is not about lies. It’s about truth.

Yet at the same time, I don’t want it to be something you can’t show kids. The story may not appeal to kids, but the content shouldn’t be offensive.

There’s a culture in the workforce that you have to pretend everything is always going great. If you don’t, the managers know you’re on to them, or at least that you’re not going to sit around pretending that you’re not on to them.

In the professional organizations I’ve participated in, everyone seems to act like it’s important that they do their job, although their job isn’t important. Because if their job were important, they wouldn’t be spending time in the organization trying to find something that makes them feel important. It seems like they take leadership positions in the organizations because they don’t have the opportunity to take leadership positions in their paid jobs. Sometimes I wonder if men created the Society of Women Engineers to give them something to keep the women out of their hair, make them think they’re important because they participate in SWE.

Yet they never talk about why their jobs aren’t fulfilling enough. It’s an unspoken rule. You’re supposed to pretend that you believe that being an engineer is important, even if none of your engineering work is important. And nobody ever talks about how they’re treated at work. We say that we need more women engineers. I agree. But nobody ever says why they think they need more women engineers. What exactly is going on in their workplace that makes them think they need more women engineers.

So when you move on to other things, as long as you’re still an employee, you aren’t allow to tell the truth about what went on at your former employer. Because then management at your new employer will assume you’ll tell people what foibles they’re up to after you leave them. And to prevent you from doing so, they’ll treat you like a mushroom. Shovel you manure and keep you in the dark.

Now, I’m not advocating tattling to upper management about everything that bothers you. In some cases that wouldn’t work anyway. If they’re doing the same things, you’ll be the one who’s punished. And I’m not saying that management owes you the moon just because you show up to work. But I don’t think employees should be bullied into silence. I am advocating speaking out through new media if the corporate waste and morale are interesting enough that someone will pay attention.

### Monday September 8, 2008

I definitely need to get a guest to appear on my show each week. Just thinking about how that would play out, I can tell it would be more fun to do and more fun to listen to.

I’ll start by asking them how they could be a role model in their lives. In the case of Kimberly, she could be a role model as either the mother of a boy with Aspergers syndrome or as someone in an interracial marriage.

I asked Dave M. how he might be portrayed as a role model. He teaches computer courses, so I thought he might want to talk about that. But then our conversation fell apart. He got focused on my example of Kimberly and didn’t see how his being single had anything to do with the show and he doesn’t have any role models in the media. Huh? Maybe he has Aspergers.

### Wednesday September 10, 2008

Dave Cooperman was here last night to shoot some scenes. It was low-key, just Dave, Randy, and me. I think he feels weird about grabbing my butt in front of Randy, but he handled it calmly. Randy wished he had the camera rolling for part of our rehearsal time. I was supposed to say I was so sorry about Charlie’s wife losing the baby, and then started laughing, so we had all this silly ad-libbing.

Dave made a pitch for getting on some Amazon site so we can get on IMDB. I gave him a totally unexpected response about how I don’t need approval from the Man. My point was that I don’t feel special just because some Amazon site gives me a blessing. I want to know what rights they expect me to give up before I decide whether their blessing is worth anything to me. Maybe other people feel they need approval from the Man to feel important. But I don’t need the Man. I need the People. Of course, nobody ever gets approval from all the People. I just need a critical mass to defend myself from those who voice disapproval.

Dave’s always so pleasant to work with. He probably doesn’t know what to do with me.

I went to the McCain-Palin speech today. As I was leaving, someone was interviewing people for whitehouse.com. I stopped to listen to an interview, so they asked if I wanted to be interviewed too. I said sure; I think the interview went well. I’m not sure what their agenda was. I looked at their web site when I got home. Seemed newsy, I couldn’t tell if there was any political bias.

It was interesting to go to the rally. You get to see what goes on at the event, what all the people do and say while you’re there. Like the kids running in circles yelling Sarah. Or talking to the people in line in front of me about their volunteer work for the GOP. I also got to see the McCains and Palins get off the bus and was within a few feet of shaking McCain’s hand, but a security guard got right in front of me as he passed.

In her speech, Palin said, “Some people change to promote their careers. Others leave their careers to promote change.” I thought that applied well to me.

McCain mentioned air traffic control, delays, and 9/11. I don’t remember exactly what he said, but he wasn’t happy with it. I’m wondering if he meant airport security after 9/11? That’s not air traffic. Is he upset with New York delays? That has nothing to do with 9/11 that I know of. But McCain is always talking about eliminating government waste and reducing government spending. Perhaps that’s why he’s not too happy with the FAA.

Perhaps McCain and Palin will be interested in what I have to show about how the FAA is run. Perhaps I should make an appointment with one of his staff to let them know what I’ve been working on once *Budget Justified* is complete.

### Thursday September 11, 2008

Doing the second live broadcast tonight. I asked Laura across the street if she wanted to be in it. She said she’d help out within the next few weeks, but Sean’s out of town this week, so she needs to watch the kids tonight. She’d be fun on camera.

Today I went downtown to get some footage for the opening credits of *Budget Justified*. I videotaped the Capitol with the FAA building and FBI building in the foreground. I also took footage of airplanes flying into the Washington Monument for transitions. Great way to spend Sept. 11. The only person who said anything to me was Bruce, a guy visiting from San Francisco. I gave him my card. I hope he doesn’t work for the FAA.

Some ideas for the script:

Welcome to the second live broadcast of *New Media Role Models*. Last week we had several of my friends and relatives join in, along with a few random people who stumbled upon my broadcast through the Stickam site. Since then, I’ve changed the category that this show was placed under in the Stickam site. Originally, I categorized it as “social,” but I changed it to “Entertainment,” meaning that this is supposed to be somewhat like a show, as opposed to me trying to meet people on the internet.

Since this is just the second week, these shows are still in experimental mode. Although the sound is fine, the video is jerky. I’m looking into that. It’s either because the video I’m uploading from my camera is too high of a resolution or because my DSL is too slow and I need to upgrade to fiber optic, or both. Hopefully I’ll be able to do something about it over the next few weeks.

Also, within the next few weeks I’d like to bring guests onto the show so it’s not just me as a talking head on the video. Maybe tonight I’ll get some participants who can upload their own video and have a few interesting things to say about their role models, or how they can be role models to others. One of my neighbors is interested in stopping by to be on the show within the next few weeks. Another friend of mine hosts game nights at her house through Meetup.com and we’ve been thinking about making a role models game out of this that we could broadcast.

For those of you just tuning in, this is *New Media Role Models*, where everyone is a role model. A show about you, not me. I’m making another show about me called *Budget Justified*. And it’s fantastic. And not just because of me. I may have written a fantastic story, but it’s really the other actors that make it come to life. They’ve been wonderful to work with, and they’re all volunteers. Same with my crew. I’m so lucky to have such talented people to work with. I won’t tell you what it’s about yet. I’m not releasing it for a few months, but you can see pieces of what we’ve done on the Videos portion of the rolemodelsenterprises.com web site.

But since we’re doing this show, let’s talk about your favorite role models. You’ll get more out of this show if you put more into it yourself. Can Gary Thomas, on live feed, tell us about his role model, or tell us about something he’s involved in that could make him a role model to others? Who can give me an example of a good role model?

Last week we talked about Sarah Palin as a role model. Now, I want to be clear that RoleModel Enterprises doesn’t endorse any particular candidate or party, but it’s a timely topic. And yesterday, I met her. Sort of. I went to the McCain-Palin rally a couple miles down the road from me. Twenty-six thousand people showed up. The line to get into the park was a mile long. It was interesting to go to, you get to see what goes on at the event, what all the people do and say while you’re there. Like the kids running in circles yelling Sarah. Or when the Straight Talk Express (the McCain bus) stopped and the McCains and Palins got out to shake everyone’s hands. I also got interviewed for the website Whitehouse.com.

So what did everyone else do for their September 11? I spent my day videotaping the FAA building, the FBI building, and airplanes flying into the Washington Monument. The only person who said anything to me was a tourist from San Francisco who asked if I wanted to be in the video.

### Friday September 12, 2008

I conducted my second live broadcast last night. Although I logged in a half-hour early, there seemed to be some glitches with broadcasting around the time I was supposed to begin. I’m not convinced I was broadcasting for the first ten minutes. Not many people joined the chat.

Pam came into the chat around fifteen minutes after the broadcast started. She said she had trouble getting in. I’m assuming that my broadcast wasn’t coming up when she accessed my web page. No naked guys came in, but before the show started, there was one guy on video who was sleeping under his covers. I’m not sure what that was about.

### Saturday September 13, 2008

Kevin M. came by last night to finally pick up the shoes he left behind and to tape one episode so it would be ready to show at my talk at ASU.

By email, Kevin had mentioned that his girlfriend was in the hospital. That sounded pretty bad. When he got here, he told Randy and me just how bad it was.

Less than two years ago, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. They had been dating for a year. He nursed her through chemo and radiation. She’s going to be fine, but she’s having some complications and he has to administer some treatment every evening for the next several weeks. That’s a lot to stick through with someone you’re not even married to.

It turns out that the swimsuit competitions that she organizes were inspired by her breast cancer. She puts them on to celebrate women’s healthy bodies. When Kevin first mentioned that his girlfriend put on swimsuit pageants, I thought, hm, Kevin must be one of those single guys who likes to hang out with the kind of girls who like to parade around scantily-clad.

That didn't exactly mesh with the impression I had of him as a confident, friendly, mature guy. My original, mistaken, impression of him as married seemed to fit his personality better. So the new information about helping his girlfriend through her illness adds a different dimension to my Picture of Kevin. Which is still incomplete, but I hope new colors will be added over time.

Although, without knowing the complete story of the swimsuit competitions, and never having met Kevin’s girlfriend, I still wonder what they say about someone’s character. If I went through breast cancer, a swimsuit competition would be the last activity I’d want to participate it. Of course, I’m not fond of the swimsuit competition idea even without ever having had breast cancer.

Kevin is so easy to be with. It seems very natural to hang around with him. Talking to him is like talking with an old friend. I bet most people feel that way around Kevin. Yet, the more time I spend with Kevin, the goofier he seems. I wonder if that’s the same impression I give others of myself – smart, confident, friendly, mature. Then the more other people see me, the goofier I get.

### Sunday September 14, 2008

I found an article in the Washington Post about girls and video games. It mentioned that more non-violent video games are being created and marketed to girls and women. It gave me an idea that I could put a few postings on online girls gaming sites about my interactive show so that I can attract more viewers that don’t upload naked videos of themselves.

Here’s what I’ll post:

I’m starting a weekly live online interactive broadcast about role models. It’s a half hour every Thursday evening at 8:30 Eastern, 5:30 Pacific time. I thought women who are into gaming would be interested in participating. Up to six people, in addition to myself, can upload their video to participate in the discussion/role playing game. An unlimited number of people can watch and participate in the text chat. You can see what the interface looks like at http://RoleModelEnterprises.com

This is how it goes:

1. The people on the video introduce themselves by saying something about their role model or how they are a role model to someone else.

2. The participants (video and text chat) decide which role model we will create a very short story about, then figure out the antagonist, conflict, setting, etc. for the story.

3. After fleshing out some dialogue, two or three of the people on video act out the dialogue.

I don't expect perfect stories. I expect people being spontaneous. Down the road, I think some people would come prepared with their stories.

I’m inviting all of you to check out http://RoleModelEnterprises.com on Thursday evenings at 8:30 Eastern Time to participate. If you’d like to participate by broadcasting your own live video of yourself, please register at http://stickam.com beforehand.

http://girlsdontgame.com/forums/index.php?topic=284.msg2649#new

### Monday September 15, 2008

I don’t fit into the culture of engineering. The culture of engineering is to be a company man. I used to be all for being a company man. I was willing to do whatever it took to get a job done – stay up all night, work weekends, go to stressful meetings. But then I found out what kind of a job the company wanted to get done. Everything was in the name of wasting taxpayer’s money and brownnosing incompetent people. And I couldn’t force myself to be a company man anymore.

I sent an email to Martha Sue about having a live broadcast as a game night. If I moved some of the furniture out of the room and brought in the smaller chairs, I should be able to get 12 people, 3 groups of four, in the room. The firewire won't reach into the next room unless I rewire my computer setup, and we really don't need a bigger group to start with anyway.

This is how it would work:

1. Everyone gets into groups of three or four and introduces themselves to the entire gathering by saying something about their role model or how they could be a role model to others.

2. The groups discuss and decide which role model they will create a very short story about.

3. The groups figure out the antagonist, conflict, setting, and conclusion for their story and report back to the entire gathering.

4. The groups figure out the sequence of story events and some dialogue between role model and antagonist to go with the event sequence. Then report back to the entire gathering, perhaps with some feedback.

5. The groups flesh out the dialogue, then act it out for the entire gathering.

The first four steps would be the first hour, then the last half hour would be the live broadcast where the groups say something about their role model, then act out their story. I don't expect perfect stories. I expect people being spontaneous. Down the road, I think some people would come prepared with their stories and the groups would have a discussion, maybe clean the stories up a little, and then they'd act them out or professional actors would act them out.

This isn't a board game, but it's social. It's online at the same time it's in person. And people get to play the role of a role model or an antagonist.

Joking, I sometimes refer to the characters on *The Office* as my friends. One problem with television is that it makes it too easy for people to hide in their homes and avoid stepping outside to socialize. The internet has brought a limited ability to socialize around the world without leaving our homes. What I’d like *New Media Role Models* to be is a forum for socializing. There’s already a topic to talk about. The medium supports it. This is what the internet is meant to do. We no longer just watch TV. We participate in it. We interact with our online/onshow friends.

While I’m editing the episodes of *Budget Justified*, I see so many flaws and think, “We should’ve done it like this…” If the cast was onsite, I would redo those scenes because it would be simple to shoot again. But these people are volunteers and I’m not going to ask them to come back for everything. Although the footage isn’t perfect, it is really very good. Much better than I expected it would ever be. And I’m lucky and grateful for what *Budget Justified* is becoming.

### Tuesday September 16, 2008

I sent an email to the professors in charge of the student chapters of the Society of Women Engineers and the Institute of Industrial Engineers to find out if it would be OK to sell books and T-shirts as a fundraiser for the student organizations, a dollar per sale. Probably won’t make much money for them, but I think it would be bad PR if I didn’t donate a portion of the sale to the organization that helped me set up the talk. I should do that at AAUW meetings too.

Talking points for when I get interviewed on a talk show, regarding new media:

The medium is changing, people are inventing new capabilities. We shouldn’t use it to do the same old thing. We should exploit these capabilities to do new things – more interaction, teaching and learning – participating instead of being an outside observer. Television can now be a two-way communication. Instead of observing the stories, we participate in creating the direction of the stories.

Regarding giving talks at schools:

As women, we're taught to go around telling everyone how great it is to be an engineer, we need more women engineers. Well, the second part is true. We do need more women engineers. If only so the women engineers we have now can avoid being treated like an object without alienating the whole office. And to create a culture where what seems normal is being a woman engineer.

I can’t in good conscience tell girls how great engineering is, we save the world, whatever. Because if we do, we’ll continue to attract the wrong kind of woman to the profession. The kind who expect everybody to be nice and sing Kumbaya. The kind who will sit passively and take whatever bad treatment they get until they can’t take it any more and leave the profession to go have babies. We’re only going to disappoint them. We need young women who are going to be activists. Not corporate mouthpieces who are too afraid to speak out, who will perpetuate this culture and sit idly by while the men treat them like toys.

Regarding the audience for *New Media Role Models*:

Some people ask me if this company is for children. Doesn’t it sound so sweet. Role models. Well, for every role model protagonist, there’s a more powerful antagonist. If there weren’t, would the role model really be a role model? They must be working against something to make life better. If they’re not working against something, they’re probably not doing their job.

Regarding complaints about crowdsourcing:

If you feel like you’re being used, that this isn’t a good opportunity for you, that it’s not something you want to spend your time on, by all means don’t spend time on it. But for others, helping out with creating a product or service would be fun, a great way to meet others, a learning experience, or a way to get their name out there, a way to be a part of a bigger community.

### Wednesday September 17, 2008

Last night I was lamenting to Randy that I didn’t have any good outtakes to play through the credits for Episode 3 of *Budget Justified*. This morning I needed to reshoot the close-up of my diploma for that episode. Zeeb solved the problem of the lack of outtakes by jumping into the shot.

I got a response about the posting I left on the girls gaming blog. It was from a guy who thought it was spam. I replied by saying I was just looking for more people to play on my live broadcast. But I thought it would be a good idea to post the announcement on more blogs and chats. So I asked my helper in the Philippines to post the announcement on various women’s web sites.

### Thursday September 18, 2008

Mom called today and said she couldn’t figure out how to watch my show last week. I’m convinced the broadcast wasn’t working.

Tonight I will wear a weird hat to catch more interest. I found Randy’s solar fan hat he got when he was a kid. It has a solar panel on it that power a tiny fan on the brim.

Possible script:

Sorry about last week. I don’t think the site was working for the first ten minutes.

Today we’re going to talk about energy conservation, so I’m wearing this solar hat. Actually, I’m wearing the hat because I need to be more visually interesting on this video, and I found this one in the closet.

It’s got a solar panel on top to power this fan. Solar power is relevant because I have a friend, who may be listening on this broadcast, who installed solar panels on their roof. So they’re role models to society by conserving energy.

Last summer I went on a tour of a house that uses hardly any energy from utility companies. Instead, they have solar panels, energy-efficient appliances, and heat their house with a corn-burning stove.

I don’t know why corn. Sounds good. But I don’t know what energy costs went into growing the corn or transporting it to the house. Perhaps they should burn something that grows nearby on its own, like the weeds in their backyard. Maybe I should burn the weeds in my backyard.

Or maybe I should eat the weeds and run up and down my stairs to keep me warm. No, I might get sick. I’ll get a goat to eat the weeds and have it snuggle on my lap to keep me warm. Then I’ll eat the goat and run up and down the stairs.

That’s the new energy savings plan for America. The goat plan.

But for now, I’m sticking to my open window policy. I keep my windows open at night if I need to cool the house down, or open the blinds or the windows during the day if I want to warm up the house. Today was a good day to have the windows open all day. Which meant it was 66 degrees in here when I woke up and it heated up to 78, depending on what room I was in.

If anyone else has anything they’d like to share about how they’re conserving energy, type it in the chat on your screen.

I need to figure out how to get more participants in this show. Tell your friends to join in and we can make this a livelier discussion.

How about Miss Delaware last year? Why do I bring her up? She was in the Washington Post last March because she’s developing new biofuels. So she’s a good role model. She’s a chemical engineer. I don’t know about the beauty pageant part, though.

Join me next week and I’ll wear a different weird hat.

On the broadcast, Pam R. suggested a topic for two weeks from now. Simplifying your life. I’ll look up someone on the internet.

I had up to twelve people at a time on my live broadcast tonight. I didn’t have dead air for the first ten minutes, so that helped. And nobody joined in with weird video. Actually, Steve R. got home right at the end of the broadcast and is trying to connect via his own video right now. It took about thirty-five minutes, but he finally found the settings to join the broadcast.

### Sunday September 21, 2008

Two Washington Post articles about the future of TV. They don’t know what it will be. I’ll tell them what it will be. Live interactive broadcasts. I’ll have to include Hank Stuever and Tom Shales on my press release list. There was also an article about a local company that creates online games. I should meet one of these people at some point.

They mentioned the disintegration of the fall TV season and television timetables. People are watching shows on YouTube and DVDs whenever they want. The only thing you need schedules for now is for live shows.

Live shows are good for interaction, like a talk show. Or a forum for the audience participants to talk to the actors/people. Real people. Not the weird ones Hollywood shows us. People representative of the world around us.

Brand yourself: the future of TV. Everyone can have their own show. We don’t need Hollywood any more.

Just like we don’t need someone to answer our phones for us or type our memos.

### Tuesday September 23, 2008

Ideas for revenue: Membership fees or one-time fees for people who want to upload their live video on my live show.

The work I’m most proud in my life is *Budget Justified*. Not the software I created at my former employer, not the research I did for my thesis. Budget Justified will have an effect on more people.

I went to another Creatives DC happy hour. The people there seem well-connected and entrepreneurial. This is a good group of people to know. Some of them are putting together a podcast. I met Greg Tindale, who does improv and is looking for businesses that are trying to drive traffic to their web site. Greg mentioned that registering a podcast with a syndication service is only around five dollars a month. That might be a good way of drawing traffic to my site.

I met two women who do sales for Red Bull. They said they’re trying to create a brand about the *experience* of the drink. Interesting.

Neil Takemoto is involved in all sorts of efforts, but he’s cagy when I try to ask him about his business model. That’s something he should be ready to talk about. He seems shy of me.

### Wednesday September 24, 2008

Flying to Phoenix. I haven’t heard back from anyone regarding the message I sent to ASU departments and dorms letting them know about my talk. I wonder if that means the message didn’t make it through their spam filter. Or if they thought it was spam, or if they have too much other things to deal with, so they ignored my message. I hope people come to the talk. Maybe I should call the dorms tonight to find out if anyone knows about it.

### Monday September 29, 2008

Well, I didn’t think it was worth the effort to call around. I’m sitting in front of the classroom that the IE department reserved for me and it’s locked. I called the IE department and they said they’d try to find someone to unlock it for me. However, the talk is supposed to start in five minutes, and I don’t have any audience waiting to hear my talk. Not even any of my former professors. So if nobody shows up to unlock the door, no big deal. I don’t think the word got around, but that’s OK. Next time I’ll have to spend more effort calling around.

I did get in touch with Brad finally and we agreed to have lunch. It’s good to talk to him to get ideas. We discussed backing up my video footage to DVD or CD. We also talked about file formats, which made me think I should look into outputting edited videos into a format that can be read into the video editing software and edited later, versus keeping only the files with all the editing data that could get corrupted and all my months of work would be lost.

And Randy went with his dad to a doctor appointment, so the trip to ASU was worthwhile. It’s changed a lot, so it’s nice to see the campus. Maybe I’ll wander over to the dorm I used to live in…

The person in charge of dorm life wasn’t in. That dorm is now for design majors only. So I’d have to try a different dorm.

I also talked to a professor of women’s studies. She teaches a class about images of women and how they affect society.

### Tuesday September 30, 2008

In the airport on the way back to Washington.

I just figured out what bugs me about mommy stuff in Society of Women Engineer magazines. SWE is trying to tell the world that the capability for being an engineer is not defined by gender. Then the magazines have all these articles that assume the women still define themselves as mommies. Like they’re telling us it’s still really our job to babysit and that being an engineer is just a fun activity to talk to other mommies about. Male engineer magazines don’t pander to men about being daddies. Maybe they should have articles that tell women how to not perpetuate their roles as the baby watchers and housemaids.

At one interview I had, they made a point of bringing in the part-time mommy on her day off so I could meet her. Like what did I have in common with her? What were they trying to say?

I wonder how many women leave engineering because they aren’t taken seriously. And how many women leave the profession because they are being groped.

### Friday October 3, 2008

Steve R. was live on my broadcast last night. Not a big audience, only a few people. Two guys came on wearing scary masks, didn’t really contribute to the conversation. I’m still not making a big deal of it until I develop my plan for where I want to go with it and how I’m going to engage a better audience.

AAUW sent around an article about Christia Brown, assistant professor of psychology at the University of Kentucky, and Campbell Leaper, professor of psychology at the University of California Santa Cruz. They did a study where they asked 600 girls ages 12-18 about their experiences with sexism and sexual harassment. They’d probably like to know about my little movie.

### Tuesday October 7, 2008

Went to a talk at the Library of Congress by the owners of a small publisher and bookstore in Scottsdale. It was about the future of publishing. Heavy on the idea of ebooks. Also mentioned the idea of using video trailers to advertise books.

The woman talked about publisher being in charge of projects, not products, without explaining what a project means. And the role of the bookstore changing to become more of a venue for author talks, and the shaper of the *experience* of reading and bringing people together – events. She compared this to people paying a monthly fee to be a part of an online story or online world.

Interesting that the publisher/bookstore owner used the same word that the Red Bull saleswomen used to describe their roles.

Her husband said they had fifty volunteer readers to help decide what they publish – crowdsourcing. The role of the publisher would become production, storage, and distribution. I don’t see the need to have a publisher do any of that. That’s what printers and fulfillment services are for. As for bookstores, as long as there’s profit in it, bookstores aren’t going to care who ships the books to them.

Some of the audience mentioned purchasing ebooks a chapter at a time or subscription fees.

### Sunday October 12, 2008

Last night I watched some clips of Angela from *The Office* talking to fans. It seemed like a good way for her to keep herself accessible to the public, to drum up publicity, to build a name for herself beyond the character. Then at the end of the clip, she played the NBC chimes. At that point, you realized it was really a way for NBC to get more publicity, to remind us who really has the money and pulls the strings.

Angela recently had a baby in real life. All-things-baby are really popular these days, so NBC probably wanted in on that publicity opportunity.

What is the structure of power? Who’s on top? NBC is just a business, a structure of financial arrangements. Several people in that business have power, each checking and balancing the power amongst themselves. No one in that structure is a dictator.

But none of those people with the ultimate power is Angela. She doesn’t have the *freedom* to dictate whether she can put a clip on the official television web sites. She’s not representing herself because she’s not creating the clip. NBC resources were used to create the clip, she’s just an actor in the clip.

How to keep power over oneself? Even as a business owner, I’ll have to collaborate with bigger business structures. No business is an island. Who will really have the power in those situations? The one with control of the most money? The one with something to blackmail the other with?

As long as no one is coerced into a business arrangement, it’s not abuse of power, it’s a mutually beneficial business agreement.

### Saturday October 18, 2008

Went to a podcasting meetup at a company owned by a guy around my age. I think the company is mostly a video production firm, but it seems that the owner is focusing on podcasts and new media paradigms. I’ll have to find out more about what he does. He seems like a really good candidate for collaboration on my business – he owns his own business, knows the podcasting business, and is trying creative, modern approaches for his business.

Even more interesting, I met an older guy who used to fly stunt aircraft and his wife was his wingwalker. He is video-interviewing several people who retired from high levels of the government agency where I used to work who have detailed knowledge of how that agency has become useless.

### Tuesday October 21, 2008

Went to a podcasting talk at a Montgomery County television station. It was given by a podcaster named Ray Ortega, put on the local Digital Video Users Group.

The people in the podcasting meetup and the DVUG are video junkies looking for content. Reminds me of the computer simulation that my degree revolved around; a solution looking for a problem, technical expertise with no subject area expertise. Also like the secretary with the typing skills, made obsolete by the decrease in cost and increase in the ease of use of computers. We don’t need the fancy video equipment to do a podcast anymore.

I took a lot of notes. No groundbreaking material, but the guy had some useful information about RSS feeds.

So far, people are treating podcasts somewhat like television, somewhat like videotapes. Nothing live, nothing interactive. I talked to a guy about my long-term podcast plan - crowdsource the show. The audience becomes the writers.

Ray mentioned that he’s joining a “network” of podcasters to use the larger group for leverage to get advertising. I think that Rich Harrington is putting this “network” together. Ray didn’t go into details of the network, however I think I know what Rich Harrington is trying to do. Build the next generation of “television network.” Except it will be a “podcast network.” Forward thinking. Genius. A guy I need to get involved with.

I’m not sure yet what advantages there are in being in a “podcast network” as opposed to doing your own thing, except pooled expertise. Maybe pooled publicity. I don’t know if I need pooled publicity or not, but I think the pooled expertise might help me.

### Thursday October 23, 2008

I’m spending some time this week getting in touch with old friends and coworkers. Found some friends from living in the dorms, some I used to work with on campus, and some people from grade school and high school who weren’t at the twenty year reunion. Part of it is for sanity’s sake. If I’m going to upend my life as I know it, I want as many pieces and people in place who know my history, so I can retain who I am more easily. So I don’t become something defined by what the media has to say about me.

Funny thing is, I noticed that the result is that I’m documenting my sexual history – or lack thereof. If I’m going to put a story out there about me getting unwanted sexual attention, I’m glad I have a history of not asking for sexual attention. Because people are going to say I provoked the groping. Blame the victim.

So here’s a good story about my past: When I worked on campus, the ASU Telefund, we had a Christmas party. We were all expected to bring a gag gift for the name-drawing gift exchange. I mentioned this to my roommates and they suggested to bring lacy underwear and Vaseline. I thought this suggestion was hilarious. As a child, Vaseline was used in my household when my sister had diaper rash. To pair it with lacy underwear suggested to me that although a person was mature enough to wear fancy underwear, she was still having problems with diaper rash.

The whole thing likely would have blown over, if it hadn’t been given to the crazy woman, who threw a fit.

During my search, I also found a guy who ended up spending the night in my dorm room alone with me one night after a party. I think my roommates were trying to get me laid. That didn’t happen. Thank goodness. That wasn’t what I was looking for. I told him I was a virgin and that was the last I saw of him. I was fine with that.

I also heard back from a guy I dated a few times, which never went anywhere because we were dating other people on and off and the timing never worked out. I didn’t expect it to be a long-term relationship anyway, so it was no skin off my nose. But his response made it seem like he wished the timing would have worked. I’m not sure if he meant it or if he was trying to lead me on. He’d have nothing to gain by leading me on, since we’re both married now and live across the continent from each other. Maybe he just felt guilty that he didn’t follow up with me about what was going on with his life at the time.

This evening I went to a documentary producer’s group as a part of Women in Film and Video. People rambled too much, but it seemed that a few of them had good ideas to contribute. Perhaps I should have expected this, but most of the people there were looking for ideas or for knowledge on the process of making documentaries than were there to give expertise. If you already have the expertise why go?

I went there looking for was a group that could consider being on my coalition of women’s groups, a group of people that are well-connected. One of two of the people there may have one or two good connections,

One of the guys mentioned putting a blog out there. Not that I don’t already have one. If I didn’t, I wouldn’t have gotten fired. But I may want to consider a daily paragraph about role models – not the business, not the video series, but the live-broadcast New Media Role Models show. It would make sense to have a blog to go along with the show.

A woman who had already finished her documentary

### Thursday October 30, 2008

Had a meeting with one of the local SWE leaders. I showed her the first four episodes of *Budget Justified* and told her that I am building a coalition of women’s organizations. She didn’t express any interest in getting involved, but I think she doesn’t have the power, or doesn’t want the power, to do something about it. At least I made her aware of my intentions.

I’m at the bank to get something straightened out. Again. I’m not impressed with how my bank account is being handled by them.

### Tuesday November 4, 2008

I sent off an email to friends to find out who’d be interested in having group discussions about role models in new media. This is what I sent:

I'm getting together a group of Founding Members, mostly women, who are interested in getting role models in new media (mostly concentrating on strong women as role models). I'm thinking we'll meet around once every week or two to discuss: the live-broadcast internet show, building a coalition of women-owned businesses and women-focused non-profits, recruiting members, publicity, Facebook, and a plan of action. The first meeting would be to discuss the group's mission, related to getting role models in new media.

I believe that as a group we have more power and a purpose toward getting more publicity for our work, or whatever else we do as role models. Let me know if you'd be interested in being a part of this group and I'll keep you in the loop regarding when the first meeting will occur. I'm thinking lunch at my house.

### Wednesday November 5, 2008

I realized that I haven’t been concentrating enough on Budget Justified lately, so I sent off an email to Dave about setting up the next shoot.

Then I realized I hadn’t heard back from the last message I sent him, and it had been over a month since our last correspondence. I had a paranoia attack that he might have had his big break and moved in a hurry.

### Thursday November 6, 2008

Heard back from Dave today. Everything’s fine.

Some of the most interesting ideas come up while I’m taking a shower: Let’s make a movie about all the guys I used to date. Except that would take about five minutes.

After searching social networking sites to find old friends, I ended up finding my first kiss, first guy I slept with (note! I did NOT say sex), first guy I thought I’d marry… oh yeah, and first sex. I realized that I’d have an interesting history of my sex life, or lack thereof, for a prequel to *Budget Justified*.

This one would be more of a documentary. I’d interview all the guys I used to know. Although it would be about guys who either I used to like or who used to like me, I’d tell them it was a story about guys in my early life. If I put out a call for admirers, maybe I’d find my stalker, Clifford, who met me while I was working at the mall senior year of high school. Or I could include the former (older) student of mine who texted me in a drunken stupor one night.

I’d interview them at their homes. At the end of each interview, I’d ask if they still had feelings for me. Some of them would likely have boring answers, but some would be intriguing. As I left, I’d have the cameras rolling and say how I still felt about them, if there was still any chemistry, or if I didn’t even like them as friends anymore.

It would be an interesting study of what happened in my life before I came to the government agency and got groped. But what the hell does this have to do with role models? Maybe the story of how a nice girl’s life evolves? The anti-“Sex In the City” kind of girl?

I’d probably find out things I never knew about my life. After spending the rest of my shower thinking about different guys I knew, I realized that one night while I was in high school I waited in the bushes with a guy who liked me for another guy who liked me to come with all his buddies to TP my house.

Tomorrow I’ll think this is a horrible idea.

### Monday November 10, 2008

Well, I haven’t thought it was a horrible idea yet. In fact, I told Randy about it and he didn’t gripe. I’m planning on going to Phoenix in December and setting up interviews with guys I used to hang out with.

### Tuesday November 11, 2008

I’m starting to worry a little about the idea of a documentary about my lack of sex life, but I’m still planning on going ahead. Just because I produce it doesn’t mean I ever have to show it to anyone.

More and more memories about one of the guys I went to high school with keep coming back to me. Haunting me. I just realized that when I ran into him many years ago and told him I was engaged, he broke down and lost it. It didn’t make sense to me at the time, so I didn’t even suspect he had much interest in me. We hung out in completely different crowds. I refused to believe it for the past few weeks. But after putting all the memories together, that’s the only conclusion that makes sense now. And I feel horrible about the way the scene unfolded when I told him I was getting married.

I talked to Michelle Tortolani, former Society of Women Engineers president, today about my movie. She poo-pooed it. I figured she would. She said there are already too many negative stereotypes out there and more negative information isn’t good for the profession. Well, I think sticking your head in the sand and pretending it didn’t happen is what’s bad for the profession. Because when everyone hides it, the victims feel isolated and leave the profession.

### Thursday November 13, 2008

I’m getting great feedback from friends who actually want to be in the documentary. One person said he didn’t want to participate, but I think I can scare up enough people to make this worthwhile.

I did my live show tonight. It didn’t work because stickam was having all sorts of connection problems. So Steve Rector and I talked over Skype instead.

### Friday November 14, 2008

Had Dave over for a taping. He was supposed to kiss my knees, but kissed his hands through my skirt instead. I think it will look fine on video. He’s definitely shy about the sexual content, even the content that isn’t that racy.

### Monday November 17, 2008

Talked to neighbor Jennie about joining Founding Members. She seemed very interested. Maybe we could brainstorm at her house frequently.

Got a message from Dave today saying that he’s not comfortable with the groping in the scenes and he would like me to cut them out. I don’t like him reneging on doing the groping scenes, as agreed upon. I also don’t like him thinking it’s his job to direct. But I don’t want to alienate him, so I’ll try to mollify him somehow.

### Tuesday November 18, 2008

I got some clarification from Dave, although I may still not understand his issue completely. The issue may be that he thinks the groping alienates the audience from the characters, that it makes the characters annoying. He may have a point.

I went to a Women In Film and Video event. I’m not sure I got much out of it, but it may not have been a total waste. I might have met one guy worth collaborating with. He has created a show as a series of web episodes. I’ve already added him to my Facebook friends. I don’t think I’m attending the good events that they put on because I don’t even have any idea who the leadership of the organization is.

### Friday November 21, 2008

Had a taping with Dave. Everything went very smoothly and we finished quickly.

I got another message from him earlier in the week. Seems like he is more concerned about having to grope than about character sympathy, but doesn’t want to admit it. It also seems that he expects me to take out the groping just because he asked. Come on. The story is about groping. The groping doesn’t stop halfway through the story. It escalates.

I even wonder if he thinks I put the groping in there because I want him to feel me up. Just like Mr. Friendly thought I wanted him to feel me up. People believe what they want to believe.

### Monday November 24, 2008

Great. Now I get an email from Dave where he rewrote my script, saying I put a scene where he shoves me onto the desk in there for sensationalism. He’s denying what happened to me. He said Mr. Friendly would’ve gotten arrested for assaulting me in the office. I replied saying nobody would ever bother to arrest they guy. I couldn’t even get a lawyer to look at my case because I was on a temp contract.

As mentioned before, the same concerns apply to scenes 36 and 38. Charlie resumes his sexual assault on Lisa, with even greater severity. The peeling off clothes, grabbing boobs, trying to kiss her, pinning her on the table, unzipping pants, etc. seems extreme and over the top. It works for fan entertainment, but doesn't seem to advance the story or present anyone as a role model. Her laughing about it and saying she'll be angry at a later time doesn't seem to fit. There's already a lot of footage establishing Charlie as a molester. I'd prefer we have him attempt one move, but she stops him and tells him to back off for good. The audience would likely prefer she punches him in the face and has him arrested, especially for what comes across as an attempted rape. However, since continuing the groping attacks are what you wish to have, how about the following changes as a compromise (the other parts of the scenes not listed below stay the same):

Scene 36- Delete the boob grab, but keep the unzipping pants and dirty talk:…

Then he proceeds to rewrite my script.

Dave just doesn’t get Charlie. He doesn’t get that Charlie thinks he’s a boyfriend. Dave has succumbed to the stereotypes of sexual harassment. That guys are either nice or scum. He doesn’t understand that creepy guys aren’t going to have opportunity to grope because the women – and even the men – won’t want to be anywhere near them. He doesn’t get that the sexual harassers aren’t the weird guys. They’re the cool guys. The ones who seem normal and cute to everyone else in the office.

Dave can’t do flirty. He can only do nice, normal guy, or weird cartoonish creep.

### Friday November 28, 2008

Here’s another email, sent from Dave on Tuesday, that I’m not sure how to take:

Lisa,

Even before the last scene, the continued groping, petting, lewd comments and locking her in rooms are threatening, at least when it started. The degree of how threatening he is becomes suspect later since she never puts an end to his behavior, laughs about it, says she will be angry later and has friendly, compassionate conversations with him. It's strange to see someone tolerating such conduct, keeping him company and becoming his caring, supportive confidant. It doesn't seem to portray anyone as a victim or role model.

Perhaps we can film one extra episode where she tells him to get lost and never go anywhere near her again or risk being reported to management and the police (regardless of the likelihood of either taking action against him). At least the option is there for the episode to be added later on if you change your mind.

I'll complete the episodes with you, but ask you to give it more thought between now and Friday. For scheduling, if it doesn't interfere with your plans, I'd like to push back the start time to 4pm. Let me know if you need to keep the original time and we'll stick to that, otherwise I'll see you and Randy at 4. I'd also like to do the scenes in order from the most complex to the least. That would be 38, 36, 31, 37 with simplifying the choreography as much as possible. Thank you for considering my viewpoint.

I never said I wanted to portray anyone as a victim. In fact, I absolutely do not want to portray the Lisa character as a victim. She’s trying to take control of her situation by *fixing* what’s going on at work. By fixing the Perfect Airspace, and by fixing the harasser. She’s a problem solver. Not a complainer. She’s taking things into her own hands. Because no one else will.

However, the taping tonight went great. So I don’t know what his problem was.

### Monday December 1, 2008

Went to Old Town Alexandria to pick up an extra video camera from Ruth. She has another camera that I might be able to use, but it’s older technology. She said I should ask someone else, maybe Pete Hartzler, if I’d be able to use the other camera too.

Maybe I should try out her camera anyway. I tried out a file Keith sent me from his video camera, but the video quality was horrible.

I got a message back from John Asher saying he may be interested in being in my documentary, but he wants more details before he commits.

I’m writing stories about each of the people who will appear in my video. I expect I’ll be able to craft them into a book about my lack of sex life, to go along with the video.

### Wednesday December 3, 2008

Went to the Government Video Expo. I finally joined Women In Film and Video while I was there. I also went to a Podcast Alliance meeting. Afterward we went to Old Dominion Brew Pub and I sat next to Ron David again. He says he’d like to get involved in the live podcast I’m working on because he thinks it has potential.

### Friday December 5, 2008

I picked up Ruth’s other video camera and another tripod of hers, just incase I can use it. But I’m still looking for a third camera because I don’t want to deal with figuring out where I can transfer Hi8 tape to digital format.

### Monday December 8, 2008

My neighbor Jenny came over and we played around with a live broadcast. She’s very nice and seemed to enjoy it, seems supportive of the idea.

### Tuesday December 9, 2008

Went to the Women In Film and Video holiday party. I met several of the WIFV officers there and talked to several people I never met before. I recognized a few people from previous events. I like talking about my live internet show because it’s so different than what anyone else is working on. People seem intrigued by the idea.

### Saturday December 13, 2008

Kevin came over for the final shoot for *Budget Justified*. I don’t have to worry about the actors’ schedules any more. Even though we only took about six or seven minutes of footage, it took us three hours to do the shoot because the scene changes were fairly intensive. One scene was in our guest room, another in our basement, and a few in the home office.

I ran around the neighborhood this week trying to find people to sit at a café table for one of our scenes. Couldn’t get anyone. So I just had Randy play the waiter, in addition to being the camera guy.

### Tuesday December 16, 2008

Went to a Downtown Women’s Club happy hour. The people were nice, but it didn’t seem like there was a goal to our gathering. They were trying to get ideas for how to revamp the group, but I’m not sure we accomplished that.

I need to come up with a clearer personal goal and method for accomplishing it for each of these gatherings. You would think that the goal would be to first get to know these people. But it seems like it’s rarely the same people at these events. I’m not sure if I should come up with goals for networking events where I don’t expect to see the people again because I don’t think these connections would be very effective after meeting them only once. I think I need to be involved with the organizations at some level in order to get anyone on board with my internet show.

But we’ll see where it goes with these organizations. So far I’ve tried AAUW, SWE, WIFV, DWC, and the podcasters alliance. And DCRRC. Funny thing is that the podcasters alliance is the group that is mostly male, but it seems like it was easier to click with that group.

I found a third miniDV camera to borrow from Mary Hartzler. Yes!

### Wednesday December 17, 2008

Went to a Christmas party for the small company of one of the women from the podcasters alliance. Fun group! These people are very down to earth and enjoyable to hang out with. I met another person to add to my Facebook friends.

As I was about to leave, I kept getting distracted. A cool antique, a side conversation. I stepped out the door and Ron David showed up. Well, I had to go back in. I stayed for another forty-five minutes.

### Thursday December 18, 2008

I sent my story about the Oldhams off to their mom. They’ll either love it or hate it. Or both. But it’s so good, so long, and so true that they’re definitely going to have a strong reaction to it. I hope they’d like to get back to me to talk about it, but I have to accept that they may not want to relive those memories with me.

### Sunday December 21, 2008

Went to the Unitarian church for the second time. We talked to the woman who gives the homily. She talked about the importance of oral history and how it differs from written documented history. The job of priests in ancient times was to preserve the purity of Story. I mentioned how technology is changing what literacy means, just as the written word changed what literacy became thousands of years ago.

I thought the discussion was interesting because it’s so applicable to my business of creating and communicating the stories of strong women with new media. The woman said some day texting will be considered something that only old people do.

Later this afternoon, Randy said he wanted to watch a muppet movie on Hulu.

“I remember hearing something about that movie lately,” I said.

“Yeah, it was on something called TV.”

“Oh,” I laughed. “That’s for old people.”

I’m working on the stories of the people I intend to interview in January. I was worried that I wouldn’t be able to develop good stories out of the memories I have of them. The stories of the Oldhams are more plentiful and better quality, but I’m doing OK with what I have for the others.

### Monday December 22, 2008

Went to Channel 10 to meet Mary Hartzler to pick up a third camera today.

### Wednesday December 31, 2008

Made appointments with old friends to interview them while I’m in Phoenix.

Had a meeting with a business consultant from score.org to get advice on starting a business. This guy didn’t really tell me anything I didn’t already know. It seems that these organizations that were created to help startup businesses don’t really have much help to offer.

### Thursday January 1, 2009

Went to Phoenix to work on my documentary about my previous life.

My computer is acting up. It’s still under warranty, so I may send it back. I hate computer problems. I shouldn’t have to waste my time on this with a computer that’s not even a year old.

### Thursday January 22, 2009

Had a great time in Phoenix. I felt much more free than I do in Washington – so much easier to get around and you don’t have to trap yourself in layers of coats to go out.

I saw a lot of old friends. As far back as grade school. I wanted to take advantage of this trip because it may be the last chance to get to see people under normal circumstances. Regardless, I should throw a party at mom’s house every time I come back.

The documentary interviews went better than I expected. It could’ve been embarrassing and stupid. I could’ve gotten no response. A few important people turned me down, but perhaps I can get them another time.

Went to see Steve Oldham last night. The weirdness of the conclusion of my story about him was bugging me. He put my mind to rest by telling me that I got it right. And he did one better by telling me he liked the story and thought I should publish it. Little does he know that I plan to make a movie of it. I’ll reveal my plans to him slowly over the next year or so.

In fact, I came up with a crazy idea for a restaurant to go along with the movie. Run by Steve and Ken. People would come to see them after the movie got popular. And in the middle of the restaurant would be the loud guys table, just like in the cafeteria in high school. People would sit at the loud guys table and yell stupid comments.

Someone would run RoleModel Enterprises events at their location. So they’d have to have some video and internet equipment.

Then when I was in town, I’d hang out there and help. Eventually there’d be a whole chain of Steve & Ken restaurants.

I’ll have to observe Steve and Ken at their jobs next time I’m in town. And plant the idea to start their own restaurant, or at least find out what their interest in such a venture might be. Even if it weren’t their restaurant, they could manage it or have some type of leadership role that they had creative freedom over. Something to keep them interested in being involved.

### Wednesday, January 27, 2009

Went to a CreativesDC networking event. As I walked through the park, I dreaded the trip. It was icy. It was dark. Had I left half an hour earlier, it would've been light out. I could've left half an hour earlier if it didn't take so damn long to get dressed in the winter. Getting around Phoenix last week was so easy. But once I got to the metro station, the world was bustling. It was great to be a part of it, rather than hidden in my house.

It was a pretty good event. I met interesting people again. I don't think I accomplished much, other than talking about my live broadcast, but I think that going to these events is building up to creating a network of well-connected people.

### Monday, February 2, 2009

At a feminist techie conference. Lots of good speakers, but some stuff about activism is not completely relevant to my efforts. I'm here for the discussion about media, how woman are portrayed in media, and how we can change how media works and how women are portrayed in the new media. A twitterfest was going on during the conference. Fem2 was the #7 site on Twitter today.

Several people say they need to have a face-to-face meeting in addition to online.

Feminist blogs are blocked by many countries, including India. Because they mention abortion rights. My topic is women's rights, but abortion is not part of my platform.

One woman said that entertainment corporations do not have social responsibility. So we need to be the ones to play to the Girl Scouts, not the frat boys. Made me think of my story about the Oldhams. Sort of the frat boys of my high school days. And Lisa (me) did not see herself as part of their antics, their world.

They were entertaining, likable. She did not dislike them. Yet she did not conform to their frat boy values. And if Steve had chosen to be a nice boy like Rick, he might have had better luck with women? As kids, they fail because the two sets of values didn't communicate. When they grow up, they pool their frat ways with nice-girl values to develop a humorous business enterprise.

The two sides don't dislike each other, they just don't communicate well. When they start communicating, they realize they can develop something beautiful out of the collaboration.

If we relinquish our power, allow others to have power over us, our fear of taking power, is a threat. It would've been easier to shut up and put myself in that kind of situation again.

I have more power outside of the employer-employee structure. I had to get out of that situation to be able to take power over my own career.

The documentary-maker asks: What is your personal story about why you decided this is something you had to do? For me: I got fired. They said it was for my blog. But I think it was because as a smart woman, I was a threat.

I'm not sure if I want to post this on their web site. I could probably post other more productive comments. There's no point in being so in-your-face about it unless I could get something out of doing so. When people see comments like that in print, without meeting the person, they could easily assume that I caused the problem myself.

Went to the happy hour after the conference. I'm not sure I got much out of doing so. I talked to some very nice women. I really enjoyed hanging around with them. However, I'm not sure how much it matters to hang around with people I may never see again. There may be some value in doing so, especially since I got her card with an email address. It would be much less appropriate to add her email address to my database if I only said hi but nothing else to her.

The documentary woman stopped by our table, but it didn't seem like she was taking any footage. Might be better not to have me saying anything about getting fired on film yet.

The Oldham movie could be the next Rocky Horror Picture Show. People come to the restaurants, called Steve and Ken's High School Cafeteria, to watch the movie and yell dumb comments during all the cafeteria scenes. The restaurants must have linoleum floors, incase a food fight breaks out.

### Tuesday, February 3, 2009

I keep imagining scenes for the Oldham movie. And laughing until I cry. On the Metro. I thought of a scene to go along with some pictures I saw at David Pyle's house. In the scene the Oldhams walk through an otherwise normal scene, maybe cheer practice, maybe Lisa and Monica talking about calculus homework at their lockers, with volleyballs in their shorts.

Went to a Women in Film and Video networking event. Sometimes I get tired of going to these things. And the problem isn't necessarily the event itself, but dragging myself there, walking a mile in ten pounds of clothes with wind freezing my face.

The talk was great: a little of what I had already thought of, but it was good to hear that a filmmaker has already done a lot with internet marketing and has had success with it. I'm not sure it gave me more ideas, but it gave me a benchmark for existing ideas. Such as 1000 good fans is all you need. I already have around 800, but I'm hoping for ten thousand. And that selling product can be much more lucrative than ad deals, which are more difficult to get.

The networking was OK. I talked to a few people, but didn't exchange business cards or engage in any great business conversations that led to anything. I walked to the metro with a nice guy who seems engineer-ish. I didn't get his name, but maybe I'll see him at another event. The food was good.

### Monday, February 9, 2009

Still imagining scenes for the Oldham movie. And laughing until I cry. A pom routine where we suck, bump into each other, doing the same four beats over and over again.

Updated my web site. Getting ready to launch publicity. Still need to plan it out more.

### Tuesday, February 17, 2009

Went to a Digital Video Users Group meeting. Mary Fletcher Jones gave the talk. Her talk was good. This is the second DVUG meeting I’ve been to. Good talk, poor networking. Not really worth the trip to Bethesda.

But it’s always nice to see Mary. At some point I’ll have to strategize with her about PR.

### Monday, February 23, 2009

Now I’m writing scenes for the Oldham movie. And laughing until I cry. I thought of the time Monica and I put a dummy in the street and someone ran over it, screaming. In the script, I put the dummy in my prom dress after my date cancelled and throw it in the road outside the school.

Since Steve Oldham was voted Worst Driver, I have him be the one who runs it over, while his and Ken’s date scream. In reality though, the people who ran it over, screaming, were people we didn’t know.

### Wednesday, February 25, 2009

Went to a the annual Virginia Production Alliance expo. I had a spot at one of the tables to set up my computer and show the first episode of *Budget Justified*. I talked to several people about it and had a good time.

I was very late because I got locked out of the house. In the cold. I was concerned that I might lose my space for being a no-show, but I was glad that I still went despite my tardiness.

### Wednesday, March 4, 2009

Went to a WIFV talk. It was by Melissa Silverstein. I met her at the Fem 2.0 conference and added her as a Facebook friend. She lives in New York City. I don’t think I got a lot out of the talk itself, but it was good to get out of the house and see people, especially those that I’ve met at WIFV events previously. It’s a good group of people.

I have over four hundred Facebook friends now. I’m really building my list. When I get 1000 fans in my RoleModel Enterprises group, I’ll release the third episode of *Budget Justified*. I haven’t solicited Facebook friends to join yet, but I will when I’m done editing *Budget Justified*.

I’ve spent a lot of time on my Oldham movie script lately. I wanted to see where it’s going. I’ve decided there’s enough material to make it two movies. The first is about Steve and Ken doing silly things and my fear that they’re making fun of me. The second is about Steve’s fear of communicating with me. I am looking forward to Steve getting email, because I’d really like to communicate with him about this movie.

### Sunday, March 8, 2009

God is science. It’s just that people call it religion when they don’t understand the science behind the phenomenon.

There are things we observe that are out of the ordinary and don’t fit into our common view of the world. Like the time my third grade teacher came to me in a dream the night she died. That doesn’t happen often, and humankind doesn’t know how that works. But perhaps there is a science of shared consciousness that has rules, such as it works only within a few hours of death and…perhaps something else has to be true also, such as I had to be asleep. And we don’t know how the molecules (matter) and energy interact to make that happen.

This may also be true of the way the Oldham story came to me during November and December. Those memories were so remote that the pieces of an event had to come to me over a period of days. If someone had asked me about those events (such as the BKA) at the reunion, I wouldn’t have been able to tell them what happened that evening. But today I could tell them almost everything that happened, that I sensed, while I was there.

### Monday, March 9, 2009

I found Monique (Monica) Yslis on Facebook. She was on Spirit Line with me first semester of freshman year of high school, then she transferred to Alhambra High School.

I had another Oldham memory while I was chatting with her. I haven’t had any new Oldham memories for awhile, although I recently remembered a detail about graduation night. My swimsuit was wet and I forgot my bra. Rick had his arms around me, and I wasn’t wearing a bra. And part of the reason I wanted to go home and didn’t want to get into the Oldham’s car is that I wasn’t wearing a bra.

The new memory is that Monica and I were wandering around Bourgade’s neighborhood before either a game or Winterfest, the November school play. I think it was Winterfest. When we got back to the campus, Monica went to the cafeteria to help with something she had volunteered for, and the Oldhams talked to me by my lockers. That would have been before the walkathon, which was in December. So the walkathon would not have been the first time I talked to them.

I also remembered that one day right before Monica and I were getting ready to cheer at a volleyball game, Ricky Christmas asked me if he could watch us change into our Spirit Line uniforms. I said he could hang out with us until we went to change. He asked where we were changing. I said in Mrs. Fraley’s classroom.

Well, he misunderstood this to mean that I was allowing them to watch us change. He went to get the Oldhams, and they peeked in the classroom while we were changing. We saw them and screamed. They saw me wearing only bra and panties.

I wonder if this is the answer to the “why me” question. Although it doesn’t answer “why all four years.”

### Saturday, March 14, 2009

I went to a podcast meetup at Rich Harrington’s studio. We went to Mary Fletcher Jones’s house for her birthday party afterward. I found out that I know Merrill’s wife from AAUW. He helped me figure out how to output my uncompressed video files so they aren’t so huge.

### Wednesday, March 18, 2009

I saw an event for the DC Social Media Club on Mary’s Facebook page, so I went. It was crowded and I didn’t have much to say to anyone. At least I saw Mary. I also found out about a social media meetup group.

The events at the Steve and Ken’s High School Cafeteria are broadcast live on the internet. People come up to the camera and say things.

The waitresses wear Bourgade uniforms. Someone wears a habit? The building looks like Bourgade. (lockers? balcony-outdoor seating) Wall decorations are letter jackets, track plaques. PA system for announcements (would Steve Oldham please come to the office). Most tables are for two to six people, but there’s one or two long loud tables. Old desks with graffiti for people who wait for a table. All alcohol is served in something (coke bottles?) that looks like it was snuck onto campus. Raid a school furniture auction for old chairs and desks. People write graffiti on chalkboards (too much dust)?

There’s a track around the restaurant and parking lot. Sometimes we hold races there. Maybe a basketball hoop, volleyball, tennis court, baseball in the parking lot. Outdoor movie screen is an exterior wall. Friday evening BKAs, Saturday night dances, on an occasional weeknight learn a pom routine, have a track meet, volleyball game, maybe a sports league, teach a class/group exercise.

### Wednesday, March 25, 2009

I got a call today inviting me to a roundtable discussion with Terry McAuliffe, Virginia’s democrat gubernatorial candidate. He wants to talk about how Virginia can attract more film projects, more revenue. I think I got called because I went to the Virginia Film Alliance event. I don’t know if I’ll have anything valuable to say, but it should be interesting to participate in.

### Thursday, March 26, 2009

I talked to Joanne Deniston today, asking her if she remembered the time that the Oldhams peeked in on us while we were undressing. She was the second smartest girl in the class, so I thought she might remember. She didn’t.

I told her about how I didn’t understand what was going on at the time, but that I remembered someone talking about calling Steve’s mom to bring him clean pants. She probably thought that was the weirdest phone conversation ever.

### Monday, March 30, 2009

There are two social networking events tonight, both near DuPont Circle. I’ll hit both, but it’s difficult to tell which I should go to first. I think they’re both just mixers, but maybe there will be a talk at either or both.

If the Oldhams want to have an event I wouldn’t approve of, but it’s popular, I could come in and “raid” it, give them detentions.

I went to both events. I think I selected them in a good order because the second one I went to was a roundtable discussion among eleven people and may have been difficult to leave. The first event I went to was easier to sneak out of. And I don’t think either event was exciting enough to attend for the full time.

At the first event, a woman I spoke with compared LinkedIn to a business meeting, Facebook to a discussion in the hallways, and Twitter to a cocktail party. She said it’s a good idea to put your Twitter name on nametags at mixers. I also met a guy who says his business is to make businesses famous. I’ll believe it when I see it, but at least I’ll look at his web site.

At the second event, people talked more about technogeek stuff, like putting banner ads inside of Facebook apps. We talked about why Facebook quizzes are popular.

Maybe I should send a link to my video series and Facebook group in a quiz. What would that quiz be about? What kind of an office do you work in? What kind of a coworker are you? I saw a link for making your own quiz on one of the quizzes I played with. Maybe I should play with that more. I should also play around with Twitter and decide how I want to use that.

### Tuesday, March 31, 2009

Cool. Two nights of fun events in a row. Actually, it may not be that cool. It might be exhausting. I’ve got something going on tomorrow afternoon and evening also. I hope I get something out of going to the event tonight, other than going for a long walk and using the metro as my mobile office while I work on my book.

When I was in high school, besides getting good grades in school, my goal was to accumulate friends. Friends to say hi to when I passed them in the courtyard, friends to talk with on the phone, friends to talk to at school events, friends to make plans with on the weekends, friends to hang out with on the spur of the moment. Different levels of closeness for different friends. Friends took up more of my mental energy than schoolwork. I didn’t have a lot of spur of the moment friends. Mostly just Monica, although Mary Kiel, Tim Hodges, and Sean Cox were good for last minute plans too. But sometimes I felt bored and lonely, and other times I wished Monica and I could go out and find our other friends and hang around with them too.

When I got to college, it was everything I expected it to be. I was never lonely. I had the opposite problem. I was so inundated with spur of the moment friends because of living in the dorms, I had to isolate myself to get my massive amounts of schoolwork done. I had to make myself less close to friends, although during classes and on weekend evenings I made a point of meeting lots of people in my classes and in the dorms.

When I entered grad school, went to work, I felt a little more isolated again, although I had my lab space on campus that functioned like an office and I still saw lots of people in my classes. In Virginia I was fortunate to be at a company where there were lots of friends at the office, although it didn’t provide any evening social buzz like the campus did.

Now I’m back to collecting friends. Friends from the past, and colleague connections in the present. I’m still focused on getting work done, but friends don’t come at the expense of the work. They’re an important part of why I do my work.

I used to think that my life was a series of ever-increasing challenges. I guess in some ways it still is. But it’s not as linear as it used to be. I thought everything I had done in the past would be relevant to my future. My past isn’t as relevant as I used to think it was, although it’s still relevant in many ways. Now I’m left wondering what’s happened to the past twenty years of my life, and everyone else’s.

I think what I need is to find the balance between the productive aspects and the joy aspects of my life in the present. Although my brain is currently weirding out over how it processes memories of the past.

Well, the event was fine, might have been worth making the trip, but just barely worth it. If I had to get up early in the morning, it wouldn’t have been worth it. It was a long metro trip.

The event I went to was put on by the CreativesDC network. It was in a restaurant under construction, and we were legally allowed in there as a consulting meeting of artists. But no alcohol could be served. I’m meeting nice people when I go to the CreativesDC events, but I don’t know if I’m meeting anyone I really enjoy seeing enough to be worth taking long metro trips. I’m just meeting people I say hi to and chit chat with for a little while. Maybe they’ll be good professional colleagues down the road.

### Wednesday, April 1, 2009

I was invited to a roundtable discussion with Terry McAuliffe on George Mason University’s campus. There were nineteen other panelists and around the same number in the audience. It lasted for about an hour and a half. Almost all panelists had the opportunity to say something. The young guy sitting next to me didn’t say anything. I think he felt out of his element.

The guy who came up with “Bustified Justice” at the Virginia Film Alliance event in February was also a panelist. David Allingham. Turns out he’s a physician by trade. He seems like a very bright, interesting guy.

Bill, The Dean of Visual Arts at George Mason said that video is infiltrating all academic areas. It needs to be thought of as a more holistic medium. He’s right. We need to teach a new form of literacy. I see video as being no longer a specialist field. It’s something that every field uses to grow other businesses.

Terry said that he’d like to try to pass California and New York in filmmaking. I told him that it’s possible and now is the time to do it. Because Hollywood won’t be Hollywood in five years from now. Virginia could be the home of new business ventures if we change the filmmaking business paradigm. People won’t watch TV, they’ll watch YouTube. And Virginia needs an incubator where independent video producers can get together and collaborate on how to monetize their new business models. Virginia is an excellent place to do this because of all the tech startups.

I arrived a little early. I saw a horseshoe of tables and several seats in a row set up as an audience. A video camera sat on a tripod in the aisle. When I saw this, I thought perhaps I was mistaken regarding my role. I didn’t expect an audience. I went to the restroom and thought about it. Maybe I was invited to participate in the audience. I had no idea what the prominence of any of the panelists might have been. I ran into one of the women while I was in the restroom. She looked older than I and very professional, so I figured she must have been a panelist.

But when I got out to the tables and chairs, I saw that my name was on one of the placards for the panelists. I wondered what I was expected to say. Fortunately I had an idea formed in my mind about the future change in the paradigm of entertainment business models.

I’m not sure how any particular person got invited to this event. One woman was flown in from Florida. I think I had something good to say; several of the panelists wanted to expand on what I had said, and it was referenced throughout the rest of the discussion. And in some ways, since Terry McAuliffe wanted to look toward the future, I may have been one of the best people to invite to the panel, even if the reasons have not yet come to fruition.

I went straight from the event at George Mason University to downtown DC. There was a Women in Film and Video talk about social media that I wanted to go to in the evening. I arrived in DuPont Circle an hour early, so I stopped to get something to eat at a café with wifi. There were two guys talking about using social media for business at a table nearby, so I told them about the Social Media Club. One guy had to leave and go to a meeting, and the other guy was in town from Boston for business. He asked what my interest in social media was. I gave him my business card and told him about my movie.

The WIFV talk was good. I saw Liza K.F. again and asked her about her web guy in the Philippines. Over Facebook a few days ago, she gave me great advice about a free lawyer service.

### Tuesday, April 14, 2009

I’m done with a draft of my book, *The Making of Budget Justified*. It’s a much cleaner draft than any of my novel drafts because the format is much more organized than a novel.

I talked to a lawyer today to make sure certain things in *Budget Justified* are not likely to get me sued. Liza K.F. had pointed me to an organization, Washington Area Lawyers for the Arts (WALA), that gives free consultations to artists. It’s only $35 per year to join the organization.

WALA also teaches a class once a month related to legal issues that artists have. After the one-on-one meeting with the lawyer, I went to a class about copyright and fair use. After attending that class, I realized I needed to make sure my graphic that I used of the FAA administrator was in the public domain. I had assumed it was because she worked for the federal government, but that’s not always the case.

I also decided to use different graphics for my Perfect Airspace slides. Even though I modified the graphics, they may not have been modified enough to be covered by Fair Use. But I still modified the public domain photographs because I wanted to be on the safe side.

### Wednesday, April 15, 2009

Went to a Social Media Club meeting tonight. I had a great time. I ran into several people that I had already met at other events, chattered a little with them, exchanged business cards and added them as Facebook friends when I got home. Jill Foster, whom I met at the Fem2.0 conference in February, recorded a brief interview with me and uploaded it to the web while we were there, then sent me a link so I could hear it.

It was raining, so luckily Randy gave me a ride to the metro on his way to a meeting. I was so happy when I arrived because they provided pizza and juice. It’s nice when someone else makes sure you have something to eat and drink. I even got to bring home a box of pizza on the metro because there was plenty left over when we had to vacate the room.

I like being a part of the Washington scene, appreciating all the opportunities available when I go downtown. I like it better in the spring and summer, on the days it doesn’t rain, because it’s much more pleasant to go there. It feels like a harsh, unforgiving environment when it’s dark and cold, when you’re just trying to get where you’re going as fast as you can.

It’s not as important to me in the summer to have a place to go to feel comfort and peace, like going to teen masses or the Newman Center. But in the winter I feel I need to know there’s someplace I can go to see people I’m glad to see. Like Rick Buelow when I was in high school or Lisa Ryan when I was in college and George Pabis during grad school.

Randy and I have been going to a church lately. I like it because it’s not such a huge ordeal to get there – only two miles away. They also have good lecture discussions. We have one friend there that we like to see that we met through another venue.

Part of me wants to find the peaceful pieces of my life from when I was young. Time slips by so quickly, I feel like pieces of my past are getting lost as I lose contact with old friends. I’m going to meet the Morlaccis, Ziayas, and Sullivans at mass one of these Saturdays. They are a part of my past that is still in Washington, unlike everyone who is still in Phoenix, that I can get to only once a year if I’m lucky.

I also want to look forward to experiencing joy like I used to at high school dances and Newman Center dances. I found out about a place that has dance lessons and parties every Friday evening. It isn’t quite as joyful as the dances of my past, but at least Randy agrees to go.

### Monday, April 20, 2009

Went to a talk about friendship tonight. I heard about it through some people I met at a dance at St. Mary’s Church on Saturday evening. The talk itself wasn’t that great, but it was nice to see a few people that I met at the dance.

I think it might be important for me to be connected to the Catholic community in Northern Virginia if I make the movie about my Catholic high school days. Randy isn’t so keen about being a part of that, but he doesn’t have to go to the Monday evening talks. It would be awkward, however, if I went to too many weekend evening events without him.

The group is for young adults, under 40. I’m still in that category, but have felt in the past that it wasn’t in my best interest to join a group that I will quickly age-out of. However there were several people older than 40, although they’re probably long-time members, so there’s no reason for them to leave the group. I don’t think it will be seen as weird to join the group at my age, although I also think most of the members are not married. Singlehood is not a requirement, but I don’t want to seem weird for hanging around a bunch of single people.

The talk tonight was part of a Monday evening series. They typically get two to three hundred attendees. And the talks aren’t that good. Interesting that they get so many more people than a lot of the lectures I go to. Perhaps the draw is singles and friends at a bar. I should keep that in mind for my High School Cafeteria business. I could draw a lot of people to lectures if it’s a weekly series, six weeks in a series, aimed toward a specific audience, such as a Catholic church. Or moms. Or people without kids. Or a science series.

Lets’s see… science, religion, math, English, social studies/history, art. One series for each school subject. Science and environment, religions, writers, history, international issues, computers/internet and social media, art projects. Maybe something interesting could come out of math or math modeling. The social media and social studies overlaps. Maybe there could be an interdisciplinary series that focuses on issues where three or more subjects overlap.

### Wednesday, April 22, 2009

Went to a Media Makers meeting at NPR headquarters. NPR has agreed to host space for these meetings the fourth Wednesday of every month through the rest of the year. It was a pretty good meeting, so I’ll probably go next month.

The presentations were very interesting, although the topics were of tangential importance to me. Perhaps the most important aspect of the meeting was to meet some intelligent and influential people. Ron David and his wife, Noor Jorgensen, came to the talk. Jill Foster, of WomenGrowBusiness, leads the meetings and Andy Carvin, of NPR’s media desk, is the NPR contact point.

### Wednesday, April 29, 2009

Went to a showing of a documentary about rape in the military. It was good to see how someone else was handling a similar situation. She didn’t say anything about any of the details of the rape. She only talked about what happened to her military career after the rape. So that’s much different than what I talk about in *Budget Justified*.

### Saturday, May 9, 2009

Went to the Podcasters Alliance meetup at Rich Harrington’s studio in Falls Church. Mary FJ talked about Twitter, a few people talked about their podcasts, and Rich talked about RSS.

I’m thinking it would be helpful to have Mary’s PR company as a backup to have interns pack mailings for order fulfillment. There may be many days when I can’t have high school students at my place to pack mailers.

### Tuesday, May 12, 2009

I missed meeting my writers group at the Vienna library again today. I haven’t gone for awhile. I slept in because I’ve had a sore throat and runny nose and yesterday was rainy and I was on the metro too late. I was gone a lot yesterday because I spent several hours in the library in Old Towne and went to a Catholic talk. I’ve been trying out a few Catholic events lately, since I’m going to make the Catholic high school movie.

According to the most recent schedule I mapped out, I’m supposed to browse elance and other outsourcing web sites for someone in India or the Philippines to help me out with my RoleModel Enterprises web site. I don’t usually stick to my predefined schedules very well, but I’m doing OK this time. Last week I looked for a manufacturer for alignmints. Didn’t find any prices that I was happy with. I’m also supposed to finish up proofreading my *The Making of Budget Justified* book this week. I’m on track for that.

There was a Women Who Tech web conference today. I wanted to listen in to some of it, but apparently you were supposed to sign up beforehand to get the url. I didn’t see that requirement on any of the web sites or emails I received. I guess I was distracted by all the other info on the sites. But I was able to look at the highlights people typed into Twitter. All I was able to contribute was “Where’s the web site for this session.” I didn’t get a link for the sessions I wanted, but got a link for another session.

In four cities around the US, there was a happy hour for after the web conference. So I’m went to that. I saw Jill Foster and Shireen Mitchell there. I’ve seen both of them a few times before at these types of events. I’m glad I’m starting to see some of the same people over and over again. I’m also getting used to talking to new people about my company and my movie.

### Thursday, May 14, 2009

Went to a WALA talk about trademarks. I decided I don’t need one yet, but I’ll probably want to get one once my business takes off.

### Wednesday, May 20, 2009

Had a meeting with a SCORE consultant at the Fairfax small business center. He had an engineering background and I was concerned that that was the reason I was assigned to him. But he was just the entrepreneur they had for that day. He talked mostly about market research.

Perhaps the most useful suggestion was to have several people watch the movie and ask them if they’d buy a sequel if it promised to be as interesting and of the same quality. But if they would or wouldn’t, I’m not sure how that would affect my marketing approach. So I’m not sure if that meeting was very useful to me.

### Tuesday, May 26, 2009

Went to a Springfield small business talk about financial issues when starting a business. I’m not sure how useful the talk was, although the speaker was interesting and captured our attention well. He recommended a few books, one which I had read, another that I own but haven’t read yet.

### Thursday, May 28, 2009

Went to a WALA talk about starting a nonprofit. I don’t need to do that now, but I may wish to set one up in conjunction with my Bourgade High School Movie project.

I also went to a talk at the Newseum with George Stephonopolous, Tucker Carlson, Juan Williams, Greta von S, and several other TV journalists. I don’t know if it was useful, but it was interesting, and lunch was free. I said a few words to Greta on the elevator.

I also went to a nice AAUW event and talked to the woman who wrote the book that inspired Tina Fey’s *Mean Girls* movie. It was also nice to see the AAUW staff and a few Lobby Corps members. I almost thought I wasn’t going to be able to attend this reception, but I got an email notifying me that the lawyer’s session was early enough that I’d be able to make it to the AAUW event also.

### Saturday, June 6, 2009

Went to the Podcasters Alliance meetup. They talked about closed captioning and several other things that I didn’t think would be very applicable to me, but Rich mentioned a software that will do voice to text translation, which I think may be useful to me at some point. I wanted something like that a while ago, but I don’t think I’d really be able to compose something useful without seeing the words in front of me. Well, I could probably do a journal like this while walking down the street, talking into my voice recorder.

As usual, we went to Clare and Don’s for appetizers after the meeting. Mary didn’t go, but Ron and Rich were there.

### Tuesday, June 9, 2009

Gave my first talk about *Budget Justified*. It was a CreativesDC event at the National Museum of Women in the Arts. I think interest was mild. Not a great sign. But at least nobody got rude or said I shouldn’t be talking about it.

### Thursday, June 11, 2009

Went to see a WALA lawyer at an art event. Not the best use of time, since he didn’t really know the answer to my questions. But it’s good to keep talking to lawyers to find out what kind of advice to expect. And I had to go somewhere on the metro anyway, and it was nice to take a short walk around Washington, see some art exhibits. Liza Figueroa Kravinski was there too, so it was nice to see her.

Also went to a networking event at CarPool in Arlington. The last time I went there was with my roommates in 1996. We met some idiots and one threw up by us. Made me feel grateful that I didn’t have to worry about the singles scene.

I didn’t stay very long. I rarely feel like hanging around at those events for much more than a half hour. It was good to see Jill Foster, Shireen, Geoff Livingston, and Rick from the podcast meetup group. I met a few nice new people too. One guy said he didn’t like the tag line on my business card. It said “A true story about a woman engineer. And sexual harassment.” I asked him if I should say something about it’s how taxpayer dollars are being spent. He thought that was good. After I moved on to another group of people, another guy, unsolicited, said my tagline was really great and that it made him want to know more.

### Friday, June 12, 2009

Spent some time looking for someone who can do my web site. I went through the responses I got on Odesk. Most of the people are in Pakistan or India. I prefer people who work for small companies, rather than independent contractors, because I want something long term and an entity with several skill sets.

I talked to one guy who didn’t seem too creative, but his English was pretty good. I chatted with another guy through Skype, but he didn’t want to talk. I assumed that meant that his English wasn’t up to speed enough for good communication.

### Thursday, June 18, 2009

Spent time learning about DVD burners today. I could get one that does around 30 DVDs per hour for around $1500. The problem is that I’d have to manually load 15 DVDs into the machine every half hour. So I could reasonable expect to get 300 DVDs per day per machine. However that would only work when I was home unless I had someone babysit the machines.

I also looked into getting DVDs burned, 1000 per order. They put the DVDs in cases with labels and ship them to me. Seems like a better idea. Then I wouldn’t have to worry about the machine breaking down, obsolescence of the machine, or storing and purchasing the machine, DVDs, cases, and labels. It would save a whole lot of labor because I wouldn’t have to print and punch out labels or put the labels and DVDs into the cases. I also wouldn’t have to worry about whether my printer could handle enough labels. Plus they shrink wrap the DVDs, so the whole package would look more professional.

I’m getting closer to feeling comfortable with the rights of each piece of my video. I’ve asked filmmakers and lawyers for several professional opinions on questionable footage and searched online for trademarks without finding anything that would pose a problem. I’ve learned a lot about fair use, copyrights, and trademarks, and applied that information to decide what images I to modify.

Tonight I went to a lawyer talk about music copyright. They went over a lot of stuff that they discussed at a previous talk, but it was good to reinforce my knowledge of those topics. I was able to ask about tradewords, as opposed to trademarks, which was helpful in determining that my alignmints logo was OK.

### Friday, June 19, 2009

Went to a SCORE business coaching day at the convention center downtown. There was some good information about marketing, some irrelevant information about cutting back on expenses. I left early because the last session I was assigned to was about getting contracts with the government, which I know I’m not going after. The lunch speaker was great. She talked about coming up with ideas for slogans.

The lunch itself was very nice; round table with white tablecloths, a nice salad with chicken, a fancy lemon tart dessert. Now I’m sitting across the street from the Whitehouse.

### Sunday, June 21, 2009

Saw James who works in the FAA office I got fired from. He was in the car, I smiled at him, but I was going to the metro, so I didn’t stop to say hi. Turns out that the metro was late, so I could’ve stopped to say hi, but then what do I say to him without letting him know I’m working on a movie to make his office look bad?

I went to a concert in the park with Gigi on Friday and I’ve been able to keep up with her, without being specific that I’m making a movie that disparages her company’s client. However we had a previous social relationship, where with James, we only knew each other professionally, so the only relevant question would be, Where do I work now?

### Monday, June 29, 2009

Talked to Judy Pedersen at the Fairfax County Parks Authority. She said that pictures of park buildings are in the public domain, so I shouldn’t have any trouble including a picture of the Hunter House in my movie. Especially since it’s portrayed as a house, not a Fairfax County park building. She said they normally require a permit to shoot movies in their parks but what I took was just a snapshot, not a whole movie scene.

### Tuesday, August 4, 2009

I’ve been dealing with people I sent requests for bids to redesign my web site. I thought it would be good to find someone who would be able to handle bigger, fancier features when my business gets going. Well, I wasn’t happy with any of them. They seemed more like hucksters than programmers. They didn’t instill confidence that they could do a job right. Not only that, but they charge an arm and a leg for lots of stuff I don’t need or want.

I realized I could do my website better myself, so I did. It looks pretty good. I still need to figure out how I’m going to deal with electronic sales, but I have some idea of how to do it.

I talked to Brad Miller and to Eric Borgen, an old friend of my sister’s, about building web sites and ecommerce. I learned some important info, such as about security certificates and using scripts to redirect customers to download a movie without letting them see the URL to the movie file.

I created a new blog in Wordpress and I like it much better than the blogspot blog I have. It embeds very nicely in an iframe in my web page. It also keeps track of how many views I get every day.

### Wednesday, August 5, 2009

I’ve noticed that as time goes by, I feel much more comfortable with my identity as business owner. For awhile I felt there was some shame associated with not having a steady engineering job, and I’m probably looked down upon by engineers who do, but I don’t associate with them as much anymore. I associate with social media entrepreneurs and techno-artists. I never intended to stay in the stereotypical engineer job, and always knew I’d try something more creative, more educational, that required technical skill.

But when you’re in a mind-numbing, confidence-killing job, peers and superiors try to pressure you into giving up your faith in your creativity.

### Thursday, August 6, 2009

I think I found a way to sell my movie online without giving away the URL. There's a software written in Perl that will send the customer an email to a link that will pop up a form for the user to submit their username, which can be set to expire.

### Tuesday, August 11, 2009

Started burning 49 *Budget Justified* DVDs yesterday.

Got my new web domain today, plus domain name BudgetJustified.com.

### Thursday, August 20, 2009

Finished editing my trailer for *Budget Justified*. This one hinges on the question of how I’m going to get out of being sexually harassed. I’m going to edit another one to show to Congressional staffers that focuses more on mismanagement.

Spent a whole lot of time implementing some perl and cgi scripts so I can sell my movie online and get the entire profit without going through a third party movie vendor. The scripts work, but I’m not sure if my host can deal with a 1 GB file.

Thought I had my web site ready to start selling downloads of my 1 GB file movie, but now I’m not so sure. I don’t think multiple users will be able to download my movie at the same time. I’ll have to test that. If it doesn’t work, I’ll have to host my movie elsewhere.

I’m also trying out the e-junkie ecommerce cart. I think it’ll do what I need, but I’ll have to figure out how to format email addresses so I can add them to an email list. I also need to look into adding them to the newsletter directly at point of purchase.

### Tuesday, August 25, 2009

Not only will my web host not be able to handle multiple downloads, but it can’t even handle one download of a 1 GB file. It cuts out mid-dowload, and the perl/cgi scripts won’t let customers resume a download. I can’t have customers spend hours downloading, only to have it cut out in the middle and have to start over.

But I think I can sell the downloadable movie through my ejunkie shopping cart. Probably shouldn’t sell it from my Bluehost account because that would not likely be able to handle the traffic. But I could try an Amazon server and see if that works.

### Thursday, August 27, 2009

Last night I went to the monthly DC Media Makers meeting at NPR headquarters. There wasn’t really an agenda, but it was a good opportunity to socialize with Jill Foster, her husband Shawn, Phil Shapiro, and several other people.

Tonight I’m going to a WIFV documentary producer’s roundtable where we’re going to talk about social media. I’d better recruit some Facebook friends because right now I have 666 Facebook friends. Unless someone added me since I left the house. Or dropped me.

Number 666 was ex-sister-in-law Susan Wilcox, who is a documentary producer herself.

### Friday, August 28, 2009

Somebody unfriended me before I got home last night. But by this morning, I had four more new friends.

I sent out invitations for most of my Facebook friends to join my *Budget Justified* fan page. About twenty friends joined right away.

I figured people wouldn’t be as interested in what the phrase *Budget Justified* means as they would be in the title, *Sexual Harassment in the Federal Government – true story, movie and book*, so that’s what I titled my fan page. One of my friends sent me a copy of the email Facebook sent to him regarding my invitation. It said, “Lisa wants you to become a fan of Sexual Harassment in the Federal Government.”

A couple of weeks ago I ordered new DVDs to burn. This time I bought the kind of DVDs with LightScribe capability so I could burn an image to the DVDs instead of printing sticky lables. My LightScribe software wasn’t working correctly, so I downloaded a free trial of different software. It worked off and on for about the first sixty DVDs, but now that software puked on me and I’ll have to try yet another software. Their free trial didn’t do a very good job of impressing me to buying their full-blown version.

### Sunday, August 30, 2009

I now have almost fifty fans of *Sexual Harassment*. Some of them are friends of friends. At this rate, it will take about seventy days before I get a thousand fans, the number I said it would take before I release the third episode of *Budget Justified*.

Either the joining will peter out, or it will grow exponentially once friends start inviting their friends. I’ll have to get an interesting discussion going to try to get people interested in being a part of the group and passing the invitation along to their friends. Tomorrow I’ll have to make some wall posts to see if they pop up on Facebook Home pages and prompt others to comment.

### Sunday, September 6, 2009

As I was sanding the deck today, I thought about the popularity of do-it-yourself shows such as Bob Vila and Martha Stewart. Perhaps I could create the do-it-yourself show for creating your own simple movies or web shows. My show would have tips for editing, creating props, lighting, etc. There would be guest teachers on the show. There may already be many people making these types of shows for YouTube. Perhaps I could get them all together in a video series.

I need to look into what Dave & Busters is. I’ve heard of it twice now and it sounds like it could be similar to my hangout idea, except without the education and social media focus.

My hangout could be like a web TV studio where each “classroom” has a live show, each broadcast on a different “channel” and having a pre-published show schedule.

### Tuesday, September 8, 2009

I’m at the library, first day the grade school kids are back in school. So Lisa Leibow is here too because she doesn’t have the kids at home today. In summer I like sitting on the deck, but today it rained and the paint is still too fresh to put the furniture out there. It’s nice to have someplace to go when the rest of the world is getting back to school for the fall.

Part of me wishes I were going back to school today. Not necessarily as a student, but maybe as a teacher. I tried to sign up to volunteer with a church youth drama group, but nobody got back to me. Makes me think they don’t really need anyone. Maybe I’ll call them, incase they didn’t get my email.

Crap. I just tried looking up Dave & Busters and this whole song starts blaring out of my computer in the library. MUTE BUTTON

OK, it actually looks more like Golf ‘n Stuff with alcohol.

### Wednesday, September 9, 2009

I brought posters and DVD cases to WIFV headquarters today to contribute to their display that they’re creating for three Bloomingdales stores in the DC metro area. Their headquarters are in a funny old house near Catholic University. Melissa said they were looking for something that would be common to all three displays, so it was good that I brought several copies of the posters and DVDs.

Went to a Startup Rockstars event. Several startups presented their work. A student from Georgetown University also talked about a club that their MBA programs has for students interested in working with entrepreneurs. They want to work for ten week chunks in small groups with startups to help grow their businesses. I’m going to fill out their questionnaire to try to get some of the students to work with me.

I think it would be good for me to hang out with entrepreneurs more often. I should suggest a weekly “Entrepreneurs Commitment Group,” like the Vienna Writers Commitment Group, to the Fairfax Small Business Incubation Center at George Mason University. We could meet in a conference room once a week for two hours to do quiet work, then go to lunch.

Online movie, startup, entrepreneur, small business, women, video

### Thursday, September 10, 2009

At last evening’s event, I found out about Georgetown students who want to work with entrepreneurs, so I’m filling out a request to have a few of them work with me. Here’s what I’m submitting:

Mission: To UnHollywood new media by featuring Smart Women

The idea is to:

1. Glorify smart, practical women - not the Britneys or Lindsays

2. Use Web 2.0 to circumvent Hollywood and The Man. It's media for The People, by The People.

My belief is that in 5 years, consumers & content producers won't really be bothering with Hollywood as gatekeeper anymore because we won't need to. We'll be looking to our friends and peers for media distribution and recommendations.

OK, now that I've described my pie in the sky view, this is what I'm doing right now:

I'm selling a movie & book online. They are about a true story of what it is like working as a woman engineer for the federal government. I intend to brief a few congressional staffers on this.

At this time, I need help with marketing, marketing strategy, order fulfillment and technology for downloadable sales. I also need help with press releases for news media.

The movie is split into webisodes for gradual free release (when fans to x, I'll release episode y), plus I'm putting 2 episodes at a time for advance sales. The movie is in downloadable & DVD form. The book is still being proofread, but will be available in e-book & print form. I'd like assistance with a plan for implementing each episode's release.

Assistance with small changes to my web site to attract interaction with fans - blog, twitter, facebook, yahoo email group, etc. I also need someone to program an interface between my shopping cart and a storage server so my movie URL is not revealed to customers, yet if download stalls, the client can resume download from where it left off.

I would like to develop a plan, and assistance with implementing the plan, for marketing the movie and fan page to facebook, twitter, etc. users and their friends.

I'd also like someone to look into the prices, methods, and data needs for various services for hard-good purchase fulfillment.

### Monday, September 14, 2009

This afternoon I'm browsing through info about PayPal, Authorize.net, Heartland Payment Systems, etc. to learn about different fee structures for accepting credit card payments.

So, to be able to sell stuff on the internet, you have to:

1. Have a web site (duh)

2. Have links to a shopping cart

3. Have a credit card processing company that interfaces w/credit card companies

Apparently credit card companies don't deal w/small businesses directly. They go through an accounting middle-man. Maybe even a middle-woman. Just think of all the 3rd party businesses supported by ecommerce. So I need to find the middle-women that offer pricing structures that work with my product prices and expected sales volume.

There’s a lot of unorganized information to sift through. Most people wouldn’t have the patience to wade through all the minutia. I think my 12 years of engineering education prepared me to deal with tedium that would cause the general population to cross their eyes. It makes me want to cross my eyes, like the intern-level work task leaders used to give me at my previous jobs. But this is something I need to understand. If I just pick the first option I see, it could cost thousands of dollars more in the long term.

### Wednesday, September 16, 2009

I uploaded Episodes 3 & 4 of *Budget Justified* into my e-junkie account so I can sell them for $1 each. The e-junkie option I signed up for only allows up to 50 Mb of storage, so I had to cut the credits short to be able to fit two videos on there. Not the best long-term solution. I’ll probably end up paying for a better service option once I start making sales.

Now I need to figure out how to sell that 1 Gb entire movie.

I experimented with PayPal and e-junkie today to see how they work. It looks like e-junkie stores my files on an Amazon S3 server, and they have some type of signature associated with each order.

https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.e-junkie.com/329993?AWSAccessKeyId=1PFE3R4NZVMJH6BWX9G2&Signature=UwN6yaaoIn67bvhrJVaPNDj2knw%3D&Expires=1253118946

https://s3.amazonaws.com/files.e-junkie.com/329993?AWSAccessKeyId=1PFE3R4NZVMJH6BWX9G2&Signature=w2YdR5kl6iuXqSMdw4v1nMRuZys%3D&Expires=1253119749

Went to a Social Media Club panel discussion at the National Press Club. Social media professionals from three news publications were on the panel. I got some ideas about how they use Twitter for their business.

My friend Mary Fletcher Jones was there. On the way back to the metro, Mary & I videotaped a motorcade heading toward the White House.

### Thursday, September 17, 2009

I tried out some Twitter ideas today by responding to some of the trending topics. I got a few followers and about twenty web site hits, but no new Facebook fans. Actually, I think most of my web site hits are from my current Facebook friends. I’ll have to try again tomorrow and see if I get some more followers.

I changed my files on e-junkie from mpgs to divx. I figure if people are going to purchase the files, they might as well be higher quality than the free ones on YouTube. Then I realized that not only were they higher quality, but they were also smaller files. I guess I didn’t need to cut out the credits after all.

I tested the download link again after changing files. I was able to download it onto my desktop, so there must not be any codes to prevent downloading onto multiple computers, and there doesn’t seem to be a limit to downloading only on the day the first download was attempted. The link supposedly is good for 5 downloads. I may wish to change that.

However if my business model is that I’ll release an episode after 10000 purchases, a customer that sends the free file around isn’t doing himself any favors.

### Tuesday, September 29, 2009

I finally figured out a way - that actually works this time! – to sell my movie as a download from my web site. That way people don’t have to wait until a DVD arrives at their front door to be able to watch *Budget Justified*.

It’s a service that costs $5 a month. It doesn’t work with my ecommerce shopping cart service, or at least I haven’t figured out how to make it work yet. That means that if anyone wants to purchase a download AND purchase something else, I’ll have to pay the five cent per transaction fee. I signed up for PayPal’s microtransaction fee, five cents plus five percent per transaction which, for transactions under $17, is cheaper than the thirty cents plus 2.9 percent per transaction.

It doesn’t seem like I can sign up for microfees for cheap transactions and regular fees for others. I’ll have to look into that.

### Wednesday, September 30, 2009

Went to WIFV open house. A guy told me about pogo.org, a film festival for whistleblowers. Had lots of great snacks and talked to Juliet Hutchings from American University about her project with high school students. I talked to another woman about WIFV external communications. She was interested in my experience with social media. Another woman I spoke to had a lot of interesting things to say about journalism in the Bush era and the lack of tough questions asked of the administration for fear of losing access.

Then I went across the street to DC Media Makers at NPR. I missed Andy Carvin’s talk, but an excellent speaker named Mana talked about making her documentary about Iranian girls. Then I went back to the WIFV open house, listened to the business meeting and picked up my stuff that I lent to WIFV for the Bloomingdales display.

### Thursday, October 8, 2009

Going to a movie showing at the Capitol sponsored by pogo.org. POGO is the Project On Government Oversight. Chris Van Hollen, a Maryland congressman gave the opening talk. He is on the house committee for government whistleblowers. Senator Daniel Akaka also spoke. I gave each of their staffers a copy of *Budget Justified* on DVD.

### Tuesday, October 13, 2009

I had an intern from NPR interview me tonight. No, it wasn’t about *Budget Justified*. She’s doing a story about couples who decide to have children to “go green.” Of course, that wasn’t the main reason I decided not to have kids, but it’s a topic I’ve certainly thought about. Randy seemed to very much dislike the idea and he said going green had nothing to do with his reasons for not having kids.

Even though this wasn’t the perfect message I wanted to send out, it’s not bad, and I thought it was great for getting another media connection. And the topic puts some more smart women out in the media.

### Wednesday, October 14, 2009

Tonight I went to the Social Media Club’s panel discussion about blogging. Two panelists were mommy bloggers, one panelist was a comedian, and the other panelist blogs about race issues.

I was reminded about the importance of keywords, blogging every day, and crosslisting (something I need to spend time on to make sure I select the right blogs). Racialicious analyses unique vs. invested readership and says a lot of racists troll their site, I suppose they conclude this based on rude comments.

There was a lot of good humor in the discussion, especially the part about the free high-end sex toys, found by TSA in carry-on luggage, given away by a sex blogger at a blog conference. “Nothing is embarassing anymore,” said one of the panelists. “Just fodder for a blog entry.”

### Friday, October 16, 2009

I should start putting together some events. I’ve got most of my technology set up. I feel I need to get out there now. Or at least volunteer to talk at more events.

Maybe start with a core group of smart women in new media, like Jill Foster, Shireen Mitchell, Mary Fletcher Jones, Shana Glickman and Latoya Peterson, Tracy Sherman… who else? We could yak at UStream every Thursday evening in my house, but it would be bigger than that. We’d arrange other events too.

### Sunday, October 18, 2009

I went to NPR's Unconference this weekend, which was held at American University, where I taught Statistics for People Who Don't Like Math in 2004-2005.

Andy Carvin, NPR's Social Media Guru, was sort of in charge, as since this was an Unconference, everyone was collaboratively in charge. I went to one of his sessions. He mentioned an awesome social media idea NPR tried out during presidential debates in which NPR asked the general public to fact-check the candidate's statements. While most of the comments were along the lines of "McCain is a dork," "I hate Obama," there was enough useful participation that enabled NPR to analyze the debate much quicker than they would have been able to without the help of all the volunteers who contributed.

There's something powerful in this. NPR enabled the public to contribute information it needed, instead of pledge money. Bartering in the form of information. And the public was eager to participate - they wanted a chance for their voice to be heard, the opportunity to contribute to the discussion.

### Tuesday, October 20, 2009

Today was just one event after another for me. I went to a women’s studies talk at George Mason University. Interesting, although it was about women in Africa, which is not relevant to what I do. But the free lunch at the talk was awesome.

An older woman asked me what I do. She said I’d better have a lot of money saved up because I won’t be making any for a long time. Seemed like she was intimidated by my knowledge and fearlessness of new technology. I wonder if she would have said that to me if I were a man.

(Hm, is this a topic for a spin-off blog? Or Twitter account? @IfSheWereAMan…would the old lady have said she couldn’t make any money doing that?...would she have been groped at work?…would she have been fired for putting meeting jokes on her blog?...would the media care if Miley Cyrus danced near a pole?...would Hillary Clinton be President?...would the media have been more favorable of Sarah Palin?) Does anyone else ever ask themselves this question? This is awesome. I should link this to my Sexual Harassment Facebook fan page.

After the luncheon presentation, there was a panel discussion about women entrepreneurs for social change. I thought that might be more relevant to me. A lot of interesting things were said, however I couldn’t tell what the main point of the discussion was. There was something about getting students involved in real-world activities and how putting effort into doing so doesn’t help professors get tenure, but I’m not sure how they intended to change the university system.

Then I took the metro downtown to a legal clinic. I talked to the same two lawyers I met the first time I signed up for a one-on-one clinic. Or one-on-two clinic. I’d refer to them more specifically here, except they told me I could be sued for defamation. Well, they were actually talking about using references to former coworkers in my book. And in this case, I can prove the truth is that we did speak. And they were great guys. So since I didn’t say anything bad about them, they can’t sue. At least, that’s what I learned tonight.

Then I took the metro to a crowdsourcing event in the cool artsy-techy neighborhood of Adams Morgan. We had a great discussion about the direction of a non-profit out of George Washington University. They have no funding, but they want to tech-out their web presence. But it became a discussion of mission and goals because with no funding, they need to figure out what they can be for their audience before they can communicate about what they can be. And they almost forgot to mention an awesome event they’re holding at GWU on October 29. I’m glad I caught that announcement as they were clicking around on their current web site. http://www.ipdi.org/Blog/

### Wednesday, October 21, 2009

Tonight I went to yet another lawyer talk. I’ve heard this woman discuss various copyright topics before. There’s always new information in each session. She always has lots of slides she wants to blow through, but the audience always comes up with great questions that we spend more time on questions than on prepared materials.

Tonight’s talk focused on copyright issues relating to the internet. The lawyer clarified the difference between libel, right of privacy, and right of publicity – beware of publishing lies, embarrassing truths about identifiable persons, and people’s images without their permission. She also said that all bloggers should post a takedown notice, incase readers leave comments that include copyrighted material (I guess I should do this).

### Thursday, October 22, 2009

I got an email from a former classmate today. She said my web site makes me look unstable and that I should look at the common denominator (me) and stop blaming others for my problems. People are already saying that the whole thing was all my fault. Blame the victim.

She’s an engineer, so perhaps she’s been indoctrinated with the engineer mentality that the boss is always right. Do not question authority. Or you will not be allowed to do any work.

It makes me sad because I feel a real fear about going back to another job like that. One of the common denominators is engineers. It seems that I do not belong in a place like that. I fear for my physical safety and I fear more unproductive head games. And I’m not allowed to talk about it in that atmosphere or I will be excommunicated.

I went to a blogger happy hour tonight put on by DC Media Makers and Blog Potomac. It’s in conjunction with a conference going on tomorrow that I am not attending. I said hi to several people, including Jill Foster, founder of DC Media Makers, and Geoff Livingston, founder of Blog Potomac.

After I left that party, I went to Women In Film and Video’s monthly documentary round table. John Z. Wetmore, producer of *Perils for Pedestrians*, was there, along with Matt Radcliff, who was in charge of the roundtable. This month’s topic was documentaries for internet distribution. I only caught the very end. We talked about *Fans, Friends, and Followers*, by Scott Kirsner. The book is based on Kirsner’s experience selling his history book through the web.

### Saturday, October 24, 2009

Jeez, I went to three lawyer talks this week. Today's talk was at the Arlington Center for the Arts. The guy who gave this talk was the best one so far. Lots of experience and super-happy to answer everyone's questions. He was trolling for customers.

This lawyer also happened to be a literary agent. I'm not quite sure why a lawyer would also be an agent. But I don't think that was the bulk of his work.

Sadly, after listening to this talk, I realize I didn't do something the right way and I need to go back and get some people to sign forms. At least I haven't filed for a copyright yet.

### Sunday, October 25, 2009

I had my first screening of "Budget Justified" this evening with some cast and crew members. I got some good feedback. Now I need to figure out what I'm going to do with that feedback.

### Monday, October 26, 2009

I've already trimmed a couple of minutes out of "Budget Justified." There were several obvious parts of the movie that needed to be cut or tightened. Although in the individual episodes of "Budget Justified," I'm leaving the fat in because people may view each episode weeks apart and a little refresher wouldn't hurt. Although several episodes already have reminders of previous episodes at the beginning of the clips.

### Tuesday, October 27, 2009

Tonight I went to a networking event for Fairfax small businesses put on by the Mason Enterprise Center. At least, it was at the Mason Enterprise Center. The local Small Business Administration has something to do with it also. There are a few organizations that all collaborate together - Small Business Administration, Small Business Development Center, SCORE, Community Business Partnership, George Mason University School of Public Policy, Fairfax County Economic Development Authority... there are probably even more that I've confused for each other.

When I arrived in my festive Halloween vest and velour pants, there were a bunch of men in suits in the lobby. Did I show up at the wrong event? I thought it was supposed to be a Fairfax suburbia small business networking event, not a New-York-City-impress-yourself event. Upon stepping off the elevator on the fourth floor, I was greeted by hosts from one or several of the above small business organizations donning Halloween costumes.

I enjoy attending these events. Sometimes I don't know what I get out of them until weeks or months later. Other times, I get something right away - like crab cakes and scallops!

### Wednesday, October 28, 2009

I went to the monthly DC Media Maker at NPR headquarters this evening. Aram Zucker-Scharff, a very nice young man whom I met at a previous DC Media Makers event and works in George Mason University’s Social Media Center, gave one of the most useful presentations I’ve heard lately. He talked about all the free tools GMU’s Social Media Center uses to make good quality media.

The best tip I walked away with was that LiveStream.com is more reliable and has better quality than UStream.tv. I have had trouble with UStream not saving the first several minutes of footage that I webcasted live. I’ll have to try LiveStream to find out if I have better luck with it.

We had a surprise guest tonight. Jay Allison, from the “This I Believe” NPR show, was there to listen as an audience member, however Jill Foster asked him to say a few words about his program *The Moth*. *The Moth* is a live storytelling show where a random audience member is selected to tell his or her story. Allison wants to create a bigger web presence for *The Moth*. He says, “Radio/sound is the one story medium you can pay attention to AND do something else. We don't have earlids."

### Thursday, October 29, 2009

I went to an Old White Man panel discussion this morning at George Washington University, entitled “New Arts, New Media: The Evolution of Content of the Internet,” that had nothing to do with New Arts. It was really about FCC policy and mathematical models.

For the most part, the panel was moderated by Old White FCC Chair Man Richard Wiley. Except for the question from engineer Richard Bennett to lawyer Harold Feld, “What were you smoking?”

It was a pretty good discussion. Carnegie Mellon professor Dave Farber doesn’t like vague terms. “They just create lifelong jobs for lawyers.” Journalist/economist Brett Swanson mentioned a company called Otoy that is developing some interesting new 3-D graphics for interactive social media using cloud computing that may have implications for broadband usage.

I also went to a showing of *The Most Dangerous Man: Daniel Ellsberg and the Pentagon Papers* at the Capitol. The auditorium was packed. I walked there right after the DC public library closed and I was so glad I got there early. They had to open a second theater to show the movie, but for the panel discussion with the directors and Daniel Ellsberg, everyone in the second theater came into our auditorium and it was standing room only.

Leonard Downey Jr., former Washington Post Executive Editor, moderated the panel discussion. He’s now a professor at ASU, so I’m not sure why he was in town.

There was a reception afterward at a supper club. But it was a mile away and we didn’t get out of the Capitol until after 10:00. I’m sure it was a lovely reception, but it would have to be life-changing to be worth staying out alone until midnight.

### Friday, October 30, 2009

There was a discussion about the difference among New Media, social media, and public media on the public media camp listserv today. Here’s my response:

You might even want to throw public libraries into the mix of public media. As the Old Guard retires, libraries will realize that they aren't just about books/newspapers printed on paper anymore. I think Phil Shapiro would agree.

Andy Carvin of NPR’s Social Media Desk doesn’t like the term “New” Media. While I sympathize with Andy's disdain for the term, I think this is the term that differentiates the old paradigm -- scheduled TV/cable shows and movie theaters and their associated distribution companies -- from a new trend -- video stored AND distributed via the internet without the middleman telling us what or when to watch OR produce and share... along with live streaming broadcasts and their associated chat (e.g. ustream.tv) or collaborative chat (e.g. stickam.com). I don't think most of the population sees the significance of this trend yet.

Many New Media applications are not yet what people think of when they use the term "social media," which at this point is typically thought of as facebook or twitter-like web sites. However other New Media applications will become more and more useful for social interaction, whether it's real-time collaborative video or static facebook content.

Yes, some day the above trend will no long represent what is "new." Something else will come along and that technology usage will then fit under the umbrella "New Media." But we'll probably call it something else by then.

### Tuesday, November 3, 2009

This morning I went to Entrepreneurship 101, put on by one of the government offices in Fairfax County. Free bagels! It was about the services that various government agencies offer to help new businesses get off the ground. Yawn.

### Friday, November 6, 2009

Last night I went to a Startup Rockstars event at the Affinity Lab in Adams Morgan. Several men talked about their new businesses. Last time I went to a Startup Rockstars talk, the most solid business model, with numbers to prove it, was presented by a young woman.

There were several interesting ideas discussed: A collaborative writing app, a news footage video-sharing platform, an activist website, a phone map app, and a creative, disorganized guy who did a lot of name-dropping. Actually, they all made beautiful, impressive presentations that made their ideas sound fancier than I described them. But I think that was all slick marketing. Regardless, I thought it was great that these guys were not only coming up with great ideas, but implementing them and creating their own businesses out of them.

### Monday, November 9, 2009

I have recently volunteered to lead the teens of a local Catholic church to create a one to three minute video for the Arlington Diocese play and film festival. It may be a film festival, but we’re not using any film. All digital video.

Yesterday I made the rounds of meeting several people involved with the teen group and attended one of the youth group meetings. Several teens were interested in being a part of the video.

I wanted to try this out as a practice for producing my High School Movie that I’ve already written. I’d like to create that movie as part of a high school class, so I want to get an idea of how much I can expect from the kids.

Thanks for signing up on Sunday night for the email list about the short video contest. I probably won’t be sending out very many emails yet, but I plan to stop by Youth Group meetings often to keep up with what you guys are up to.

So this is what I learned on Sunday night:

Patrick D. drives Anthony around with his internal combustion engine-powered machine that he is grateful for, meanwhile his dad waits around in the parking lot after there are no more teens left to pick up.

Zackary thinks Patrick is so cool, he even dresses like him.

Lauren has a gigantic truck so she can drive her horse around.

Jose is a great quarterback, even with a knee injury.

Tom tries not to be noticed, sitting very quietly on the couch in the back of the room. (Did anyone else notice?)

Anya, an Oakton student, has enough bruises from powderpuff football and has no wish for more.

Chris, who prefers sitting next to Anya over playing football, proves that white men can jump. And can shoot rubberbands into an air vent.

Is this a story?... Patrick and Lauren go head to head in a game of combustion engine football while Tom observes from behind a video camera. Jose throws a football out the passenger window of Lauren’s truck and knocks Anya out. Chris, in a horse costume, jumps off of Patrick’s car, into Lauren’s truck, while shooting rubberbands at Jose’s knee. Meanwhile, Patrick discovers he has a twin brother named Zackary…

Well, maybe it’s not a very good story, but it would be an unusual sport. Perhaps we should stick with the suggestion I gave Jose, that you guys come up with something that happened at school.

### Tuesday, November 10, 2009

Just got back from a meeting. Diane E. Kelly, senior policy advisor for the Office of Global Women’s Issues at the State Department, discussed foreign assistance efforts to address violence against women and, empowerment through education and microenterprise. Her boss is an ambassador to someplace in North Africa. I told her about my experiences with violence against me, working in the federal government offices here in the US.

### Wednesday, November 11, 2009

I think its funny lately when I meet people who aren't entrepreneurs or new media professionals and they ask what I do. Since these people generally don't need to know my background, or exactly what it is that I do, I keep my answer short. Usually my response is something along the lines of my mission statement, "To UnHollywood New Media by featuring Smart Women."

At an entrepreneur meeting last week, that answer got a lot of oohs and aahs, and everyone was referring to Smart Women for the rest of the meeting. When I meet anyone else, especially engineers, I get a look of total bafflement.

I'm OK with this. They don't need to know how that's a business. Yet. As long as they're on board with the goal.

### Saturday, November 14, 2009

Today I went to a podcast meetup at RHED Pixel in Falls Church. Richard Harrington usually puts these on every month or two. It's been awhile since the last meetup.

This was the most crowded podcast meetup Richard has had, but where were all the regulars? I haven't seen Ron David for awhile. Mary Fletcher Jones wasn't there either.

I got there late because I went to Reston Runners this morning. Unfortunately, the event was cut short, so I was there for less than an hour. A lot of it was stuff I already heard at previous meetups, such as vimeo, youtube, blip.tv, creative commons, widgetbox.com, ligit.com, and feedburner. But I also heard about the social media book "Crush It," howcast.com, sciv.tv, feedforall, metacafe, and something called cackle. I'll have to look them up to find out what they're all for, but supposedly these are the many convoluted things these podcasters play around with.

### Sunday, November 15, 2009

I had the 2nd showing of Budget Justified in my personal theater (basement) last night. It went even better than the first showing. I had a few people from the cast & crew again, plus a couple I met through some of the various meetup events that I attend.

Great comments! And the overall feedback was positive. I even enjoyed watching it more this time around. My favorite comment was the “talking chair.” Apparently I had a character shouting from across the hall, complaining about the office furniture while I inserted a cutaway of a broken chair. But the audience interpreted it as a talking chair. I’m still laughing about it as I type about it on the metro.

I also went to Youth Group at St. Mark again. I brought my video camera so the teens could get used to playing around with it, and to gage their interest in making a video. One techie kid really got into running around taping everything.

### Tuesday, November 17, 2009

Tonight I went to a Social Rockstar meetup at Lotus Lounge. Except it was closed for renovation. So five of us stood around deciding what to do. By the time we figured out what was going on, it was time for me to go to the next meetup. Good thing there was a second meetup, or I would’ve been very unhappy about a wasted one-hour trip downtown.

The second event I went to was titled, “Yeah, Our Website Sucks...What Can We Do About It?”A web designer gave a talk about good web design. I chatted with a couple of American University grads who knew of my screenwriting professor. One of them took statistics from a former colleague of mine who still works at my former employer. I gave the American University grads my business card and told them that “Budget Justified” (<http://budgetjustified.com>) is my true story about working as a federal contractor.

One of the people who came to critique “Budget Justified” was at the meetup tonight. I told her that my favorite comment that she gave me was about the “talking chair.” Apparently I had a character shouting from across the hall, complaining about the office furniture while I inserted a cutaway of a broken chair. But the audience interpreted it as a talking chair. I’m still laughing about it as I type about it on the metro.

### Wednesday, November 18, 2009

I went to two meetups again tonight – a techie “art” show at a gallery and an online news meetup at Medill. I’ll discuss the second event first.

I arrived at the second event a little late. David Wright, an online newsman from NPR, gave a presentation which was a summary of a conference he went to. That might sound bland, but David was such a great speaker, I followed every word.

What surprised me most about this meetup is that there were several people there whom I had met at last night’s meetup. I’m really glad that I’m starting to see a lot of the same people around at so many of these meetups. It makes me feel like I’m starting to become part of the new media community, instead of just showing up to listen to interesting talks.

The first event, the art show, was a modified PacMan game, along with other stuff. I didn’t really care about the other stuff so much. I was paying attention to the people playing the video game and everyone standing around watching and talking about it. After the game-playing session was over, there was an intellectual panel discussion.

My comment to the panel was something along the lines of, “I’m not sure who your intended audience is, I guess it’s us because we’re here. I’m more techie, so my reaction when I arrived was, ‘Eh, art.’ I also think about it in terms of a church teen group that I volunteer for where we set up events every week with a game or a topic for them to interact around.”

To some extent, I think that is the purpose of the Pink Line Project, the company owned by Phillipa Hughes who put on this event. To create events with art displays for people to socialize around. This is similar to what I want to do five to ten years out – put on events that focus on new media topics and projects for people to socialize around.

I need to try to create some new media events for teens at church and for my friends in my house.

### Thursday, November 19, 2009

The George Mason University Community Business Partnership is holding an event on Thursday, December 3, where local small business owners can sell their products as Christmas gifts. RoleModel Enterprises has just been approved to be one of the vendors.

I'll be selling DVDs of "Budget Justified" http://BudgetJustified.com and T-shirts with my logo and the slogan, "Let's Put Positive RoleModels in New Media."

I have 60 DVD's burned with the pre-release version of "Budget Justified," and over 150 t-shirts sizes M, L, and XL. I don't know how many people will be there, but I have a feeling that I won't run out of product at the event. I wonder if I should bring bags. I should probably have something to put the t-shirts in.

Does anyone out there have any suggestions for inexpensive holiday bags or something to wrap the t-shirts in?

### Friday, November 20, 2009

I should look into getting a permit to sell DVDs on a street corner, in front of the FAA and in front of the Washington Post.

### Tuesday, November 24, 2009

I’m staying at my mom’s house in Phoenix for Thanksgiving. While here, I had a few friends over to watch “Budget Justified.” We had a good discussion about it.

Unfortunately, I had a slew of technical difficulties. I played the movie on my mom’s DVD player and there were several times where the DVD player acted like there was a “bandwidth” problem, pausing for several seconds, skipping, then pausing again. I have no idea if it’s a problem with the way Adobe Premier burns to a DVD or if the DVD itself is faulty.

I had problems with using lightscribe on several DVDs, and problems burning the movie to one or two of the DVDs, so I was extremely unimpressed with the quality of the DVDs. I also had trouble fast-forwarding through the DVD on my mom’s player, so when I tried exiting the movie and going back to where it had left off, it took several minutes to bother with that.

We didn’t get through the whole movie. So the showing ended up being a nice evening to chat with friends, more than a movie showing. I can’t complain about that.

### Monday, November 30, 2009

I’ve had my blog hosted on my own web site, as opposed to a blogger or wordpress site, for over a month now. According to my stats plugin, I get about 100 views on the days that I post an entry, and the trend is growing. So if I post an entry every day, I’ll get over 3000 views per month. Although, I have no idea if all those views are people, or if some are bots.

Some of the viewers are spammers. I’ve been getting a few spam comments each week. But I’m finally getting some real comments. Thank you, real people! Within the next few months, I’d like to make this blog, plus Facebook, Twitter, etc. into a more interactive forum. Let’s start with a question…

In the spirit of “Budget Justified” (http://budgetjustified.com), how many women out there have worked with, or know someone who worked with A Groper?

### Tuesday, December 1, 2009

Aak. Just got back from 10 days in Arizona. Tomorrow night I’m going to an event downtown and I need to make arrangements with a friend for getting there.

But the bigger deal is Thursday night. I’m going to sell DVDs of “Budget Justified” and I need to get $10s incase I need to make change, I need to set up my web site to take credit cards in person (no shipping calcs), I need some packaging (pre-gift-wrapped in thin cardboard?) for selling the t-shirts, and I need to come up with some type of simple display.

Then I volunteered to do something at 6:00 Friday morning! What was I thinking.

### Wednesday, December 2, 2009

Richard Harrington of RHED Pixel put on another great podcasting meetup after the Government Video Expo this evening. I didn’t count, but at least 50 people attended. Rich and Emmanuel, a RHED Pixel employee, and Ray Ortega talked about their podcast experience.

This was a great event for podcasting beginners to attend. Lots of tips for getting a podcast started. Which was appropriate, because I brought a friend from church where I recently started volunteering to help with the teens.

### Thursday, December 3, 2009

Yesterday as I was wandering around with a colleague at the GV Expo, we happened upon a booth for a vendor who sells DVD burning/printing machines. I’m somewhat interested in such a machine – I priced them last year, but determined that it would likely be more cost effective to contract out the burning and printing of “Budget Justified,” the movie (http://budgetjustified.com).

But instead of handing the literature and sample DVD to 39-year-old me, the man at the booth handed the items to my 24-year-old male colleague. Did he look like he was more interested in purchasing a machine than I was?

### Friday, December 4, 2009

Wow, yesterday’s post about women being ignored at the government video expo was so popular, it got twice as many views as my previous most popular post.

Last night I participated in a small business holiday party where several small businesses, including RoleModel Enterprises (http://RoleModelEnterprises.com) displayed products for sale at their booths. Not a whole lot of anything was sold. But everyone got some exposure for their businesses.

### Monday, December 7, 2009

I find it interesting that when I google “smart women,” I get a bunch of results saying that men don’t want to marry smart women. As if marriage is the only topic relevant to “smart women.”

So I thought I should find out what I get when I google “smart men.” Also still all about marriage. Except several of the links say that smart men shouldn’t get married. Why does society think that smart women are useless because they don’t get married, but smart men are praised for eschewing marriage?

Honestly, I think it’s all bunk. Most of the smart women and smart men that I know are happily married. And women these days don’t have to marry themselves off in order to become participants in society.

### Tuesday, December 8, 2009

I was reading Steven Covey’s “Seven habits of Highly Effective People” this morning while on my Nordic Track (too cold & snowy to go for a run). Covey mentioned that leaders allow others to have ownership of results. Gofer managers stand over others’ shoulders and tell them each motion to do instead of communicating the goal.

Reminded me of when I picked my mom up from work a couple of weeks ago and she told me each turn to make. Mom, I lived in that house all throughout high school, I know where it is. I asked her if she did that to her employees too.

### Wednesday, December 9, 2009

I tried playing around with Livestream last night. I used to use Stickam for live broadcasts. They have a nice feature which allows up to six viewers to participate with video. Except that sometimes turns out to be not so nice. Some people think it’s appropriate to show up naked in those screens.

I had heard at one of the DC Media Makers events that Livestream is better than UStream, so I though I’d try it out. I asked what criteria were used to determine which was “better,” however I don’t remember exactly what those criteria were. I think reliability was the main criterion.

After a little struggle getting things going, I finally broadcast something live on Livestream last night. Unfortunately, nobody dropped in. I used to get several people viewing my Stickam broadcast, and a couple of people stumbled across UStream when I tried that out, but with Livestream, I got nothing. Maybe it was because it was my first time trying it out and I didn’t have much to say.

### Thursday, December 10, 2009

I broke my glasses a few months ago. I guess I need to get some new ones – these are almost 4 years old already. But I usually buy new glasses about every 10 years.

The glasses broke right across the nose. I’ve been supergluing them together because that’s better than wrapping them in duct tape. And it’s been working quite well for the most part. I’ve only re-broken them twice in the past few months. The main problem is gluing them together crooked, which causes weird vision effects because I end up looking through each lens at a different angle.

So what’s broken glasses have to do with Budget Justified? Well, in Budget Justified, I’m wearing these glasses. Take a look at http://BudgetJustified.com They’re quite cool pink glasses, which I bought long before Sarah Palin made them cool. I wanted to reshoot some footage of me talking to the camera in my kitchen. But I have to be wearing the right glasses – without duct tape – in order for that to work.

### Wednesday, December 16, 2009

I went to the DC MediaMaker meetup at NPR headquarters tonight. Mike talked about how he and a bunch of friends created a fan movie about *Firefly* called *Browncoats*. I’ve never heard of *Firefly*, so all I know about it is what was said tonight. Apparently it’s related to something called Serenity – I think it’s the sequel.

Although I wasn’t interested in *Firefly*, I was very interested in hearing about how they put their movie together. Since *Browncoats* takes place in the future, they had to build an elaborate set. In general, Mike and friends created a much bigger production than *Budget Justified*, (http://budgetjustified.com) which was originally intended to be a bunch of web videos, until I realized I had enough footage/story for a full length feature, even after I edited out the redundant and slow-moving scenes.

Another difference between *Browncoats* and *Budget Justified* is that since *Browncoats* is stolen from a Fox production, Mike couldn’t make it a for-profit venture. So he created a non-profit entity for the sake of all the finances. He was able to get a lot of stuff donated. And since it was a spin-off of something that already had a fan base, Mike was able to leverage existing fan groups for publicity, extensively using twitter, facebook, and youtube to engage people. I can leverage other groups for *Budget Justified* publicity also, however it won’t be as clear of a connection to some groups.

The most exciting part of the talk for me was seeing Ted Taylor, who plays Barry in *Budget Justified*, in Mike’s movie trailer!

Mike was an excellent speaker. He was excited about his topic, and exuded a genuine and honest personality. I had to leave to attend a Social Media Club event, but I hope I have the opportunity to talk to him at future MediaMakers events.

### Thursday, December 17, 2009

I feel all popular and urban because last night I had two parties/meetups to go to. First I went to the DC MediaMakers talk about the *Browncoats* movie. Then I could’ve either gone to Bus Boys and Poets – a really cool hangout/restaurant or to the Social Media Club’s holiday cookoff. I chose the cookoff.

When I arrived, the doorman was gone and the elevators require an access card to get to the floor where the cookoff was going on. A glamorous woman arrived at the same time I did. Some people were getting off the elevators, but didn’t have access cards for the right floor. Then the janitor got off another elevator. I asked him if he could get us to the fourth floor. He didn’t seem to understand me. So the glamorous woman spoke to him in beautiful Spanish. He took us to the fourth floor as Ms. Glamorous continued to speak to him in very pleasant Spanish.

I got her business card – I was feeling liberal with the business cards yesterday, since I was going to a Social Media event. I gave a card to someone on the metro who was having a conversation about sending a message around Facebook about a small concert she wanted to put on with her friends.

Ms. Glamorous writes citygirlblogs, which is a Sex In The City-esque story. The business card says it’s all true, but the story says she’s moving in with a guy she’s known for eight days. She seemed a little too smart to do that, so I’m not buying it.

Several other people from MediaMakers also horned in on the end of the cookoff. I missed pretty much the entire cookoff, but there was plenty of very good pizza left. And I made a few new Facebook friends; people I’ve seen several times at these events.

### Sunday, December 20, 2009

I broke my plastic-framed glasses a few months ago. I had been getting by with superglue, but decided it was time to get a new pair, since after all, it had been four years since I had gotten new glasses.

I went to the eye doctor on Friday and got my eyes examined. Strangely, my eyes have actually improved over the past four years, so my new prescription is weaker. The frame style is no longer manufactured, so I had to pick out a whole new style. I was bummed that they didn't have any glasses that were as cool as the ones that broke. They only had boring, normal frames. I wanted purple, but the best frames I found were a shiny metallic burgundy with a cute carved design on the sides.

The glasses seller asked me if I wanted a special coating. What's the point of the special coating? "All the TV stars get this coating." Uh, why would I care if TV stars get coating? Well, it turns out that it prevents lights from reflecting off the glasses and showing a big white glare in the lenses. My mother-in-law complained about that glare when she took my picture at Thanksgiving and made me take my glasses off for the pictures. In Budget Justified (http://BudgetJustified.com), there is an occasional reflection of the lights off my glasses. The glasses seller showed me a lens with the coating and compared it to a lens without the coating. Sure enough, the coating made the light reflection a muted, dull blue and the lens without the coating reflected bright white light.

Sold! I bought the coating.

### Tuesday, December 22, 2009

Brian Ross of ABC News published a news story with video about a $5 million party thrown by the FAA for its managers. It’s going to be on ABC World News with Diane Sawyer tonight.

What I need you to do is go to various news sites – Washington Post, ABC, your local paper, etc., and post a comment such as this:

A movie about waste and abuse at the FAA was just produced. You can watch the trailer at http://BudgetJustified.com

My favorite part of the story was when one of the managers at the party asked a female ABC News undercover reporter if she was a “hooker” because “I was ready to reach for my wallet.” That sums up the FAA right there.

### Wednesday, December 23, 2009

Budget Justified web site got a lot of views from FAA domains. Last night Diane Sawyer had a segment on ABC Nightly News about the FAA throwing a huge boondoggle party for its managers. OK, that’s not news, the FAA managers have boondoggles all the time.

I posted comments on several news web sites referring readers to Budget Justified on the web (http://BudgetJustified.com). Got a whole bunch of hits from FAA domains. I even got a Facebook fan from the FAA I don’t know if that’s a good thing or a bad thing.

Unfortunately, I don’t think the boondoggle party will have a long news life. The Washington Post didn’t have much to say about it. That’s because FAA managers mistreating employees and overtreating themselves isn’t illegal and really isn’t news. It’s just nasty reality of life as a government worker.

That’s why Budget Justified has to be a movie. If I went to the news whining about what it was like working at the FAA, I’d be lucky to get anyone to pay attention. But with a movie, I tell the story. I don’t have to worry about whether someone else will do it for me.

### Monday, December 28, 2009

I watched that 1977 *Oh God* movie for the first time this week. And over the weekend I watched the commentary. Usually I don’t care for the commentary – I just watched the movie. But my husband likes the commentary and it was a slow weekend, so I watched the commentary with him.

I’m sort of glad I did. A common theme that ran through the commentary was how simple the movie was (which could also be interpreted as low budget), even the miracles that George Burns/God did. Like disappearing cards or disappearing God. The commentary was produced 25 years after the movie, so the guys doing the commentary did a lot of comparing to how movies are made now.

The message I got out of it is that a movie doesn’t need fancy doodads to be good or popular. The main thing people care about is whether it’s a good story.

### Tuesday, December 29, 2009

I wanted to make a transcript for a video I made with my friend Tim, the youth minister from my church, with the intention of experimenting with an idea for a video series & corresponding book that we might create some day. So I’m playing around with voice recognition software. I tried it on this video of Tim in his office http://www.youtube.com/user/LisaSchaefer#p/a/u/0/m0xWZf90mCc He’s so genuine & goofy, I think we might come up with something good with a little prep and a little practice.

So here’s what I got when I put the mic to the speaker as I played the video: “The rear of a city on all traffic drives a car at the classes on one of the on the manager of stuff doesn’t sign she acted like I have no fall into a stack of a.”

Huh? That’s what the software said too. Actually, throughout most of the video, it said, “What was that?”

So I tried again, this time I spoke into the mic while the video played quietly in the background. “And still have three well we still have the ability to choose to accept god’s call tours things other female vocationary a what did the door to religious positioned for weather of the bike or whether not to go to levitate for weather not to put on a baseball cap Monday we never know what kind of a fax that has got what doesn’t want to be upset about marionettes the shrubs of existence fallacy of purpose of existence. guy would make marionettes and play was marionettes. he wouldn’t have created such a sophisticated thing. that god is the greatest been a measure ball and he went and makes waste time and even waste the money needed a waste of money was untouchable I feel a play in

20 to feel like maybe god waste of time on youth of the apostles for good people like Peter. Peter constantly impresses up here gives me hope. because I am off all. I’m constantly messing up. every time I think them back of the straight and narrow, I we bought your some of you guys drive so we don’t. but when you’re seeing the steering wheel, there’s nothing worse than that feeling when you’ve all the sudden gang will try our seat, and you start to go little to the left a new job at the. 20 said the office in on all types of drives. Now that’s the summer. of Mary drives. she is excited. she acted like she but she didn’t think I know what it felt like to drive the first time. as an alert feels like.”

A little better, but it still needs a whole lot of editing. I tried speaking into the mic a second time, but it’s just as bad. I think the voice recognition software is helpful for making the transcript. I was considering using it to create this blog, but I think typing it out myself is faster.

### Wednesday, December 30, 2009

Whenever I see an article about female role models in math and science, it bothers me a little because I don’t think that lack of role models are the main reason why there aren’t many women in math and science fields. From what I’ve seen in my professional experience, the problem is the way in which women in math and science fields are treated.

We can’t just go out and send a bunch of girls to take math and science classes, then expect that we’ll end up with a bunch of female mathematicians and scientists. The problem is that once they get into the workforce – and sometimes even the problem starts in the classroom – they’re treated like they’re not wanted there. And sure, a lot of men are also treated like they’re not wanted there, however the problem is often much worse for women.

In male dominated workplaces, women are still treated like objects, often like sex objects. Often they’re treated like secretaries even if they have a PhD. As we saw in an the ABC news clip of an FAA conference, some men thought it was normal to ask women in a professional venue whether she was a hooker. When I worked in the FAA the building, I had to experience that type of treatment every day.

Thus I feel a moral obligation to first let society know what it is like to work in a math and science field. I also wish to encourage girls to learn as much math and science as they can. However I do not want to give girls the impression that doing so will lead them into a Pollyanna environment, as the goal of organized girl science days often seems to be. Instead I believe these young women will need an additional education in being very tough when dealing with these less-than-professional men.

But even more so, these so-called “professional” men first need to learn how to treat women with respect.

If name calling were the problem, no one would blink. The problem is not being allowed on projects, being left out of the loop, expected to do the menial work, being used as scapegoats for poor management, getting groped up the skirt, etc... But that's the reason for the inability to retain the engineers we already have.

The other problem is the difficulty of getting people to take the math & science courses. Some people may be turned off by the way HS teachers or college professors treat them. (Personally I had little problem with that - in my 12 years of college, there were only 5 professors who were dismissive of me for being female.) And I agree that American society does not value math and hard work, rather it values instant gratification and glory.

### Thursday, December 31, 2009

I’m spending my New Year’s Eve messing with PHP code for my ecommerce shopping cart. The last time I tried to get the code to output mailing addresses, it printed nothing. I got so sick of bothering with the mindless tedium of parsing text that I ignored the code for several months. Amazingly, the code suddenly works tonight. I should leave code sit around for months more often.

### Monday, January 4, 2010

Recently I received a quarterly magazine from a women’s organization that says they promote equality for women. The cover says, “A difficult balance – managing work and family.” I’m debating whether I should just throw this publication in the garbage.

Well, OK. I have a family – I live with a husband. 22 years ago I lived with a man that the government called my father. But he died 10 years ago. I was spewed out of a woman’s vagina almost 40 years ago. But wait. Is she my family? My mom never met that woman, and I didn’t meet her until I was 25. Somehow, I don’t think the magazine addresses any of those “family” issues.

Inside the magazine cover, I see “Academic Motherhood.” I have a Ph.D. Am I the mom of my dissertation? No, it was about professors who are moms of babies. There’s an article called “Women at Work: Still Waiting for Change.” Maybe I’ll get something out of that article. When I turn to that page, there’s a picture of a woman holding a baby. I also see an article that says, “Three quarters of working women become pregnant…” Well, that means to me that this magazine is irrelevant to a quarter of working women. Including me. (If you want to consider what I do as work.)

There’s something that bothers me about publications that assume every woman wants babies, that tell working mothers they’re such poor things. Why does everyone assume that it’s still the mom’s job to do everything for the kids? Why isn’t anyone asking why the dads aren’t stepping up? Why are we ignoring the dads who do step up? In a Family and Work Life study mentioned in Newsweek on March 26, three out of five men reported some or a lot of stress related to workplace-family life balance.

So why is the media perpetuating the stereotype that it’s women’s job in life to manage babies? Two thousand years ago, when people were making up religion, nations were short on people and making more was a very important task. But now we have too many for the planet to sustain. It’s time we acknowledge that women aren’t required to take on the role of making more humans.

George, you can feed your baby breast milk out of a bottle. That's not an excuse for men to avoid doing the parent stuff. It seems husbands participate in the devaluing by refusing to do the tasks their wives do.

Yeah, sometimes I think some media over-... See Moreglamorizes work. A lot of employers/bosses treat their employees like children or like grunts. I think the freelance activities Shelli does will become a trend as people feel more empowered with more choices for what they do as "work."

Hmm...an idea for an interesting blog format: Woman writes, Man responds...it becomes a back & forth conversation. Much better than a 1 woman screed. There's topics for several blog entries in these comments.

I have to admit, I write whatever comes to mind each day, depending upon what I'm working on or reading. It's all related to my so-called "work," but I don't have a blog strategy plotted out. (Although, believe it or not, I have a quasi-plan for where I'll be 10 yrs out.)

And I proof read for the most part, but my blog title is a rework of something I read, which totally lost the meaning of the original quote, "We have to stop using "work/life balance" as coded language for "working-mom stress." http://www.prospect.org/cs/articles?article=worklife\_balance\_is\_not\_a\_womans\_issue... See More

I really like the What Is The Definition of Work idea. I think about how over my 12 years of college & the first 4 years out of my PhD I was so consumed with the "work" required of me by others. And I'm starting to notice that it's resulted in losing touch with a lot of my favorite people. Although, I guess I wasn't the only one who moved away ;).

It makes me sad that all that work & corresponding loss didn't get me where I thought I was trying to go. But I'm hopeful that those people are still around, I'll make more long-term friendships, and that past & future "work" take me where I need to be.

It's hard for me to guess in general about spouses w/o kids. Sometimes I read survey results, but I don't remember seeing any literature about spouses w/o kids. I mostly see media about dating or momming, not even much about dads. I'm an ignored demographic. I have a friend who is a stay at home dad and he's REALLY part of an ignored demographic.

I'm often leery of the biology arguments. Sometimes men use that as an excuse to get out of the child raising tasks they don't want to do. Although I have seen women micromanage the childraising, causing their spouses to back off.

I'd probably be more likely to want kids if someone else was responsible for feeding, bathing, chauffeuring, etc. I have no interest in babies, but I like volunteering w/high school kids because they say interesting things & make me laugh. Based on the media I am exposed to and based on pieces of conversations I hear, I feel like most members of society expect women my age to be moms. ... See More

Maybe I need to put some media out there about women who are non-dating non-moms.

### Tuesday, January 5, 2010

I grapple with the definition of work lately because I’m still in the startup phase of building my business and I’m creating my product on spec. So I have no boss, I’m not accountable to anyone for what I work on, I completely decide what I need to do and when. And since it’s a total spec project, nobody pays me anything.

Is that a “job?” I think many people would call what I do a “hobby.” But I don’t. Sure, it’s something I do because I want to work on it, but my project is intended to be the foundation of future business projects and efforts.

Yeah, maybe most people don’t understand exactly what in the hell I’m up to. That’s OK. They don’t need to. Just buy my damn movie and book. Then watch to see where I’m going from there. http://BudgetJustified.com

### Wednesday, January 6, 2010

I have eight events on my calendar for Saturday. But it’s a nasty January and I’ll probably only go to two of them.

The race in Kensington was cancelled because ice on the course won’t melt by then. I’ll probably skip Reston Runners because it’s going to be 15 degrees that morning. But I will go to a luncheon. Skip running, eat food.

I’m also skipping a politician talk because lunch won’t finish in time to get there by metro and Randy will have the car.

Then I’m skipping food in the evening. One dinner is for young adults, which I will no longer qualify as seven months from now. The other is in Maryland, later in the evening, and now that I’m almost an old adult, I don’t feel like staying out that late.

I’m also skipping Wii games in favor of a PinkLine Project event in Reston. I like Philippa Hughes’s business, even though I’m not exactly in the art field. Although, she was originally a lawyer, so you never know where business takes you. Philippa is well connected and I want to keep an eye on what she’s doing with her PinkLine Project. Plus, several of my Smart Women friends will be there. So this is a Must Go To event.

### Thursday, January 7, 2010

I’m just adding a few entries today to see if I get a bunch more daily hits by posting extra posts. Eric Borgen suggested trying Google analytics, so I signed up and now I’m trying them out.

At about 3:00 yesterday, I got around 180 hits on my blog. I usually get about 120 per day. So I’m not sure what happened. I use myStat and I have no idea how it counts hits. Or if real people are reading the blog vs some blog bot hitting my site.

### Monday, January 11, 2010

Today I watched part of a video of a guy playing with his kids in his living room, then his wife going out to lunch. It got half a million hits. I can't figure out why. It had no point, it wasn't entertaining.

A friend of a friend posted a video of her Chihuahua sitting on a chair. Within a few hours, it got thousands of hits. My cat video only has 7 hits. Not that I care if anyone watches my cats. I want people to watch Budget Justified http://budgetjustified.com

I need to look into YouTube SEO.

A comment I left on a YouTube video: Dead on about an agency that doesn't respect the work of its employees. Take a look at my channel. I made a movie, "Budget Justified," about what it was like to work in FAA offices in Washington.

Reinforces the comment to the woman about being a hooker. Typical of the kind of behavior you see around FAA offices.

### Tuesday, January 12, 2010

Kelly Cutrone, a fashion PR mogul who doesn’t wear makeup and has an MTV reality show, has her first book coming out next month, “If You Have to Cry, Go Outside.”

I watched an informal interview with her on YouTube and I really liked her message. She was basically encouraging women not to follow the life script society tells women they have to go through: be skinny, get into the best college, attract a guy everyone else approves of, have babies. Kelly encourages women to figure out what they want, who they want to be – not what everyone else wants them to be.

Kelly says she wants to go around the world teaching young women. I think that’s great. And I want to go around the world teaching men and older women to accept that young women can do a lot more with their lives, to stop treating women as though they can’t.

### Wednesday, January 13, 2010

I went to a Society of Women Engineers meeting last night. I haven’t gone to one of their meetings since a former national SWE president highly discouraged me from producing Budget Justified (http://BudgetJustified.com). She said it would be bad for the profession. Well, I think it would be bad for SWE to tell its members to shut up and hide in the corner when somebody is mean to them. I have a sneaky suspicion that if someone asked her if she told me not to create Budget Justified, she’s deny ever saying so.

Since this former national SWE president wasn’t there, I told several members about Budget Justified. They seemed fairly supportive of the effort. Perhaps I will give a talk about it at one of their upcoming meetings.

### Tuesday, January 19, 2010

I went to an entrepreneur talk put on by the Engineering College at George Washington University. It was way more fabulous than I expected. Awesome fancy hors d’oerves, excellent speakers.

There were three semi-white male panelists. One was American, the other two had some Middle Eastern background. They had interesting stories about how they started their companies. Well, I found the stories interesting, probably because they were relevant to me and I like to compare how people develop new companies. However the student next to me fell asleep.

The entrepreneur panelist I found most relevant was Elias Sham who founded telezoo.com, a B2B social networking site, in 1999. He was also on the board of Searchles, another social media company, and runs a blog http://www.awesomedc.com which is about the real people of DC, not the politicians. I relate to that mission. When I was on the board of the local Society of Women Engineers section, I used to write letters to various media outlets commending them whenever they wrote about engineers, making the point that engineers are a huge part of what makes DC tick.

Unfortunately, the panelist story that stuck out for me was when the white guy made a point about how hard it is to start a company when the wife is at home and pregnant. Hello? Who is your audience? Why is your wife sitting around at home? I felt like to him, my presence in the audience was nonexistent, that he was commiserating with the boys, and I was merely an interloper. As if he expected everyone in the audience to have a pregnant wife at home.

Of course to the men, I’m sure they didn’t think twice about it. Instead they probably thought it was more unusual that women were there.

I left early and walked almost two miles to an entrepreneur event at the Affinity Lab in Adams Morgan. The presenters talked about an online network called Care2. It has some type of charity purpose, however I didn’t catch exactly what its business model was since I arrived late.

After the presentation, I spoke with a woman named Candace about subtle gender bias in American writing, as opposed to Scandinavian writing which she said views women as more powerful. I also talked to Tegy Thomas who is involved in setting up events in the DC tech scene. I’ve met him at DC Creatives events in the past.

### Wednesday, January 20, 2010

Today I had a screening for *Budget Justified.* Lisa from the Vienna writers group and Tim from St. Mark came over and gave extremely intelligent and constructive criticism. Mostly about the audio, but the movie version still has one or two too many groping scenes.

I went to a Social Media Club networking event at the Consumer Electronics Association headquarters. A few people gave an overview of their international symposium in Vegas last month. The turnout wasn’t as large as some of the previous Social Media Club events, but it was still a nice venue and I chatted with some interesting people.

One woman I met ran her own local news site for three years in Silver Spring. She shut the operation down last week and is looking into new ventures. The guy sitting in front of us works in hyperlocal advertising – small local shops target the people who live in their neighborhood.

Two of the presentations discussed new electronics coming out in 2010. It’s nice to hear about them, but I never buy the newest stuff. I always wait for the price of the whole technology to go down. My cell phone doesn’t even have any web capability. I wouldn’t use it enough to be worth paying the money.

The other presentation was about how social media was used to get symposium attendees to interact with the vendors and with each other. Sadly, the interaction that stood out was the derogatory tweets about Carol Bartz, female CEO of Yahoo.

### Monday, January 25, 2010

Thanks to Eric Borgen and reCAPTCHA, my blog spam problem is solved. ReCAPTCHA is a manual word-entering system that helps digitize books and newspapers for online use. Eric Borgen is a bipedal primate, not to be confused with Borg, a collective of cybernetic organisms on Star Trek.

When blog sites used reCAPTCHA, humans enter two words of scanned text. One word has already been verified by humans. The other is a new word that needs to be manually decoded. If the human gets the verified word right, she gets to have her comment posted on my blog, and the new word is saved in the electronic file for the book or newspaper. Damn clever idea.

Now if I could only figure out my multiple posting issue… I successfully unlinked twitter, however I still get 3 entries on Facebook every time I post.

### Tuesday, January 26, 2010

Tonight I went to a Small Business Development event at the Arlington public library. I left early and took the metro downtown to a talk put on by the Online News Association.

I didn’t even know about the Arlington Small Business event until this morning. While I was in the quiet room in the Vienna library with my Writers Commitment Group, I was uncommitted to my writing and browsed the internet for meetup groups instead.

I found about four meetups going on tonight and settled on two of them. It was too late to sign up for the Arlington Small Business event, but I figured that the library is public after all, so I showed up to crash the event.

The first woman who spoke was very chipper. She went over the top twelve mistakes new businesses make. Then another woman got up to speak. I had heard her at a Fairfax Small Business event and remembered she was horrible. So when she arrived onstage, that was my cue to leave for my next event downtown.

I signed up for the Online News Association event because I thought it would be a good idea to meet bloggers and other internet news professionals. Especially since I think the internet is where the future of news is going.

Tiffany Shackelford is in charge of this group and has everyone in stitches every time she makes her introductions at the beginning of the meeting. And it’s all off the top of her head.

This month’s topic weren’t especially relevant to me – market research methods to figure out how people consume news. However the speakers were interesting and the networking venue was great.

### Wednesday, January 27, 2010

I went to the monthly Media Makers meetup at NPR headquarters, and tweeted a few responses to the conversation at #dcmm. Jen Consalvo, a photographer, talked about her upcoming book, mostly about digital photography techniques.

Jen asked us what we disliked most about our pictures. Me, well, my husband likes to take pictures much more than I do. This results in my ownership of multiple pictures of traffic signs. I do not want pictures of traffic signs. I want pictures of people. People I know. And not these posed fabrications with fake smiles. I want real people doing real things in real settings.

My favorite story of the meeting was from Andy Carvin, NPR’s Social Media guy, who was threatened to be arrested by private security guards at Union Station for taking pictures, in spite of his press pass. http://www.andycarvin.com/archives/2008/05/almost\_arrested\_for\_taking\_photos\_at\_uni.html

Fox News got a hold of Andy’s real-time tweets and went to Union Station themselves. Camera rolling, they interviewed management about their policy on people taking photographs. They insisted they were totally OK with it. Until security came in and harassed Fox News on camera, insisting they leave or get arrested. This resulted in a congressional hearing on first amendment rights http://theonlinephotographer.typepad.com/the\_online\_photographer/2008/06/union-station-p.html

### Thursday, January 28, 2010

I’m looking for women interested in developing a live internet show with me. It’s a bit of a chicken and egg problem.

### Friday, January 29, 2010

The purpose of RoleModel Enterprises is to create stories about smart women along with social activities, integrate them with new media, to change the paradigm of how women are portrayed and treated by society.

I was browsing the web site for TechCocktail, a popular event for the techie startup crowd. It’s run by Jen Consalvo and Frank Gruber. It’s analogous to what I want to create, so I called Tim to ask if he’d be interested in attending. Then I sent him this email to clarify:

*On the phone I mentioned an event on Thursday, Feb. 4 from 6:30 to 9:00pm. The reason I wanted to bring you to this event is that I'd like to get your thoughts on how Tech Cocktail compares to youth group events on Sunday evenings. Maybe I can organize my thoughts a little more if I put them in writing:*

*Think about youth group for adults (snacks, drinks, socializing, communicating ideas through video/social media, an intellectual topic to discuss, a sport/game). Then think about topics that may not necessarily be religious, but have moral implications. Then think about how other business entities, such as Tech Cocktail, have existing business models and customers. Tech Cocktail targets young IT professionals in the city who want to talk about their jobs or startups.*

*"Youth group for adults" would be... young educated people in the suburbs who want to see "nice smart young women" in new/social media instead of trashy hollywood girls? ...who want to be a part of the "nice girl/guy" hangout scene instead of "trashy girl/guy" bar scene?*

I received no response. Perhaps it’s too early for Tim to understand or feel invested. Or perhaps Tim has no interest.

I went to talk to a business consultant at the Fairfax Small Business Development Center. I’ve gone to the Fairfax SBDC a few times for consultations. Every once in a while I get a call from them asking if I need advice. Eh, why not.

The advice I usually get from them is quite generic and moderately useful. This session’s advice was a little better than what I got out of the other sessions. This was the first time I was assigned to speak to a female counselor.

The main point of her advice was about branding, although she didn’t say much about it that I didn’t already know. Mostly she talked about the fact that I should have a brand. Hello…feature smart women in new/social media. Without excluding the men, of course. No use in preaching only to the choir.

The counselor also suggested establishing an online presence in the game Second Life. I played with that a little over the weekend, although I’m not very impressed with it so far. She also suggested speaking to the local Women In Technology group.

The best part of our conversation was when we talked about building communities. I compared it to when I was teaching classes and to the youth group activities I help out with at my church. She said that it takes eight hours of working on something together to form a bond with other people.

### Sunday, January 31, 2010

“If you can be replaced by a DVD, you should.” GWU professor. I went to St. Charles Borromeo Church in Arlington for mass. Fr. Gerry’s homilies are so much better than anyone else’s. Someone should just record him and play that at all churches so that every priest doesn’t have to come up with an entirely separate homily.

Fr. Gerry thinks big. He wants to make a difference in the global community and wants to get people in the parish involved in helping on a global scale. A young woman made an announcement at the end of mass about her new organization to send people on one-week missions. I think it’s a great idea. I came up with it during the Just Faith course I took over the summer, although I had no interest in running it; I thought it would be something that St. Charles would take over.

I can’t help but question how well her operation will be run. She’s young and sounded more like she was more interested in being called President and CEO of something than creating an organization that did good work. After her story of working on one mission in college, she stated, “I’m Julie Whatever, and I’m President and CEO of Mission Whatever.” I probably would’ve sounded like that when I was 25 too. But she would’ve sounded more mature if she had emphasized what people could do to help, rather than her status in her little organization.

Unfortunately Fr. Gerry’s talk after mass was cancelled. However, I walked away feeling like I needed to be a part of St. Charles, in addition to St. Mark.

### Wednesday, February 3, 2010

I went to an event put on by the DC Film Office so filmmakers could meet their staff. It started with networking, then the director of the DC Film Office told us what they’re up to and had a question and answer period.

After the talk, there was an opportunity to show some short video clips. So I showed a six minute clip of *Budget Justified*. Every time I’m about to show it to someone, I cringe, feeling like it’s too stupid to show. But when I start watching it, I get really into it because it’s pretty funny. Tonight’s audience was by far the largest I’ve shown it to at one time – about fifty people. And people laughed a lot.

It hit me about what I’m supposed to do for St. Charles – youth group for adults. I was incredibly disappointed with the 40+ group when I went to the pizza night after mass a few months ago. At the time, I decided to abandon the group because I didn’t want to deal with it. But now I realize it’s an opportunity.

John Rinaldi suggested that it might be more vibrant if it were a 35+ group. I noticed that the young adult groups dwindle in the upper thirties age category. In my experience the last several years, it seems as though there aren’t any good social groups that cater to the 35-40 crowd.

I’ll have to try simple events at first, and experiment with my structured social interaction as people get to know me better. Maybe I’ll leave Jack in charge of whatever he wants to do, and I’ll set up a discussion group disguised as a party or a party disguised as a discussion group. Or a discussion group disguised as a game. Maybe a discussion game.

Like the youth group at St. Mark, I’ll get involved however it seems comfortable, without suddenly imposing myself on the whole group. The current leader is extremely irritating, so that may pose a problem.

### Thursday, February 4, 2010

Videos for the Arlington Diocese teen video competition are due February 26. A few teens from St Mark Church in Vienna, VA, have gotten together with me over the past month to put together the script. The diocese requires that the idea for the video comes from the teens. St Mark's video is about ninja sheep. I don't think I'll have any trouble convincing anyone that this story was not my idea.

The story takes place on a field, represented by a grassy area near St Mark School. I dressed all in off-white with socks safety-pinned to my head for ears, along with a few teens who also played sheep. I really would have liked to have heard what the parents were thinking when they saw us with chairs and desks in the grass as they came to pick up their kids after school.

Now, I hope I’m not giving away any secrets of our story to those who are looking to steal ideas for the next Hollywood blockbuster, but we had a Teacher Sheep, a Wannabe-Ninja Sheep, and a Bully Sheep, along with a Ninja, Dog, and Wolf. Like a bad cartoon, played by real people.

So we started by shooting Brad, also our video editor, wearing a black knit hat pulled down over his face. Brad, dressed all in black, flailed around with wooden swords that Liz, the Wolf, had in her possession because her uncle had found them lying on a beach.

“Did I look stupid?” Brad asked.

“Well,” Tom the Teacher Sheep replied, “at least nobody could see your face.”

At some point, Tim, St Mark’s Youth Minister, went to his office to get a black T-shirt. He seemed to be gone a little too long, so I looked around and saw him wandering around the parking lot talking on his cell phone.

“Who is he talking to now?” I muttered to the teens. Geez, he’s as unruly as the teens. It’s like herding ninja sheep.

When he came back to the set, Tim said, “I just talked to Randy.”

Um, why was he talking to my husband.

“I thought I was calling your cell phone, but I must have programmed your home phone number into my phone.”

Ah, yes. My husband was home this afternoon because he works for the Virginia Department of Transportation and was scheduled to work overnight to prepare for the snowpocalypse.

“I hope I didn’t wake him up.”

We tried shooting a scene of the sheep running away from the Wolf. Liz played a running sheep. At our next shoot, she’ll wear a mask and play the Wolf. Tim played cameraman.

As we ran past our sheep school desks, baaing, Tim said, “That was perfect! Do it again, except this time, I’ll press Record.”

Unfortunately, it was getting dark before we finished shooting half the footage. I was exhausted and Tim, being the sweetheart that he is, gave me a ride home because my household car is at Randy’s office. (Randy drove to work on Tuesday – instead of his usual bus commute – so he could volunteer to do people’s taxes at the library.) We refuse to drive our own car in the snowpocalypse. If Randy has Snowpocalypse Duty, he’s driving a state truck.

I just hope we can shoot the rest of the footage before the contest deadline.

### Friday, February 12, 2010

The meaning of (Second) Life

I’ve been trapped inside the house for the past week with the metro not running above ground and all my professional/social events cancelled. So I decided to explore the online computer game Second Life, as suggested by a marketing consultant I talked to a few weeks ago.

It’s a rather social game, although when I first logged in, I landed as a naked man on someone’s house. Someone shouted to go away, but I couldn’t see anyone there and I didn’t know how to go somewhere else or find my clothes. So I got sent to Korea.

When I landed in Korea, my avatar walked into a guy and my head got stuck inside his chest. People were chatting not only with the text box, but also with voice. They explained to me how I could also chat with voice. They figured out I was new, so they told me how to find clothes in my inventory and how to turn into a woman.

I was invited to a church house, a couple of apartments, country dancing, a pirate ship, a waterfall, and an exotic dance club. I met a few Snoopys, kitties, and gnomes, though most avatars were in human form and dressed really weird. Someone gave me a tie-dye hat almost as tall as my avatar. I also received other articles of clothing, a stuffed animal, and different kinds of hair, which occasionally got removed, leaving my avatar bald until I could figure out how to put hair back on.

Hanging out at the church house last night, several of the staff greeted people. I asked what it means to be on the staff of a church in Second Life. At my real church, people donate money, and they money is used to pay the bills and the staff. Well, Second Life churches don’t get electric bills. And the staff of the Second Life church are volunteers. The pastor of the Second Life church is a pastor in real life, but the volunteers and the Second Life church are not affiliated with the real church. Some money exchanges hands if your avatar buys a hot chocolate. You can buy Second Life money with a real life credit card.

Anyone is welcome to hang out at the Second Life church at any time. The church holds scheduled concerts and other gatherings. People who visit can hold meetings there and watch various videos, even clips from some Pixar movies. My application crashed and my avatar went hurtling through gray space as I was trying to ask how the church got rights to show movie clips.

I’m still trying to figure out the business model of Second Life. I won a few Second Life dollars at the country dancing place for randomly guessing the answers to some trivia questions correctly. I think that’s worth a few pennies in real life. There were a few ads at the country dance place, so maybe they make some money that way, in addition to the contests.

I think what I need to do is figure out how to graffiti my web site URL on stuff in Second Life.

### Monday, February 15, 2010

While playing Second Life tonight, I listened to an interview with Lisa Leibow, a friend from my library writers group, on BlogTalkRadio. I don’t think the sound capabilities of Second Life work while internet radio is playing.

There were a few questions for which she seemed unprepared. It reminded me of the time Randy was interviewed on live morning news in Phoenix. The interviewer had no questions. She just said, “Tell us about traffic.” (I’d be surprised if she wasn’t fired shortly afterward.) Luckily he had plenty of coherent things to say about traffic.

Several years ago, Randy took a media training course. He was taught to prepare what he wanted to say and to prepare answers to possible questions that might be asked.

### Tuesday, February 16, 2010

Tonight I went to the Online News Association meetup. A panel of white men talked about how the news associations they worked for were adapting to doing business online.

A friend of mine, Beau Dure, was the original blogger, tweeter, and facebook guy for USAToday.com. (Right now he’s in Vancouver covering the Olympics.) One of his colleagues, Howard Kamen, was on the panel. Social media wasn’t mentioned during tonight’s discussion, although that’s a very relevant topic to online news.

There were two other events going on that I could have attended, however it was enough of a pain to get to this meeting that I didn’t want to bother waiting for a bus or walking over a mile to get to another event.

I’m glad I stayed because the socializing after the panel was great. I talked to Katie Kemple, an NPR journalist that I often see at various social media events, and to a guy who was a journalist for an English newspaper in Taiwan for several years. And I ate cheese and crackers and shrimp.

### Wednesday, February 17, 2010

The “You Don’t Belong Here” look that I had forgotten after I left engineering

I suppose if it were a beautiful spring or summer day, I would’ve felt that my trip into DC was worthwhile just for the sake of going someplace more happening than my house in the suburbs. But the best part about tonight’s outing was commiserating with a George Washington University student about the poor duck standing all alone in the snow outside the metro station.

I trudged through the mile of snow to the Vienna metro station to attend a talk at the Arlington Public Library put on by the Arlington Small Business Association. I sat there for half an hour listening to people speaking Spanish around me before I decided to leave and go to a talk about intellectual property put on by the engineering school at GWU.

As I entered the lobby, I got that look that I had grown used to from white men during my almost 20 year career as an engineer. I had almost forgotten about the look, which I now call, “You Don’t Belong Here.” I haven’t experienced it over the past two years since I decided to refuse to be an engineer after a final straw groping and firing incident.

The look is comprised of a surprised stare (why is a WOMAN here?), then a refusal to acknowledge my presence (don’t talk to women, they’re different) until I interrupt their conversation.

If anything, I deserved the Look at the Online Media Association event I attended last night. I’m not a journalist. But in spite of the all male panel, the audience was around fifty percent female, so I “looked” like everyone else. Well, except that everyone else dressed in black and I wore a bright green British soldier blouse with purple pants.

Now I remember why I don’t go to engineer talks (which was again, a panel of white men). They’re damn boring and the information is not useful for the real world. And the networking sucks. So I left and went back to the Arlington Library.

Turns out that someone did actually appear to give a talk at the library, in English. But I missed it, returning in time only to catch the question/answer period. Sadly, the questions didn’t seem geared toward well educated people. Example: Do I use first names at the beginning of email?

I’m not sure what was said during the talk, and it looks like I won’t find out because nobody would answer my question regarding whether electronic slides were available. Possibly due to a language barrier. But after the question/answer period, I got the impression it had been a sales pitch to purchase the 25 year-old speaker’s book and $400 training session.

### Thursday, February 18, 2010

I went to a social media discussion meeting sponsored by SCORE (retired entrepreneurs) and Arlington Small Business Association. On the web site I saw, the meeting was supposed to start at 8:00am. But it didn’t start until 9:00. I was supposed to be home by 11:00 to talk with someone about Second Life, but I had to email him from the meeting to let him know I’d be late. And since I was logged in, I played on social media during my meeting about social media.

A few other people showed up at 8:00. We chatted about our businesses and former employers. I told the first woman who showed up about *Budget Justified*. She asked what contractor I had worked for. I told her I didn’t want to tell people which contractor was involved. Good thing I didn’t tell her because the next woman who walked up said she had worked there. And didn’t like it either.

I got home just in time for my delayed meeting over the computer. I ate lunch while we talked. After we brainstormed about ideas for events and businesses in Second Life, I rushed off to St. Mark to shoot video with the teens.

There’s going to be a huge continuity problem with the video because the first footage we shot was before the huge snowstorm. So Tim, the youth minister, got the bright idea to have the Teacher Sheep in the video say, “Well, there’s too much snow. School’s cancelled for the rest of the day. Let’s go back to the barn.” So then we shot some footage indoors.

### Friday, February 19, 2010

Went to a 40+ event at St. Charles. A few boring older people again. Only seven people showed up.

We watched “The Sixth Happiness,” an old movie starring Ingrid Bergman, a true story about a missionary. It was better than I expected. And longer. Afterward we went around the circle and said something about the movie. I said I was impressed with how well the story was told. But I also should have mentioned I was surprised about the theme of women’s rights being in a movie from 1958.

I asked about the leadership structure of the group. There’s a president, vice president, and a programs chair. But no membership chair. I might try to informally take over the role without committing to anything.

I did mention I was interested in manning a table after one of the masses to recruit people to sign up for the email list. My first goal will be to make the events fun, and make people feel welcome enough that they’ll want to come back and invite others.

### Saturday, February 20, 2010

Went to an AAUW Arlington branch meeting at the Arlington library.

Went to a peace symposium at St. Charles. Randy said I could’ve just spent the night.

### Thursday, March 4, 2010

Got a brainstorm about another book: my experience as a man in Second Life compared to my experience as a woman. I created a male avatar today. The title of the book is, “My Life as a Fake Man.” The title of the character’s blog is, “My Life as an Avatar.”

### Friday, March 5, 2010

I’m giving a talk at the Podcasters Alliance tomorrow. I designed the talk to be about the process of creating *Budget Justified*, as opposed to the talk for women’s groups, which is about what happened while I worked in the FAA offices.

So today I’m working on the presentation slides.

### Monday, March 8, 2010

Lisa Scoops the Washington Post

On Saturday I gave a talk at the Podcasters Alliance meetup about *Budget Justified*. I showed the trailer and the first episode. I was pretty upbeat during the talk and it seemed like I held their attention.

For the most part, the audience was friendly, although the guy who always says that the video clips didn’t make him want to see more said so to me also. I told him that he probably wasn’t my intended audience.

In fact, I didn’t think most of them would be too receptive to my topic – yet another woman complaining that men are pigs. But I didn’t make that the focus of my talk and the tone was not whiny. I even said that the movie was more about how the management treated everyone poorly.

I mentioned a few of the things I’ve been doing in Second Life. Then the *Washington Post* had an article about making money in Second Life on the front page this morning. I mention it before the Post does – makes it look like I’m on top of my game.

### Wednesday, March 10, 2010

I went to a press conference about a study on woman entrepreneurs this morning. The main address was given by Nell Merlino, Founder and CEO of Count Me In, a not-for-profit entity that provides resources for women to grow their microbusinesses into multimillion dollar enterprises.

The thrust of the press conference was that women business owners are reluctant to hire. I stood to ask a question and summarized my business in three sentences. I asked if the women were contracting work out instead of hiring. Merlino said that contractors were included as hiring staff.

I also went to a talk about government transparency at the Brookings Institute. The speaker was Cass Sunstein, the Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs. Unfortunately, he made it sound as though he thought everything was perfect, and didn’t seem very transparent.

### Tuesday, March 16, 2010

I went to a talk by Kurt Klaus, an entertainment attorney. I hadn’t been to one in awhile because I haven’t found any other new talks that I hadn’t already been to.

I learned a few new things that I hadn’t already heard, such as problems with using footage of book covers, different kinds of production insurance, and that it’s more than likely not a problem to have wallpaper that somebody designed in the background. And if you want to use a popular song in your movie, you’ll probably have to pay several different parties a total of more that forty thousand dollars for the rights to use the song for ten years.

That means that for my high school movie, I’ll have the pom line do the pom routine I learned in high school, but dub in different music later. It’ll look bad, but that will be more realistic. Because our pom line wasn’t very good.

### Wednesday, March 24, 2010

Jill Foster invited me, along with five other people, to help out with DC Media Makers. We had a little pre-meeting before the DC Media Makers talk at NPR headquarters tonight. It seems like a pretty good group, so I think it would be a good idea to get more involved.

Dave Saunders gave a talk about Samurai. He is an engaging speaker. He was involved in developing the internet in 1990 and worked with the people who invented the 56k modem. But he doesn’t care about connecting computers. It’s about connecting people.

A few people talked about their experiences at the South by Southwest conference last week. One person said it used to be a great creative atmosphere, but this year it had become too corporate. Someone else noted that Yelp is a great tool for stalking someone.

### Thursday, March 25, 2010

I went to a panel discussion at George Washington University put on by the American Association of University Women. AAUW just published a report on research they had done about how stereotypes affect girls’ and women’s performance in engineering and math. Girls do worse on math tests if you tell them beforehand that girls aren’t good at math.

April , CEO of Girls Inc., has a problem with moms who tell their kids “I’ve never been good at math. Go ask your dad.”

One point that was brought up several times was that women who are seen as competent are seen as unlikable. Therefore girls and women are given the message that they have to dumb themselves down in order for people to want to interact with them. Personally, if someone only wants to hang around with me if I’m dumb, then that’s not a someone I want to waste my time on.

Another point that was made – and this gets harped on all the time without asking the right question – is that women need flexible work places so they can sit home and take care of babies. Why doesn’t anyone ever ask why the men refuse to sit home and take care of babies? I mentioned this to one woman. Her response was that men aren’t any good at it. Well, how the hell are we supposed to get rid of the women-aren’t-competent-in-their-jobs stereotype when we’re refusing to get rid of the men-can’t-take-care-of-babies stereotype?

IfSheWereAMan: Would newspapers print that Nancy Pelosi is competent but unlikeable?

### Tuesday, May 18, 2010

I went to the Virginia Film Alliance annual networking event in Northern Virginia. I had a spot at a table to display the trailer of *Budget Justified*.

I told several people that I was creating a theater within an online game to show my movie clips, build a fan base, and experiment with a role playing game about *Budget Justified* where people can pretend to be the overbearing boss, the lazy coworker, the shy coworker, the guy who tries to get sex in the office, etc. One guy said, “You should try Second Life.” Well, that happened to be the game that I was referring to. We exchanged user names, so I plan to show him my Second Life movie theater next time we’re online together.

A lot of people said they’d check my web site to watch the trailer. We’ll see if anyone checks the web site. But will anyone tell their friends about the web site?

### Thursday, June 24, 2010

I went to a nice event on Capitol Hill this evening to celebrate the thirty-fifth anniversary of the American Association of University Women lobby corps. I volunteered on the lobby corps for almost three years. It was one of those things that I didn’t have a lot of fun doing, but I was really glad I did it for the learning experience of how things work on Capitol Hill and how service organizations interact with Congress.

I hadn’t seen several of the AAUW members in awhile. But it was good to discuss *Budget Justified* with them and offer to give a talk about it at their meetings in the fall.

I went to a CareerSocial meetup run by Paul Worsham. We discussed the usual Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc. I told them I was building a theater in Second Life to show clips from my movie. Second Life is rarely discussed in social media forums. But when I bring it up, it seems that many people play in Second Life socially.

Another new social technology tool that was mentioned was Four square. I had never heard of it before. Probably because it’s for fancy phones, which I don’t have.

One of the guys there had an iPad, so I got to see how that worked. When my laptop gets old, I might want something like an iPad, but I’d probably rather have a small laptop. That’s at least a year away, so I may want something that’s not even available yet.

### Tuesday, July 6, 2010

Building a theater in Second Life to show clips from *Budget Justified*. Interact with the movie set.

### Saturday, July 18, 2010

Went to Pittsburgh. Interviewed Sean Cox for my *Lack of Sex Life* video.

We talked about watching *Wall Street* at his dad’s house one night around eighteen years ago. Plastics.

### Thursday, July 29, 2010

I sent an email to Andy Carvin of NPR and Jill Foster, both in charge of DC Media Makers. I thought my role could be to make it more of a social event, and to get sponsors to donate hors d’oeuvres, like at most of the other networking events I go to.

They didn’t like the idea, because of the extra work involved. But then why did they want so many more volunteers to help out, if they don’t have anything that they want volunteers to help with?

I’d be better off focusing my efforts on making my own social networking events.

### Monday, August 9, 2010

I had spent a lot of time working on the video from workcamp. Tim and one of the parents had a party at the house of one of the kids who had been at workcamp.

Ironically, there was some major painting being done in the main part of the house. “We should have had workcamp here,” I said.

### Saturday, August 28, 2010

Randy showed me a video someone made of the blog comments from a project he’s working on.

“What about the peer review studies?”

“Everyone in Washington thinks they have a Ph.D.,” Randy said. “For instance, do you think you have a Ph.D.?”

### Thursday, September 2, 2010

I went to a book talk about street harassment. They were kind of whiny. Guys yelling at you on the street does not take power away from you. They’re just like anyone else who makes stupid comments. The street harassers will always be seen as stupid people.

The problem is the work harassers. They are the ones who keep women from being equal in the workplace. Because they aren’t just some idiot on the sidewalk. They are people who affect the outcome of your work. They affect your promotion potential, your paycheck, and your career.

### Tuesday, September 7, 2010

I just finished a Second Life version of the wardrobe for what my Lisa character wore in episode 1 of *Budget Justified.* Now I need to set it up so I can sell it on Xstreet.

### Wednesday, September 8, 2010

I was at Randy’s hand therapy session at the plastic surgeon’s office again today. There was an older woman there with her husband, making motions under her breast. Which made me think that she was in for breast ‘enhancement.’

Now, maybe she had gone through a mastectomy and just wanted to look normal again. But maybe she was vain, or had low self esteem, or somehow got talked into getting new boobs by a perverted man.

I think it’s a shame that women go through unnecessary invasive surgery in hopes of getting more sexual attention. Some doctors talk their patients out of abortion (which if not done, leads to bigger consequences than if a face lift or boob job doesn’t happen), why wouldn’t some doctors try to talk their patients out of/create a business to prevent unnecessary cosmetic surgery?

This could be a business. Like a spa. Come to the therapy office to do facial exercises. Preventative therapy. There could be a breakfast of foods good for your face, I don’t know, cucumbers, avocados, and peaches?

### Thursday, September 9, 2010

I went with Randy to his hand doctor again today. They have a television screen where they play a popular children’s movie. I wonder if they had to get a license to show it. Their other office had a Russian cable news station playing. I wonder if I could show *Budget Justified* in various offices around the Washington metro area. I don’t think that would be a good place to start showing the movie, however. I need to develop a positive fan base before I start showing the movie in settings that are likely to also have people who are opposed to the message.

I went to an ASU alumni event tonight. They just opened a new ASU center in Washington. Michael Crow, who has been president of ASU since 2002, said a few words to us. His main point was that ASU has an unusual policy of allowing admittance to anyone who meets admission criteria, as opposed to having a competitive process for admitting new students.

But he also emphasized that ASU students are tested when they come out of their degree, and they have equivalent opportunities and critical thinking skills as those who come out of more selective universities. Which means that instead of watering down the education to accommodate students who are not used to challenge, ASU brings those students up to the same intellectual level as the ones who were already smart before they went to the Ivy League schools.

### Saturday, September 11, 2010

I created a video of a spoof of the pastor who got a whole bunch of news coverage for saying he and thirty of his lunatic friends were going to burn the Quran. I posted the video on YouTube, with the question, ‘Is this news?’ It got a couple hundred hits. More than *Budget Justified* did in its first week.

I received a few comments too. All contained obscenities from Muslims who thought I was for real. I don’t really care if I get insults about it. It was supposed to be stupid. Which make the insults seem funny.

If anything, it’s a way to get me used to letting the insults roll off my back. I take insults about *Budget Justified* episodes a lot more personally. Those videos are supposed to be real. Everything in that movie happened to me. I put a lot of work into producing that webisode series.

### Tuesday, September 14, 2010

I went to a panel discussion that was supposed to be about men’s role in family life. One of the panelists was Barbara Ehrenreich, who had taken several low-pay jobs and wrote a book about what it was like living that kind of life.

The reason the discussion was held was that Joan Williams, a work/family law professor, had just published a book titled, *Reshaping the Work-Family Debate: Why Men and Class Matter*. Well, I’m not sure why she thought men mattered – I got the impression that everyone on the panel was divorced – but everyone talked about class quite a bit.

Dr. Williams talked about traditional views of masculinity and that the future of masculinity needs to change for an evolving society. But it seems that her view of femininity is still very traditional.

Her talk revolved around women having babies and caring for babies. Women taking time off for having them, staying home when they’re sick. It seemed like all she wanted was for men to do their share of the babysitting – babysitting should be considered a masculine thing to do. But what about changing culture to acknowledge that women aren’t less than human if they don’t spawn?

Dr. Williams hasn’t let go of the assumption that the sole purpose of women was to make more babies. If we fail to acknowledge the many more important things that women do – politics, business, technology – we’re going to continue to pigeonhole future generations of women into roles that may have made sense when the human race was more susceptible to death by disease or dragons, but won’t be helpful for our ever-increasing population of descendants.

And while I was there, I coined the phrase, “The Whore Track.” Women who aren’t on the mommy track at work get put on this track instead. It’s when the managers or the older government employees expect sex from the women in the office.

I also went to an Online News Association meetup. I told a few people about the Koran-burning news parody that I had posted on YouTube. The people running the meeting were funny as usual, but the content of the meeting itself wasn’t that useful to me.

However I did come up with a new idea for getting involved in online news – cover all the brainiac events that I attend and post short clips about them on YouTube.

It will probably take up more time than I want to spend, but it would be a good way to get people to chat with me at events about what they’re doing and what I’m doing. I might be able to get myself known better in these circles.

Video clips of my reporting will probably be a lot more engaging than the blog blurbs I’ve been writing. Hopefully the people in the clips will feel involved as part of the project and will show their friends. Now I need a catchy title.

DC Social Networking? Social Networking In Person News? Social networking is too specific. I go to book talks and other meetings too. Geek Parties? Geek Gatherings? Wonk Workshops?

### Wednesday, September 15, 2010

I submitted an application for free store space in a Second Life mall and added clothing from Episode 1 of *Budget Justified* to Second Life’s online store.

### Thursday, September 16, 2010

The *Post* had an article about the kids who run the top-rated channels on YouTube. They’re all 17-22 year old boys. I looked for Hot For Words on YouTube the other day, and she’s getting a lot more sophisticated on her site since the first time I saw her.

On my way to Boston, I stumbled across a magazine article that said that girls send more text messages. So if I want to get the attention of girls…use a platform that lets them send lots of text messages? And figure out what boys want to watch and post that on YouTube?

Well, teens aren’t my intended audience, so maybe I have to think more about what young adults are using – Twitter, Facebook.

### Friday, September 17, 2010

Rachael Ray was on the TV in my hotel room. I thought she was a chef, but she was actually being an infomercial for cleaning products and plastic surgery.

Is that what modern women watch? It used to be in vogue to show cleaning ads to housewives in the 1950’s. I thought that stay at home moms who are into plastic surgery hired immigrants to clean their houses.

But seriously, cleaning products and plastic surgery? What is the media trying to tell women about what their place is in this society?

I intend to market something else to women: leadership. I’m not sure exactly what products this translates to, except maybe professional, yet simple clothing. Perhaps trips for brainiac vacations – where people do something good for the environment, women in other countries, or learn something obscure. I’m sure that there will be plenty of small businesses and green businesses that I could partner with for ads.

### Sunday, September 19, 2010

Hank Stuever reviewed a TV show that was inspired by someone’s twitter entries. He was very disappointed that it wasn’t more political, like *All In the Family*. Stuever thought that it could be funny AND meaningful to have an old curmudgeon go to Town Hall and Tea Party events, say crazy things, but make a statement about today’s society.

Maybe my Wonk Workshop news can do something like that. Instead of being a curmudgeon, I would ask painfully tough questions like I always did at thesis defenses when I was in grad school.

I wonder if I could get some kind of news credentials or press passes. Although I think my intention is to stay along the lines of events open to the general public, to show all the interesting things to do in DC. Perhaps the Dept. of Tourism would pay for ads.

Eventually I’d do these as a live broadcast, even opening my own location to hold events some day. And people could hold satellite events over the internet in their own homes or at restaurants. And the restaurant could pay for an ad.

### Tuesday, September 21, 2010

IfSheWereAMan would Ines Sainz have been criticized for wearing jeans and a white shirt in the Jets' locker room?

I happened to be searching Facebook for my Sexual Harassment fan page and came across an update posted by a friend about the news coverage of her tweets after she had interviewed one of the football players.

Ines is from Mexico. Sexual harassment is to be expected in their culture. So she didn’t think much of it. It was just another tweet.

### Wednesday, September 22, 2010

IfHeWereAWoman would anyone be so surprised to see him carrying a baby on the cover of Newsweek?

I decided to start covering events I go to as video news events to put on a YouTube video blog. I went to three events tonight: an ASU alumni event, DC Media Makers at NPR, and a Brazen Careerist meetup. When I got home, I taped myself giving a newscast in front of my favorite bookshelves. I’m going to put each even up as a separate newscast, less than two minutes each.

I was going to call the newscast Washington Wonks or Geek Gatherings, but that seems to be catch phrases that belong to other groups, not me. I figured I’d be better off calling it RoleModel Enterprise news and let people figure out that it’s supposed to be peer role models for adults, not role models for little kids. I think it works. Role models for business and intellectual enterprise. Smart, productive people who are enterprising and creative.

Hi, I’m Lisa Schaefer and this is RoleModel Enterprise News, the news about brainiac events in the DC area.

Tonight I went to a happy hour for the PAC 10 alumni who live in the Washington, DC, area. [Cut to hi fives] Several people attended from Arizona State, my alma mater for all three of my college degrees. ASU alumnus Scott Gore tells us why he likes living in the DC area. [Cut to right before Scott gets a greeting]

We also asked Scott why he is actively involved in the Arizona State alumni association. [Cut to Scott]

That’s today’s RoleModel Enterprise event, I’m Lisa Schaefer. And don’t forget to subscribe with that button right there. And sign up for my Facebook fan page.

But unfortunately I handed Scott a business card simultaneously as he handed me his. After I interviewed him. He works for the FAA. I think I’ll hold off on posting that news clip on the internet.

On the fourth Wednesday of each month, DC Media Makers holds a meeting at NPR headquarters to discuss various techie media projects. This month’s DC Media Makers event was a presentation by Ian Cairnes and Robert Soden from Development Seed, a nonprofit that helps international development organizations with open source technology. Ian and Robert talked about their online mapping applications.

Ian showed us how their mapping software has helped analyze the election in Haiti. Robert talked about Open Street Map, where users created a map of Haiti.

Some of the audience members mentioned a previous event where several people gathered to test out Open Street Map to create a map of the National Zoo by using GPS with their cell phones.

The next DC Media Makers meetup will be at NPR headquarters at 6:30pm on Wednesday, October 20.

As I walked out of NPR, I noticed a little scratch in the sidewalk that said “I ♥ NPR.” I wondered if someone who worked at NPR had written that. It occurred to me that it’s such a foreign concept to me to love your employer. At most of the jobs I’ve ever had, the employer was the foolish enemy who had no regard for its employees or their work. But I can imagine that most of the people working at NPR believe in what they’re doing and feel that their colleagues value their contribution.

Hi. Today I’ll talk about the second meetup of the DC fans of Brazen Careerist, a Facebook-like site for twenty-somethings. The meetup was held in the posh restaurant of the Hamilton Crowne Plaza hotel on K Street – the very professional street that all the big name lobbying firms are on.

Brazen Careerist held meetups at various locations around the nation tonight. They suggested that everyone talk about one of my favorite subjects, what our city has that’s better than other places, or what makes DC unique.

"Good looking young people," local organizer Tariq West said.

Brazen Careerist, based in Madison, Wisconsin, will be opening an office in DC within the next few months. So we’re expecting to start holding these meetups monthly.

That’s today’s RoleModel Enterprise event.

### Thursday, September 23, 2010

IfHeWereAWoman would he be shouting out his truck window about where I should and shouldn’t be running?

IfIWereAMan would men be shouting out their vehicle windows about where I should and shouldn’t be running?

### Monday, September 27, 2010

While I was volunteering at the church teen group last night, one of the girls said she kept getting sexually harassed by an older kid at school last year. "That happens to everyone all the time," one of the other girls said.

### Tuesday, September 28, 2010

I went to a Web Mavens meetup and took my video camera. I had never been to any of their events before.

This month the Washington DC Web Content Mavens held their meetup with the local semantic web group. The meetup took place at the Affinity Lab, a shared office space for startups in DC.

Jasmine Sante is the organizer for Web Content Mavens, a local DC group for web professionals, run by volunteers.

We had two presenters, Duane Degler and David Wood, both computer scientists. Duane talked about search with a semantic twist. Dr. David showed us Callimachus, a Semantic Web framework for building hyperlinked Web applications.

Jasmine apologized that the talk was so technical this month. “Reminds me of grad school,” I said.

### Wednesday, September 29, 2010

Mashable held its first Fairfax meetup in the Old Town Hall in downtown Fairfax. While we exchanged business cards with other social media fans, we snacked on wine, cheese, and crackers provided by Long and Foster Realtors.

We also had a special treat from a local bakery, Cupcakes Actually. I tried the red velvet cupcake. And a chocolate fudge. I almost didn’t want to eat them, they were so perfect. Almost.

Valasie August from Long & Foster organized the meetup. George Mason University also participated by sending Aram Zucker-Scharff from their Office of Student Media.

I didn’t have any footage of me eating cupcakes, so after I went home, I recorded myself with a green frosted hamburger bun. I offered it to my husband, but he wasn’t interested. So I turned it into a peanut butter and frosting bun.

I love it when new technology meets something historic. I should've gotten some footage of the outside of Old Town Hall, but it was dark and rainy. At least the cupcakes were cheery.

The best part about this meetup for me was that it was only a fifteen minute drive from my house, as opposed to the hour + long metro trips I take when I go into DC. Don't get me wrong - the conversation was great, but the transportation is no small thing. I'm much more relaxed when I get someplace if it's just a quick trip. Especially when I don't have to walk a mile to the metro in the rain.

I need to go to local cupcake stores, or something like that, and see if I can get them to sell my movie on consignment, and they can keep ten percent of the profit. What other woman-centric or political/government store might be interested?

I could check the Soundry or Jammin Java, but they might have lots of local filmmakers who want to sell their stuff their too. Perhaps the Artful Gift shop. They sell music from local musicians, why not a local movie. Maybe boutiques in Old Town Alexandria, Fairfax, and Georgetown too. Even a used book store.

I could try a booth at Viva Vienna next year or other art fairs. Eventually I’ll get a permit to stand in front of the FAA and sell copies.

Of course, I don’t get people’s email address if they buy it elsewhere, but selling them and getting the word around would be better than hoarding them. Plus, after the DVD is sold, the customers would know where to find me on the web if they wanted to sign up for my fan page.

### Wednesday, October 6, 2010

Media Future Now organized a presentation at the Daily Caller offices. Chris Brown gave a dynamic talk about the influence of online video. Take a look at the video below.

Media Future Now is a monthly gathering of DC professionals focused on finding ways to keep media-centric businesses agile, innovative and future-focused. The Daily Caller is Tucker Carlson’s online news venture. Their spin tends to favor conservative viewpoints, but not through extremism.

A lot of Chris Brown’s main points were similar to advice I’ve heard before: make it authentic and make your audience feel like you’re talking just for them. Chris’s value added were the interesting anecdotes, told well. Although my former-stats-professor self would also like to know about the studies that quantify the results, Chris’s talk was great for giving people ideas for how to craft their own media message.

I asked Shana Glickfield, one of the organizers for Media Future Now, to say a few words about the presentation. I was impressed at how well she summarized the important points when I put her on the spot.

I included a question that one of the men asked because it was about Elena Kagan, the new female supreme court justice. I also included a question asked by a woman because it was important to me to show participation by the women at the event.

Seems as though all the presenters at the events I go to are white men. I’m disappointed at the way most of the women demure or walk away when I ask them to say a few words. The men don’t react at all when I bring out my camera. What are the implications of this?

As I edit the footage of my newscasts, I realize that instead of writing a newscast for me to read to the camera, I should edit the footage of the event, then record a little voiceover, and insert just a little video of myself at the beginning and end. Let the video tell the story, not my talking head. I ended up cutting out a lot of what I said. Too rambly.

Since the footage for Howard Mortman and Chris Brown was so good, I decided to make two videos for this event.

Howard talked about CSPAN’s online video archive. He encourages everyone to use the archives. At the beginning of his talk, he emphasized that no government money is used to support CSPAN.

Which means that none of the footage is in the public domain, and thus protected by copyright laws. However, if organizations wish to use a few clips within their projects, they may do so under fair use laws.

I included a piece of Chris Brown’s talk because he showed a great use of CSPAN’s news archives. I especially liked this example because it was about Meg Whitman, a female leader in technology, business, AND politics.

### Thursday, October 14, 2010

The Washington Area Women’s Foundation published their report about the situation of women in the Washington area. Barbara Gault talked about women’s wages.

Peter Tatian reported on the statistics for public transportation, business, health, and violence. And Jennifer Locwood-Shabat gave concluding remarks.

Then there was the question and answer session. Hannah Hawkins, the President of Children of Mine educational center was concerned that the children of Washington, DC, are often overlooked.

I asked why everyone was expecting the women to raise children. I did not expect that everyone would laugh. As if it’s ridiculous for women to do anything else in their lives than plop out and watch over babies.

It seems that women are guarding caregiving as their place. Not only are they not encouraging men to step up, I’ve seen cases where women discourage men from stepping up, micromanaging the care, as if they think men can’t do it well enough. So unless women are taught to believe that caregiving is something the men have to do; and accept that it is not women’s fate to propagate more children into this overcrowded world, women will forever be stuck at home with babies.

I also went to a copyright workshop that was put on by the Washington Area Lawyers Association. Four women from the US Copyright Office talked to us about the process and rules for applying for a copyright.

I asked them about who owns the copyright for video footage: the person pressing the button on the camera or the director/producer. They said that the company, nonprofit, or other entity that produces the entire work is the one who owns the copyright and that they don’t even ask about the camera person when processing copyright applications. So I’m not sure why a lawyer told me that it was the person who holds the camera that owns the copyright (unless there’s a work-for-hire agreement).

### Saturday, October 16, 2010

The AAUW branches of Northern Virginia had their annual joint meeting at Richard Byrd Library in Springfield, a facility named after a man.

Dr. Lori Ann Roth, director of training and development at George Mason University, gave a seminar about working with difficult people. I got the impression that the main point was to try to empathize with the person you’re dealing with. They may have a reason for being difficult.

The principles Dr. Roth discussed seemed to be applicable to somewhat difficult people, but she admitted that working with seriously dysfunctional hostile people, or bullies, required a whole different set of tactics. This seems to be the type I more frequently run across.

The national AAUW convention will be in Washington, DC, next summer, so Theresa Merkel, the local arrangements chair, updated us on the planning activities. She also hoped to wrangle a few of us into volunteering to help out.

Then a member of each of the Northern Virginia branches verbally tweeted the latest news about branch activities. To close the meeting, each local branch said a blurb about what they were up to.

### Thursday, October 21, 2010

The New America Foundation sponsored two panel talks today, part of a series of discussions sponsored jointly with Arizona State University. The first set of panelists included Gregory Rodriguez, a columnist for the *LA Times*, Rodolfo Espino, a political science professor at ASU, and Lattie Coor, CEO of The Center for the Future of Arizona. Coor was the president of ASU during the last ten of the twelve years I was a student there. Leonard Downey Jr., former editor of the *Washington Post*, now a journalism professor at ASU, moderated the panel.

The second panel was moderated by Matt Bai, a columnist at the *New York Times*. The panelists were Dennis Hoffman, a business professor at ASU, Peter Beinart, a fellow at the New America Foundation, and Mary Jo Pitzl, reporter for the *Arizona Republic*. (I recently stumbled upon a past episode of the *Colbert Report* on which Beinart discussed a book he authored.)

The first panel discussed immigration reform and how it has motivated Hispanics to become more involved in the political process. Rodriguez was an engaging speaker, telling stories about the Hispanic community in Los Angeles. When the moderator commented on Rodriguez’s diligent note-taking activities, he joked with Downey, saying he was actually drawing cartoons of him.

The second panel discussed the economy, emphasizing that Arizona was hit harder than most other states. Hoffman displayed charts showing that Arizona had not been affected much by any of the recessions after World War II. Pitzl talked about the past two governors, Janet Napolitano and Jan Brewer. Napolitano is now the Secretary of Homeland Security. The legislature fought Brewer on raising taxes and Pitzl found the room where the legislature held the budget hostage.

A recurring theme throughout the second panel discussion was that the current Republican party is much more extreme and less pragmatic than the republicans of the Goldwater days.

The entire event was several hours and consisted of an address by Lattie Coor and a discussion between two politicians who participated by phone. I only attended the two panel discussions. The guy sitting next to me must have been there too long. He appeared to have fallen asleep despite an interesting discussion.

The new America foundation held two panel discussions. During the first discussion, a group of journalists and professors talked about immigration reform. Leonard Downey Jr., a professor at Arizona State University and a former *Washington Post* editor, moderated the panel.

For the second panel, a few more professors and journalists came to discuss financial issues in the State of Arizona.

### Saturday, October 23, 2010

Somebody needed to represent engineers to the public. But I’m not going to demand, or even ask, someone else to do that, so I have to do it myself. I’m OK with that. I’m not an attention hog, but I’m not shy either.

So I was writing my novel about a female engineer with the intention of building a nonprofit dedicated to lobbying Hollywood to put women engineers in popular media such as television and movies. But of course I couldn’t tell my employer that I was writing a novel, because I would have been strongly discouraged, even punished for doing so.

But engineering employers punish engineers for appearing as engineers in public, unless they’re being an ad for their company. I think that spouting great things about your company comes across as disingenuous. So unfortunately, you have to lose your job as an engineer in order to represent engineers to the public. In my case, I lost my job the hard way. I got fired.

### Monday, October 25, 2010

I went to a copyright workshop, again put on by Washington Area Lawyer’s for the Arts. This time it was another lawyer talk instead of people from the copyright office. I asked about copyright being owned by the person holding the camera.

The lawyer said that the copyright office just processes paperwork. They don’t check up on anything. He also said that if the camera and equipment were provided by an organization and people volunteer to help out, the agreement is that the video is for the organization. Although it’s good to have the agreement in writing.

### Friday, October 29, 2010

Chevrolet presented the Volt, their new electric car, in downtown Washington on their Volt Unplugged tour. They kicked off the demo with a luncheon presentation held in the Washington Marriott at Metro Center and invited the Society of Women Engineers, along with a few other organizations to attend.

Pamela Fletcher, GM’s Global Chief Engineer, was introduced as a mom. Every man knows that reproductive status is the main qualification for high-powered positions such as chief engineer.

For a promotional campaign, Fletcher’s talk was appropriate for the selected audience. The presentation wasn’t as much as an ad as it was an informational briefing of the technical capabilities of the Volt. Which is the best way to advertise to engineers. We don’t want the marketing fluff.

After the very posh luncheon, we went out to the parking lot where the old convention center used to be and took a test drive of the new Volt. I was chicken to drive too fast because pedestrians and other cars were wandering around. You know how when you get into a car you’ve never driven, and you press the gas, nothing happens. Then you press a little more, still nothing happens. Then you press harder and you shoot forward. I didn’t want to wreck the car, so I kept my foot on the gas very lightly.

Chevrolet took its Volt Unplugged tour to the Washington Marriott at Metro Center.

Pamela Fletcher, GM’s Global Chief Engineer, was the perfect spokesperson for an audience filled with woman engineers.

### Monday, November 1, 2010

RoleModel Enterprise News – what the brainy women of Washington are up to. Or at least what my friends and I have been doing.

This weekend, I gathered with two hundred thousand of my closest friends to Restore Sanity and/or Fear. Metro set a record for Saturday ridership. Over eight hundred thousand trips. One hundred thousand more than the previous record, which was set during the Desert Storm rally in 1991. Of course, people leaned on the doors, then they got stuck, so we all had to get off the train several stops early.

Jon Stewart got Cat Stevens to come sing *Peace Train*. But that wasn’t fearful enough for Colbert. So he invited Ozzy Osborne to sing *Crazy Train*. An argument ensued where Ozzy and Cat sang at the same time. It was resolved when the O’Jays sang *Love Train*. At least they didn’t make us all get off the metro.

Amy Goodman, host of Democracy Now, passed out fliers for her show. There was hardly enough room to move an arm, so I was surprised she got through. I tried walking to the edge of the crowd, but had too much trouble pushing my way through. Stephen Colbert estimated the attendance at six billion.

I was one of the lucky ones who got a spot around two hundred yards in front the stage. Those on the sides could neither see nor hear. Although they had access to the portapotties. The view of the stage was atrocious. When I zoomed in to the max on my camera, I could see the back of Stewart’s head a few times. So I gave up on that and paid attention to the monitors.

Stewart and Colbert gave out Sanity and Fear medals. They emphasized how the media instigates fear. And of course, the surveillance helicopters of Washington didn’t help.

Stewart led a feel-good sing-along. His voice cracked many times. I didn’t get the most hilarious singing on tape. He even laughed at himself and apologized that we had to hear that.

Then Jon Stewart got on his rally soap box for a twelve minute speech which seemed like he was positioning himself to run for office. He criticized the media for how they paint ‘others.’ And stood up for what Americans really are, no matter what political party they support.

The speech was well written and well delivered. It’s posted on YouTube and has more than a million hits. In addition to my view of the rally, there are many more clips on YouTube, some focusing on the crazy signs and costumes, others are just outtakes from CSPAN.

Go to RoleModelEnterprises.com to be a part of the RoleModel community.

I made signs that said “Vote against masturbation in government offices” with a background of my DVD cover and BudgetJustified.com at the bottom. I handed the signs out to several people. Unfortunately it was so crowded that I couldn’t circulate and hand out more. I didn’t get many hits from it.

### Friday, November 5, 2010

Finally done with the obscene part of *Budget Justified*. But now I’m having trouble uploading the movie to my Amazon S3 account. It seems that Amazon made some “improvements” to their system, and now you can’t upload a file more than 300 mb.

There was an interesting set of comments from women complaining about the sexual harassment they’ve experienced in the federal workplace on a *Washington Post* blog. They seem like they’d support my *Budget Justified* effort. Too bad I can’t contact them.

### Tuesday, November 9, 2010

The American Association of University Women held its first Cocktails and Conversations happy hour at Grand Central. Several AAUW staff, members, and friends gathered for refreshments, swag, and conversation about what issues affect today’s woman.

Door prizes and gift certificates were donated by local women-owned businesses such as Georgetown Cupcakes, Green and Blue clothing, and Pulp stationery.

The next Cocktails and Conversations will take place from 5:00-7:00pm on December 14 at Nage in Dupont Circle.

### Wednesday, November 10, 2010

Important business lesson: you can’t just put stuff out there and expect people to buy. Even if many people see what’s out there, go to the web site. You have to get them involved.

I posted *Budget Justified* on Craigslist and Ebay. I got only a few views on Ebay. I got a lot of website hits from Craigslist, but no Facebook fans. Still, I’ll relist.

But my website did get ninety hits today. Usually it gets only a handful. I must have posted a comment somewhere hot. Google analytics says over fifty hits were referred from Mashable. There was an article about someone who got fired for a Facebook post. Seems like Mashable is the best place to drive traffic to my site. Now I need to figure out how to keep people coming back and get them to buy my stuff.

### Tuesday, November 16, 2010

AAUW meeting at Patrick Henry Library. Another AAUW meeting at a library named after a man.

### Wednesday, November 17, 2010

I went to a Startup Rockstars event at the Affinity Lab. I brought my video camera, but none of the startups had any women. So I didn’t take any footage. At the end of the evening, a female lawyer presented some good legal information for startups. But by then I had given up, so I didn’t take any footage. And since I didn’t have any footage of the startups, the short legal presentation didn’t really have the flavor of the meeting.

The best piece of advice I took away from the lawyer was to go shopping for insurance, even if I don’t need it. The discussion with the insurance agencies would give me an idea if I might have any potential issues with my business.

### Thursday, November 18, 2010

The annual SWE meeting at Exxon was tonight. I announced that I had created *Budget Justified*. They kind of looked at me like I was a weirdo. Yes, it’s a weird thing to happen, but I shouldn’t be shamed into pretending it didn’t happen to me.

I’m not expecting SWE to be supportive. The culture is to be a mouthpiece/ad for your employer. A good little employee. No independent thinking allowed.

I didn’t take any video footage. I didn’t like the idea of taking footage at Exxon. And the speaker was a mouthpiece. And my battery ran out.

### Sunday, November 21, 2010

I looked into buying *Budget Justified* buttons, pens, and magnets to hand out. I’ll have to find out if it’s illegal to hand them out on the metro. It probably is. I might be able to hand them out at stations if I get a permit.

### Monday, November 22, 2010

I’ve been spending a lot of time building up my Twitter followers lately. Too much time. I looked into even more slick ways of automating my follows than the Tweepi I’m currently using. But they aren’t free. I probably won’t be spending so much time on Twitter in the near future, so it’s not worth buying software for it.

I posted my profile on an “expert” site called SelfGrowth.com. It seems like a bunch of hooey is on their site, but I thought I’d put my name there to see if I get hits. I’ve also been commenting on several YouTube videos. You can’t put a URL in the comments, but you can refer people to your own videos.

I finally went back online into Second Life after ignoring it for the past two months. I just chatted, though. I did recruit one more person to my BudgetJustified.com group, but do anything more.

### Wednesday, November 24, 2010

I rented some space in a Second Life store for the next four weeks. My products and fan base aren’t developed well enough yet, but it will be a good learning experience.

### Tuesday, November 30, 2010

Philippa Hughes put on one of her Pink Line Project art-evangelist events at Bus Boys and Poets. Which is interesting to me because I see myself putting on events in the future in my own restaurant/hangout that revolve around technology-evangelizing. Or evangelizing smart women in technology. Well, maybe evangelizing isn’t quite my style. I’m more snarky than mouthpiece. But the event part is still key.

I keep forgetting that the camera records slightly outside the view of the tiny screen on the camera. Damn lights in the background. At least I didn’t get the light stripes down the middle of my face.

Philippa talked about collecting art with Darryl Atwell, an artist colleague of hers. Well, actually Darryl is an anesthesiologist by trade. But he also cofounded CAS51, a group of young art collectors. He said that his social life revolved around art. Isn’t that what art is for anyway? Sure, some people make a living creating art, but the general public can relate to a conversation piece that brings focus to what people’s lives are about.

I wasn’t so much interested in focusing on Philippa, a lawyer by education, as an art collector as I was interested in her creative idea for a business. She’s the founder of the Pink Line Project, a company that brings artists and the general public together.

The best part was when Philippa told a story about how a friend of a relative of a friend came to stay at her place during the 2009 inauguration. It wasn’t even a planned part of the discussion. An audience member just asked for a story. The story was so chic-Washington, I thought it best represented how I view the city and that it gave the flavor of what SmartWomen Event News is all about.

The art on display at Busboys and Poets was an exhibit called “Furious Dancing,” curated by Sim&Son, a collaboration between Simone Jacobson and Sonja Kubota. Simone and Sonja told us about the art pieces around the room. I mentioned that I was working on a project to portray smart women, so Simone invited me to attend a monthly smart women’s lunch.

Andy Shallal, the owner of Busboys and Poets – however he has given himself the job title of ‘artist’ – talked about how art is the central theme of his restaurant/hangout and the events that are held there. He specifically mentioned the recent book signing by Alice Walker, author of “Hard Times Require Furious Dancing,” for whom the art exhibit was designed.

I asked Philippa about the art salons she holds in her living room. Which was also interesting to me because I thought it would be a good idea to start small events at my home, but I wasn’t sure if that would work. I’m a mile away from the farthest metro station out in the suburbs and I thought that people who might not know me very well would feel uncomfortable coming to my home instead of a restaurant.

Of course, with me living out in soccermom suburbs, my lifestyle experiences are a little different, but I have the opportunity to participate in Washington intellectual life frequently since I’m just a half hour train ride away.

Come hang out with me for a few minutes while I listen to Philippa, and the audience questions.

Audience participants asked questions during the discussion. Several people asked about the process of becoming involved in the art community.

### Monday, December 6, 2010

I watched *The Informant*! over the weekend. Matt Damon plays Mark Whitacre, a chemical engineer who cooperates with the FBI in getting evidence of price fixing against his coworkers and bosses. It’s a true story about the Archer Daniels Midland company in the 1990’s. I love a true whistleblower story.

But what really struck me about the movie was the way Whitacre’s wife was portrayed. *The Informant*! is a true story, but that doesn’t necessarily mean that the woman who plays Ginger Whitacre is acting like the real life Ginger Whitacre. In fact, I don’t think whiny-voiced, whimpy Movie Ginger is anything like Real Life Ginger Whitacre.

I watched a few news clips of Real Ginger on YouTube. Sure, they were too short to give a detailed glimpse of Ginger Whitacre’s personality. But she certainly wasn’t whiny-voiced. She speaks quite well. And I think it took a tough woman to deal with Mark through Mark’s three years of working undercover for the FBI and nine years of jail, without walking out on him.

Why did they portray Ginger as little woman-in-tow in the movie? Because all male engineers marry fluffy women? Take a look at one of the news clips (below) and let me know what you think.

### Friday, December 10, 2010

I sent out the first Yahoo email since the spam debacle in my Yahoo group as soon as I created it almost a year and a half ago. I have over six hundred friends in my group and have been saving up email addresses to add to the group for the past year and a half. I’ll have to invite them to sign up for the group.

I announced that I’ve been experimenting with SmartWomen Event News and invited people to comment. A few hours later, I had twenty five hits, but no comments.

I also commented on and AP article on Yahoo about the FAA losing track of where over a hundred thousand aircraft are because they haven’t been keeping good records. I got about twenty hits from that. People commented on that article all day about how incompetent the FAA is, so my comments quickly got lost in the shuffle. But it looks like the FAA has a lot of enemies. Which means I have an audience, if I could just get their attention.

### Wednesday, December 15, 2011

Media Future Now put on a panel discussion about search engines, how they have evolved in the past and continue to evolve.

On my way to the talk, I spotted a metro employee decorating a station for Christmas. So I took some video and posted it as the opening for my video. Then I saw an about the decorations in the Washington Post. That’s how I found out the name of the woman putting up the ornaments.

Vanessa Fox, Beth Shankle, Geoff Livingston, and Ron Goodstein were on the search panel. Er, the panel that talked about search.

Vanessa came out from Seattle. She used to work for Google and wrote a book, Marketing in the Age of Google. Later in the evening, she held a book signing at Big Window Labs. Beth is Research Director at the National Press Club. She gives classes on social media tools. The classes are open to the public. Check out http://press.org/library for more information about her classes.

Afterward I went around town to do some shopping because I had gift certificates. But on the way to my destinations, I asked several shop owners and street vendors if they’d sell copies of the *Budget Justified* DVD.

I’d rather that local small businesses get a share of the profits than some big box store. Big “The Man” businesses aren’t interested in partnering with new talent. If I have something they can exploit, they’d buy the rights from me. Then I’d be left with no product, no business, just some money. Local stores have more of a stake in pushing the product. Big box stores just stick the product on a shelf with thousands of other competing products.

I found out that some food carts are owned by a company called DC Foods. Some are independent. The Chinese deli in the Washington Post building wasn’t interested in non-food items, but an artsy coffee shop was interested in building an inventory from local authors and artists.

### Thursday, January 20, 2011

The DC chapter of the Online News Association held a panel discussion at *Washington Post* headquarters. The panel consisted of six of the *Post* digital journalists who worked on *Top Secret America*, a two year project about the growing number of top secret government contracts.

Ryan O’Neill, the backend developer, was the first techie that Dana Priest, a *Post* Pulitzer Prize winning journalist, recruited to help with the detailed data analysis. Due to the time required to develop the story, the *Post* wanted to keep the existence of the investigation secret. Since nobody knew about the project, no one was accountable to anybody.

Dan Drinkard did the front end development, Nathaniel Vaughn Kelso was the cartographer, and Kat Downs was the graphic designer. All three of them did a lot of data visualization. Kat concentrated on the relationships of which contractors worked with what government agencies on certain types of functions. One such function they reported on was ‘human collection.’ What does that mean, finding dead bodies? When she found out it meant spying, she suggested to Dana Priest, “For the sake of the story, let’s just call it ‘spying.’”

Interestingly, out of the eight hundred companies they analyzed, Kat showed the graphic of one of my former employer’s relationship to government agencies. Even though it wasn’t in the top twenty largest employers. But my other former employer was in the top twenty.

Sarah Sampsel worked on web page layout, or ‘blowing apart the *Post*’s home page,’ and Jennifer Jenkins was the fact checker for *Top Secret America*.

### Sunday, January 23, 2011

Pink Dot Concepts put on ‘Work It Girl,’ a business fair, at the Hilton Garden Inn Bethesda. Several companies hocked their wares at tables.

I attended most of the workshops. Jaylin Bailey, from Maryland Home Business Expo, gave us 10 steps for starting a business. They included research, training, finances, and several legal issues.

Monica Montgomery was fun and energetic. She did a great job of engaging the audience by asking questions. We went around the room and everyone gave their ten second elevator speech. She told us about the magazine she publishes and her work with charity organizations.

Monica gave us the 6 M’s for networking: moxie, message, memorable, motivation, momentum, and mentors. She also gave us ideas for partnering with charities for cause marketing. Over the past ten years, she’s built a list of thirty thousand email addresses from all the people she’s met at networking events.

Gail Diggs talked about 7 low cost marketing tips, emphasizing the importance of social media. She used to hate Twitter, “I thought it was silly. That it was for people who had nothing better to do,” but now sees it as a way to stay in contact with customers.

Angela Macarthy closed the workshops with a motivational speech and engaged the audience with questions. I liked her idea of creating a poster with images for what you want your life to be like one week to one decade out. She keeps her poster on the bathroom mirror. That way not only does she look at it every morning, but her kids and husband do too.

### Friday, January 28, 2011

I submitted an entry for the DC Shorts Film Festival. The maximum length the video is allowed to be is twenty minutes. It took me by complete surprise how much time was required to fill out the entry form.

First they asked for a 125 word pitch. Which I expected they would. Then they wanted a 250 word synopsis. Out of the 90 minutes of movie that currently exists (which was cut down from 112 minutes of webisode footage), I have to cut out at least seventy minutes. The final product isn’t due until May, thus, I haven’t decided yet exactly which footage stays and what goes.

So I went through my list of fifty episodes and decided which ones had crucial plot points and character representations. Then I wrote a sentence about each. I ended up with a 100 word synopsis.

Now, the web site for submitting the film entry does not have a list of items or questions involved in the entry submission. The form is filled out online. As you complete one page of the form, another pops up. The next page asked for a 1000 word synopsis. A thousand words??? For a twelve to twenty minute video??? Why don’t I just send in my entire script?

I’ll tell you why. Because the entire script is for 112 minutes of video. I don’t have a concrete decision of which footage I’m keeping. So what I submitted was an expanded version of my 250 synopsis, going into a little more detail on the parts of the story that I would most likely include in the video. It ended up being 535 words.

I sort of wonder if that was a test. If your synopsis is more than that, you probably can’t cover the whole story in less than 20 minutes.

Look at all the numbers in this post. See: Math is important in the arts.

By this point, I began to wonder how many more pages of this I was going to have to wade through. It must have been over thirty. I had to include each of the actors and their IMDB listing. Seven out of eleven of my actors had one. I was one of those that didn’t. One of the others who was also not in IMDB was the seven year old daughter of a friend.

Finally, after several hours, I completed all the required pages of the form. Here’s my 535 word synopsis:

A lot of misbehaving has been going on at Lisa’s new office, so she brings in a hidden video camera to catch it all on tape. As soon as she arrives, she sees the one who sets the tone at the office. Boss comes in to work with his mistress, one of the coworkers. Charlie, Lisa’s officemate, sees this too and wants his own office chick to validate his manhood. He picks Lisa. She’s new, and she’s there.

Tim comes into Lisa’s office all paranoid about sexual harassment. And he keeps harping on the subject. He had forwarded an article that had cuss words in it – quotes from air traffic controllers in an industry publication. Tim may not be into groping, but he’s definitely a chauvinist, laughing about how the controllers harass waitresses at the fancy hotels they are put up in when they travel.

Boss verbally harasses Charlie by telling his coworkers that Charlie has illegitimate children. Charlie wants to get away with something behind Boss’s back and feels up Lisa when the boss leaves.

Tim is engrossed in a bunch of graphs he made. Lisa wants to learn about the work and the role it plays in decision making. But Charlie has no respect for the work or anyone’s role. He keeps grabbing Lisa’s ass. She rips his hand away. It’s supposed to be a professional setting. She doesn’t want Tim to see how Charlie violates her. “What does anyone DO with these results?” Lisa asks. Nothing. It’s just something for managers to talk about to try to sound important at meetings.

Boss tells Lisa not to work on the project she was assigned to. Trying to be cooperative, she asks what she should work on. Uh, he doesn’t know. She should ask Tim about…whatever project Boss can remember anything about. But Tim has already finished that project and never got feedback on it. So Tim tells her to get coffee. What does Tim work on? He sleeps in his office. Because he’s been spending his time on a side business, throwing parties with hot women.

At the All Minds meeting, Mistress gets promoted. “My door is always open,” Boss says. Except when it isn’t. When Charlie and Lisa stop by, he’s in there with Mistress. And it doesn’t sound like work.

Tim makes up some work to justify his existence. Videos that don’t mean anything but are supposed to make it look like their office has actually completed projects. But then Tim doesn’t always come in to work and gets a cryptic Blackberry message from his boss. No worries. The bosses aren’t at work either. They’re out shopping or playing golf.

Charlie continues to try to force himself all over Lisa. Since nobody in the office can handle a difficult situation very well, she delicately tells Charlie to go to a psychiatrist on his own. Later, Charlie masturbates in front of her. Lisa is fired the next morning. Maybe that’s not such a bad thing. She vows never to work in another job like that. “The future of our nation is in trouble not because we don’t have enough engineers, but because business and government leaders misuse the engineers they already have.”

### Monday, January 31, 2011

After spending hours filling out forms for a short video contest, I submitted a one minute clip to a Social Benefit contest. Like the short video contest, I have no interest in winning. I’m doing this for exposure and for the learning process.

I didn’t really get much exposure, only 65 YouTube hits. I’m not sure if any of them converted to Facebook fans and I’m pretty sure they didn’t sign up for my newsletter.

I also didn’t get any feedback. I thought someone from the contest might comment on my video. Nothing. The only acknowledgement I got was a link to my video posted on Techsoup.org.

### Thursday, February 3, 2011

The director of the film festival commented on my blog. He was very nice and said that he agreed the submission form was long, but if I wanted to submit the video to other festivals, I’d only need to click a button.

I think it's an omission in the WAB software design that they don't list all the required pages. But anyone who has the attention span to come up with a (good) 20 min. video will have the patience to pull together all the right materials for submission.

I'm getting a lot of messages from WAB about other festivals. Film festivals are not the goal of my work. I'll wait until this one is over before I decide if it's an appropriate venue for my goals.

### Friday, February 4, 2011

I went to a kindle party at the Soundry, near my house in Vienna. My friend The Other Lisa, along with seven other women, read from ebooks they had published.

The Soundry is located in a former auto shop along the W&OD trail, so I’ve been running past it several times a week for the past couple of years since it opened. The logo is black and the garage door is painted with a graffiti mural. Oftentimes there is loud metal music blaring out to the runners and bicyclers on the trail. I had thought it was some kind of goth club or biker bar for the auto mechanics.

Well, the goth club concept wasn’t too far off. Although, it’s not a dance club, nor a bar. The front room is a coffee shop. In back, there are artist studios. And if you go all the way around, there’s a music rehearsal room that doubles as an event hall, which is where the kindle reading took place. It’s sort of like a Jammin Java or a Bus Boys & Poets.

The nice thing about going to an event in Vienna is that it doesn’t take an hour, dragging myself through snow and the metro system, to get there. Thus my husband was willing to come with me. I’m glad he came, so he could see what I mean when I talk about a hangout business.

Jennifer Crawford, owner of the Soundry, streamed the event over the internet and fielded questions from the internet audience. She introduced each of the eight authors and their work:

Tonya Plank Swallow, Lisa Leibow Double Out And Back, Laverne Thompson Living on the Edge, Misha Crews Still Waters and Homesong, Karen Cantwell Take the Monkeys and Run, Dorothy Hassan Not One of Us, Cathy Wiley Dead to Writes, L.B. Gschwandtner The Naked Gardner.

I didn’t figured out why the gardener wanted to be naked. Sort of like mud wrestling alone.

Three of the authors were lawyers. Like myself, Tonya Plank “operates in the realm of logic.” Lisa Leibow describes herself as a “recovering lawyer.” If that’s the case, I suppose I could describe myself as a “recovering engineer.” Maybe more so, since I’m not aware of any of her former coworkers masturbating in front of her resulting in her termination.

### Sunday, February 6, 2011

I watched *The Social Network* this weekend. If some college kid can program up something cool, I should be able to figure out how to write a web application. Mark Zuckerberg hasn’t lived very long. How long could it possibly have taken him to learn to write software? During the time I spent learning how to write fiction and produce a movie, I could have learned how to write a decent web app.

### Monday, February 7, 2011

I had a brainstorm about putting on events. Since races are always really popular, I should put on weekly races. My contribution would be to bring breakfast, post race times, and to organize people into social/coaching/pace groups. Like I did when I taught classes. Make sure the students get to know each other and have a support group because I can’t be there to give everyone individual attention all of the time. I think it could be a good environment for beginner runners, to push themselves because they see other people doing it.

Once I’ve got that running smoothly, I can put on races several times a week, and eventually a race every morning and every evening. They would be in different locations around the DC area, so that people could go to the one near their home once a week.

At first I’d keep it small and run the show myself, but if it got really popular, I could bring in people to offer all kinds of services, such as massage, individual coaching, or shoe sales at the event so that people wouldn’t have to make a separate trip to get their shoes. Perhaps in addition to mobile events, I could become a mobile shoe/running goods store myself.

The thing is, in theory this seems like such a great idea, I’m not sure why nobody else is already doing it. Charities put on successful races, but the fee is tax deductible and they get volunteers to help. Actually, I think they might pay some people to organize the races. I guess to some extent, Pacers does put on events. But I’m wondering if in practice this is a horrible idea.

I’ll have to look into legal aspects, such as licenses, permits, and insurance. I know that DC Roadrunners has to get permits to run their races on trails. They also have to get some type of police traffic control, but I wouldn’t need that on the stretch of the W&OD where I’m going to start. DC Roadrunners doesn’t need a permit for Saturday Long Runs. Perhaps that’s because they don’t take money at those events.

I could have monthly memberships instead of race fees, however I’m not sure how that would be perceived compared to fees people are used to paying for races, and compared to membership to a running club. I think a per event fee make the most sense to people.

I’d have to get a website running that would take people’s fees. I haven’t messed with e-junkie for awhile. Unfortunately, I keep paying them money, but I haven’t made any money from selling movie items on my website yet.

### Tuesday, February 8, 2011

I went to AAUW Cocktails and Conversations at Firefly. Seems like a lot of the AAUW happy hours are at hotel bars.

Cordy Gallagher told me that the reason they haven’t committed to authors who want to sell books at the national convention is that they need permits to sell onsite and they’re having trouble getting a vendor.

At first I thought that was a nonissue. Why can’t I just sell the book at my table? If anyone needs to pay by credit card, they can just go to my web site and pay with PayPal. Of course, that only works if I have internet access at the conference.

But the real issue is that DC requires who has a permit to sell onsite. And the vendors don’t have any contracts with each of the authors to sell the self-published books, whereas it’s standard for them to sign contracts with traditional publishers.

Cordy also thought that waiting to buy books at each table would cause long lines to form, but I don’t expect there will really be that much demand.

I also went to and Salon Contra at Philippa Hughes’s condo. I was interested in that event because I’d like to throw similar parties at my place. Although I don’t live in DC. So it would be a different crowd. And her place was crowded.

Two guys, Eric Rubin and Sariel Lehyani, did some off the wall skits, like talking with their heads in the oven and becoming Latin lovers when they put on a robe and going through the audience feeling their friends’ heads. It was hilarious. You never knew what to expect.

The interesting part was that Sariel Lehyani said he likes to question society’s view on gender roles. One audience member said she thought they were playing gay characters. I said I thought of his characters as gender neutral. Their characters weren’t making a point of being specifically gay. Gender was relevant in the relationship of their roles to each other, but they were just not being specifically male or female. More like a little of both in each character.

I talked a lot with a lawyer who told me about GregsListDC.com. They post cool things going on in DC.

It seems to me that most of the people who attend Philippa's art events are not artists themselves (which is true of any art gallery audience). Or maybe I just end up talking to the nonartists because I don't 'look' like an artist. At one of her events, I was talking to a guy about light. "Do you have a PhD in physics?" I asked him. He did.

### Wednesday, February 9, 2011

OK, I’ve got to start a web site about cool things going on in Northern Virginia. There are lots of lists of cool things going on in DC. Not so many about Northern Virginia. A few of the DC lists have some Arlington events. But there has got to be a demand for cool NoVA things.

I would concentrate on techie things and women events that are under $25. People would subscribe to an email list about that. I could get fans. People would come to events to be in SmartWomen Event News.

Although, if I concentrate on techie events rather than artsy events, I probably should include DC since the artsy lists don’t include those. I could tag the events according to whether they were in DC or NoVA.

I had previously thought about putting the events that I was planning to go to on my site, but now I see it as a way to get local subscribers to my newsletter. SmartWomen event news could be brought to other cities as well. But other than one city at a time, is there another way to get nationwide subscribers for *Budget Justified*? What would I offer them?

About putting on races: To get enough buzz, I have to say they’re for a women’s abuse charity. Races always have to be for a charity or nonprofit. I could put on lots of simple races and give ten percent of the proceeds to Hollaback and AAUW or something like that.

I could make it a Slow Women’s Race for those who are just out to get in shape. I’m not sure if there’s much of a market for that, but there might be a stroller-runner market in Vienna. At least it wouldn’t directly compete with DC Roadrunners or most other races.

I should also put on a dog race as a second heat and donate to an animal charity. People would love to bring their dogs. I could get a local pet store to give gourmet treats as a prize. And free doggie treats when they’re done.

### Friday, February 11, 2011

I write like a man. Or at least that’s what the internet tells me.

Today I stumbled across a web site called “The Gender Genie.” Sounded like something that would instantly turn me into a man, so I had to check it out.

Turns out that it analyzes a block of text and predicts the gender of the author based on words used in the text, such as ‘with,’ ‘your,’ and ‘her’ for women and ‘above,’ ‘more,’ and ‘is’ for men.

The first block of text I typed was, “What is this gender genie shit.” I selected ‘blog entry’ as the genre. I received a female score of 0 and male score of 43. The internet said I was a man.

The Genie works best on text of more than 500 words, so I expanded. “What is this gender genie shit I am not a man god damn it.” Then I selected the genre ‘fiction.’

Again, the internet told me I was a man. Well of course. Logic says that if “I am not a man” is fiction, then I must be a man.

Then I pasted this blog entry into the Genie. I received a female score of 235 and a male score of 406.

Perhaps that’s why nobody can tell that my Brad avatar is a woman.

### Tuesday, February 15, 2011

Rep. Donna Edwards from Maryland put on a women’s business forum. I met fun people, got some good information. I took a lot of good video for SmartWomen Event News. But I’ve decided not to spend much time on that blog for awhile – video takes a lot of time to produce. I’ve gotten behind of production, so I’ll explain at the end of the month what I’ve decided to focus on instead.

### Wednesday, February 16, 2011

Tim said he’s looking for a new job. I won’t continue to volunteer at St. Mark. The other adults aren’t fun enough. And the teens have enough school commitments that they don’t want to commit to doing videos at St. Mark. I’d have to put in too much effort to make it a big enough activity. I need to look into volunteering in

I found some software that will automate your YouTube videos into other people’s viewer if you let the software automate a series of other people’s videos onto your own screen. I specified a hundred of my viewing credits toward a few of my videos. I ended up getting more views than that, perhaps because it prompted other people to watch my ‘related videos’ since I was getting lots of hits.

But then I think it didn’t register the views I got last night while YouTube was under maintenance. So now I can’t subtract the fake hits out to be able to tell how many extra ‘real’ hits I got.

At least in addition to getting a few more real hits, I found a way to make my hit count look credible. So when people go to my YouTube profile, it won’t look like nobody ever watches. I can direct people to my SmartWomen Event News and people won’t think, eh she’s just doing this in a hole and nobody cares.

Last night Tim and his friend were watching a drummer on YouTube who had over five million hits on each of his videos. I can’t imagine that many people would watch his stuff. He must be using a hit automation service.

I automated friend requests and selected a list from PBS’s YouTube subscribers. But I haven’t receive many confirmations. But I did get a lot of reciprocal subscribers through a YouTube subscriber automation.

I had found a way to automate facebook fans too, but it only worked for about seven new fans before you had to pay for a software upgrade.

I went to a sales tips networking breakfast at a Crystal City sports pub. I wish I hadn’t bothered. Too long of a trip, too early, I didn’t want to be there, and I didn’t get much out of it. The other people there were mostly boring guys with boring businesses like realty.

### Thursday, February 17, 2011

At this month’s Media Future Now presentation, two guys from Minnesota presented a web site that aggregates events according to keywords. Not a bad idea. It sort of takes over my idea of having people submit techie/entrepreneurial events to my web site. Although people may still wish to subscribe to my newsletter to read about how the event news integrates with events.

I’ve got to get more into the mobile app space. I’d like to invent apps, but I don’t even have an iPhone. But even if I did, invent an app to do what?

Media Future Now brings innovative media professionals together to discuss change in the way people interact with information. They put on panel discussion in Washington about once a month.

Shireen Mitchell, an event organizer and tech consultant, moderated the discussion about how businesses shape the way teens interact with media.

Corvida Raven, founder of SheGeeks.net, came down from New York City to participate in the panel, along with Daniel Brusilovsky, founder of Teens in Tech Labs, which provides resources to teen entrepreneurs.

Norelie Garcia from AT&T’s public affairs provided the venue for today’s event.

### Tuesday, February 22, 2011

The Community Business Partnership in Springfield had a coaching session. It’s a three class series and this is the second series they put on.

They also held their monthly women’s book discussion. I went to that since I was dragging myself down there anyway. But even though I signed up, I didn’t read the book. They hadn’t posted which book to read on the internet. It was a good discussion anyway.

There was a social media business coach there. I was curious about that because I think most business coaching is malarchy. She didn’t seem to know much about social media. She wasn’t very educated in general, so she would definitely be a poor coach match for me.

The guy leading the coaching workshop was pretty good. He has a masters degree in entrepreneurship. Still, he’s not a super shining star. He’s good at these sessions, but I wouldn’t hire him. although, CBP hired him to be there for office hours. I think a free session might be worthwhile. I’ll see how the second class is before I sign up to drag myself to Springfield again.

The Online News Association invited people from the Washington City paper to talk about the Dan Snyder case. Snyder, owner of the Redskins, is suing the city paper for writing something about him that he didn’t like.

Again, I took video, but I’ve put it on the shelf for now.

This is really spooky, but there was a group of three people on my car when I was riding the blue line this afternoon who are also on my car on the orange line this evening.

### Wednesday, February 23, 2011

iStrategy, a tech PR firm run by Joe and Peter Corbett, put on a party for the launch of USConverge, a nonprofit that gets for-profit and nonprofit tech organizations to work together. Other than that, I have no idea what they do. Perhaps they don’t know yet either.

I’m not quite sure what iStrategy does either. I used to think that they developed technology. But after looking at their web site, I think they just put on tech events, like TechCocktail. Peter told me it costs $15,000 to get a venue in Washington that seats a thousand people.

Peter was talking to Jen Consalvo of TechCocktail when I arrived. I chatted with them a little. Jen told me about Lean Startups, a meetup group in DC where entrepreneurs critique new startups. I tried joining the group, but they rejected me. Eh, I’m in too many meetup groups already.

I met Rob Pegoraro, the tech reporter at the Washington Post. He was also at the Online News Association event last night, but I didn’t know what he looked like, and didn’t bump into him. Rob said his wife used to be a member of the Society of Women Engineers. She’s a manager at a big government contractor.

Marta Urquilla was the only female speaker at the launch. She advises President Obama on using social media. She talked about crowdsourcing technology solutions.

Biz Stone, the founder of Twitter was there. Lots of young people flocked around him like sheep after the talk. Supposedly it only took him two weeks to write the prototype for Twitter. It’s such a stupid little program, I would have been disappointed if it took him any longer. The impressive part about Twitter isn’t lists of 140 character texts. It’s the ability to link to other sites to spread a word-bite ad or concept. Micro-ads. That anyone can put out there whether they are a company or just have something brief to say.

If Biz can write up a stupid software, and have it become popular, I should be able to create something much better. Ever since Microsoft Word, I’ve been wishing I could come up with a ubiquitous software. Something that everyone would want.

Then it hit me. I have to create the site that allows not just me, but anyone to do something that I’ve been trying to kludge for my own site. So now I need to do a real job on it, not my kludgy garbage. But I won’t tell you what that is until you can play or do business with it too.

**HOW TO GO FROM STATIC WEB DEVELOPER TO SOCIAL COMMERCE**

What simple application could I develop that would get popular quickly? We have Microsoft Word, Ebay, Amazon, Facebook, Twitter.

I thought about an Ebay where electronic goods are sold, rather than physical objects.

Then it hit me. That is exactly what I’ve been talking about for the past five years. A way for authors and movie/show producers to sell their books directly to their customers without the publisher/bookstore middle-conglomerates. Facebook of Amazon. Facebook for books. Book book. It’s so obvious that this is the future of publishing. Why hasn’t someone else already done it?

It’s what I wanted when I created my web site to sell my book. And even more so when I was trying to kludge a way to sell my movie.

### Thursday, February 24, 2011

I didn’t sleep at all last night. The last time that happened was in grad school when I had a project due that wasn’t working. I kept thinking about the Ebay-Amazon-Facebook startup.

I thought about calling it antiPublisher. But that’s a little too in-your-face. I like it, but customers probably wouldn’t. Keep The Rights was another name I came up with. That may be of interest to the authors and video producers who want to sell their content, but their customers wouldn’t relate.

Originally, I thought that the future of books would be authors selling their own books on their web sites. But after getting no bites on my website for my book, I realize that there needs to be a place for authors to congregate on the web. Like a store.

Of course, since most authors aren’t savvy programmers, I have to make a site that makes it real easy to put together an author fan page and upload a kindle-formatted book.

The crazy part of this idea is not the idea. It’s that I’ve never programmed a web site before. I have to learn a new programming language, or learn an old one well enough to make it run a web site. I need to understand more about clients and servers. I don’t know anything about streaming video. But I have a PhD, a computer, and a kick ass idea. I’ll figure something out.

### Saturday, February 26, 2011

Each author/artist would have a fan page. Customers/fans would vote for artists and leave a review of their work.

I could entice authors by emphasizing that they’d keep the rights to their work. But I’d entice their customers by giving them the opportunity to judge a contest. Like American Idol for authors and video makers. The Next Great Communicator. That’s the whole point of the peer to peer sales site. To empower the content creators and their customers.

Hollywood no longer has to be in charge of what we watch. I could even make a video of myself announcing winners. I’d do it live with Ustream, people would wait all week to hear the announcement.

There could be something academic about it. Maybe I should call it COMM101.com

### Tuesday, March 1, 2011

I don’t want to be a party planner, like TechCocktail or iStrategy. But I would like to have someone else arrange events for author talks and movie showings (that would be livestreamed), eventually at my own brick and mortar ‘bookstore’ that sells books – on a computer.

New purpose of RoleModel Enterprises: To empower creatives to reach their audience without being roadblocked by a middleman. To empower customers to have a say in what content gets rewarded. To bring creatives and their customers together locally and globally.

Heart attack: it looks like Amazon CreateSpace has started a web service similar to my idea around four months ago.

However, it doesn’t look well executed. I’m not sure how to purchase any of the books, songs, or movies that authors have uploaded. Most of the uploads are drafts that people want reviewed. There are only a handful of finished products, and I think they’re print-on-demand, not electronic. And there isn’t a fan page for the authors. They also don’t have software – yet.

But once they get a critical mass of authors, I bet their site will improve. Unless they give up on it. I doubt they will.

I guess I had to know that Amazon would be huge competition, even if I put a version of this site out there first. It’s possible that my site would beat them out. If people even know about it.

UnlimitedPublishing.com also has something similar. But also not well organized – an uncategorized list of a few books. There’s no fan page, although if you click on a book, you can see all the books by that author. That page would be better if you could get a blog & twitter feed from the author on that page. Also, if you want to buy the book, you actually like to CreateSpace or Lulu. So I’m not sure what the purpose of that site is.

Lulu is also close to what I want to create. Again, no fan page or twitter feed. Not even a Like button.

The “royalties” aren’t great either. I don’t like the idea of royalties. I think that implies that a publisher owns the book.

When I search for ebooks on Lulu, I get 270,000 results. Although the site says they have only 3000 ebooks. I think many of them are not self published. I think Lulu started out self published, but they didn’t have a reason to prevent publishers from selling their too. Lulu also sells print books. I’m not really sure how it’s different than Amazon. Maybe it isn’t, which shows that an Amazon competitor can make money.

What’s missing is personal interaction with the beloved authors. People should be able to comment on author blog posts. And perhaps I could offer a higher profit if I concentrate solely on e-products because no mailing would be involved.

I should also make it easy for author to have automated “cover” design if they don’t want to upload a graphic. After all, there is no cover on an ebook. The author could select color scheme for their graphic and the title, their name would be added to the graphic.

### Wednesday, March 2, 2011

There should be online events. On the home page, a list of Who’s Showing Now and a link to their Ustream page. But how is this any added value to what Ustream already does? I’m not sure if a link to the artist’s fan page/store is enough. What makes it an *event* that Ustream doesn’t already do? Viewers can participate with comments. In Stickam, up to six viewers can participate with video.

Small businesses can also ‘sell’ coupons in exchange for becoming a fan of the business.

What can people sell that is specific to each person? What makes each person unique? Their story. Life story or expertise. But what else? Anything that doesn’t take a long time to create? Perhaps people would answer questions that would form their life story. Funniest thing that ever happened, scariest thing, first day of school, etc. But people wouldn’t buy that. Most people’s story would be boring or horribly written.

Pics with usage license? I could post thumbnails of gallery.

I’m installing a bunch of stuff so I can learn to program in Ruby on Rails. I’m most likely getting in way over my head. But I want to be able to do this anyway.

Small businesses will want to advertise. Facebook lets them have a free page, but targeted ads are paid for. They could pay to be higher in a search engine too. How is this different than Google – maybe slightly more targeted. They could pay to post extra videos or other content. They could pay to be fans of more of other businesses. Pay for reviews?

Maybe they could buy ‘fans’ in addition to previous customers. That might be interesting. The fans would have to accept. Micro-targeted marketing. Select fans based on certain criteria. How would this be unobtrusive to fans? Have current fans recommend friends…except fans don’t have friends. But fans could entice real life friends to join my site, and the friend would be automatically a fan.

What would be the original fan’s incentive? Extra fan points toward…what? A discount on other products? The business pays, say a dollar, for a fan recommendation, the recommender gets a coupon from the business. How much is a fan recommendation worth?

Fans have to be loyal for a day before dropping themselves from a business’s list. Most Loyal Fan on a site is a function of loyalness time and number of recommendations.

So, can fans make money by referring other fans? No, just earn discounts toward products. Perhaps for a trial period, they can earn credits for recruiting fan members to the site, but not to certain business fan pages.

Businesses could run contests. First to refer x fans gets a free book. Or coupon toward a free meal – with their name printed on it – depending upon the business. Fans would have to opt in to an emailed contest announcement digest, or for announcements from a given company. The announcement would also show on their feed.

Why would fans log in? To see artists’ blog post or twitter feed. Or video stream. Or to check deals from local businesses and restaurants. Maybe for contests.

Businesses and artists could have some type of automated trivial pursuit or other game regarding their products. Fans could get loyalty points for knowing the answers. The games could be held at specific times so fans would have to play against each other. A running game with challengers and a champion would be cool. What kind of game would that be? Maybe a logo contest or joke contest with votes would be good too. Like the Style Invitational…come up with a limerick about the products.

I could come up with a different contest each week and artists/businesses could opt in, select the prize for their business.

A good game could entice people to become fans. Trekkies would love it if there were a Star Trek related business or artist. Like stories, one thing that people would have that would be unique to them would be the questions and their answers.

### Thursday, March 3, 2011

Previously I had been thinking that a good audience for *Budget Justified* was feminists. Well, it is, but it’s difficult to find where feminist under the age of sixty gather these days. I think they might all be at schools. And they’re not the final goal audience of my work. I identify more with techies under age forty-nine.

I’ve gone to a lot of women-oriented events, but they are all different crowds that don’t necessarily communicate with each other. So there isn’t a stable community to get involved in.

Another audience is government employees, contractors, and women engineers. But they don’t want to get involved, lest they get punished by their employers. I’m not sure where I could find a stable community of them, and I’m sure my topic would not be relevant to any of their meetings.

Government change activists are another potential audience. I’m going to one of those events next week. Like most people and organizations, they like to toot their own horn, and not necessarily the horn of someone else’s issue that supports their mission.

I could try HR societies. They would likely be very receptive to my message and possibly to spreading it. Although that’s not the community I’m trying to be a part of.

Women business owners was another community I sympathized with. But I haven’t met any high powered, or even low powered business owners at these gatherings. The women I was most impressed with were the dog walker and office organizer. Seriously, who needs to hire someone to help them organize an office they don’t know anything about.

Of course another audience is taxpayers, but that’s too broad.

The audience of my web site will be authors, movie producers, creatives, and small business owners. I totally sympathize with them. And I’ll enjoy talking to them about my site.

So where is the intersection between the two? Women business owners. Activist authors? Might not be enough of them. Feminist authors and creatives – perhaps Simone’s group. Creatives who can’t stand the federal workplace? They don’t necessarily gather as a group. But perhaps creatives in general qualify.

Women authors. Especially anyone who has had a toxic workplace. Which would be most people.

Alas, the social media space is the place I identify with the most. Which is why I came up with the idea for an ecommerce site in the first place.

Blacks have been free since the 1960’s. Why are women still household slaves?

### Friday, March 4, 2011

I’m tired of these PR people yammering about technology, but not doing anything about it or creating it. In last month’s Media Future Now event, Shireen kept talking about engaging youth in creating technology, not just using it. But what is Shireen creating? What skills does she have?

Artists and businesses could host game shows on Ustream. The prize would be one of their products. Throughout the show, contestants would earn credits toward a free product. They could be accumulated throughout several weeks to keep people coming back for a chance to win. Winner names would be posted on the fan page/artist store.

Games would be like hangman, trivia, slogan contests. There would be a scrolling list of Who’s Live Now and the name of their game.

In order to be a fan, you have to purchase something from the artist. Even if it’s a dollar coupon or an image. Maybe I’ll give fans the option of selecting five free artists. There should be an option to get an artist newsletter if you’re a fan of their store. And you have to be a fan for at least a day before you have the option to quit being a fan.

### Sunday, March 6, 2011

Sellers and fans would all have stores. But some people might be more interested in being fans than selling things.

It’s a way for everyone to sell to everybody. Everyone has a story. Most embarrassing, worst boss, weird dates. There could be contests for those stories. And people could sell their short stories for a dollar.

Yeah, they can also post them for free on the internet. But the most enterprising authors will be able to interact with their fans to make their stories more real. The real person behind the stories. Free interaction, and if you really like what you see, buy the story with all the details.

People would no longer have to wallow in their victimhood anymore. Surely these things have happened to other people too. Communities could be built around bad boss or abusive boyfriend stories. A few authors could get together on a panel to talk on Stickam, or a Skype talk show. They would call out (and call up?) the bad bosses and make them accountable.

Could this be the next generation to unions?

I might be the one to get them all together. And that’s a great thing. But I’ll be grateful for all the work they do for each other.

### Monday, March 7, 2011

Stores can give away x megabytes of free stuff per month. Which means it’s a “first x customers” giveaway. Of course, people could just create more stores. Customers can hunt for free stuff.

Stores would pay to sign up to be on a weekly scavenger hunt list. If it’s a store, how would customers scavenge? There would be clues on the store’s page. The customers would read the pages and solve the clues to figure out the password to get the free prize.

I signed up for the Rails Forum on a Ruby site. There are so many things to sign up for these days, I try to use the same username for just about everything. But my typical user name for business related sites has been rolemodels. It seemed a little irrelevant for a programming forum. Too many people get the impression it has something to do with teaching little kids. So I selected noobPhD. It says brainy, yet new at this.

I’m trying to get Ruby on Rails set up on my computer without much luck. I sent a question to the Rails forum on their website. It takes hours to get a response that is only slightly helpful. But at least I have a place to ask questions. Like this one:

I decided I AM GOING TO CREATE A WEB APP. As opposed to the kludgy web sites I usually make. I heard Ruby on Rails was a good way to go. So for the past week I've been trying to just get Ruby on Rails to work. I tried several tutorials, but none of them had the right steps/commands for the system I have.

Right now I have Aptana RadRails set up OK. In spite of the wording/graphics online and in their help files, I've been able to do most of what they meant for me to do. I also have MySQL and stuck a mysql-connector-java inside the MySQL Server folder, as I was sort of instructed by one tutorial. It said to add a connection, but once I got into the RadRails application, I had to go through a set of four Help stages that didn't match the interface. Eventually I figured out how to get most of it going.

But I couldn’t connect to the database alias. And of course, I added some New Users with passwords and RadRails tries to log all of them in when I try to connect. And I don't see a way to delete them. Sadly, I don't know how to check what the right username or password would be for my database.

So, if I'm having this much trouble loading all this Ruby Rail crap to my local Windows machine, I'm imagining another month to try to get this working on my web host.

Does anyone have a better solution?

### Tuesday, March 8, 2011

I went to a STEM forum sponsored by Rep. Donna Edwards. It was in the same room as her women’s business forum last month, but there were tables and a lunch this time, so not as many people were present.

After I had sent my RSVP last month, I received a confirmation email. Then I received an email the morning of the business forum saying that the STEM event was too full. Well, I went anyway and they didn’t check whether I had been registered. There were no lines out the door to get in like last time. They gave me a number for lunch and I was good to go.

I made a big downer speech about how STEM jobs aren’t all flowers and lace like the people on these panels try to make them out to be. Nobody uses our work, we’re not treated well, etc. I think a lot of people understood and agreed. But nobody is going to do anything about it. I don’t think they are refusing to acknowledge how poorly engineers in most organizations are being treated.

I went to the second coaching session at the Springfield Community Business Partnership. Less than half the people from the first session were there. I might not be able to make it to the third session. And I’m not sure I got much out of the first two. Plus it’s a pain to drag myself all the way to Springfield.

In the evening I went to an event for Public Citizen. Whistleblower organizations rarely have gatherings, so I thought I should check this out. The nephew of the organization president gave a book talk, which was not really relevant to the mission of Public Citizen. Still, I met Ralph Nader and sat next to the author’s aunt, who was a fun, interesting lady.

Her husband is an engineer. He suggested that I go back and work for the FAA. I get that a lot from engineers. They don’t seem to understand that these dysfunctional jobs are not worth going back to, that there are much better uses of my time.

### Wednesday, March 9, 2011

Someone on the forum suggested installing Ubuntu, an operating system, within a virtual machine on my Windows computer. Ubuntu is over six hundred MB! It took three attempts, but I finally got the entire executable downloaded. Now I need to download VMWare, a virtual machine. Another one hundred MB.

### Thursday, March 10, 2011

Rich Harrington put on the first of a two day workshop today. Free. He also gave out copies of some of his books. He must get some kind of business out of this, but he’s known for being a smart, helpful guy.

His books are about how to make videos. He makes extremely professional videos. People who buy his books don’t necessarily hire him to make videos, but it gets his name out there so that people will come to him to make really nice videos. He has a following because there’s a niche of people who like to make videos.

What kind of books should I write to get my name out there? People don’t really want a How to Be A Whistleblower book. Maybe how do build a website, but others do a better job of that than I do. Maybe a creativity business book. Or the next wave of media.

That’s a good idea. A book about how to creatively use my new site. But I can’t make it sound as though you can’t use the site without reading a book I make you pay for. It should include tips and trends, a book on using creativity in your web business. And oh by the way, here’s an example of how to do it on my web site.

Rich showed us a music video he produced with the owner of Jammin Java. I think that’s the future of music video – a guy who sings and plays guitar gets his talented friends to make a video. Or TV show.

I went to a Ruby users group meetup. It was much better than I expected. The first presenter showed ‘gotchas’ in coding Ruby. I knew what was going on because of previous coding experience and picked up on some of the Ruby syntax. They suggested a few books for beginners. *The Ruby Way* is supposedly the book everyone needs to start with. They also suggested checking out the Ruby Users Group for Northern Virginia: NovaRUG.org.

They seemed like a friendly group of guys. Yes, I meant guys. No women. Just me and forty men.

### Monday, March 14, 2011

I have to create a way for people to give to charities on the site. Especially while the charities are having an online event. Like a telethon on the internet. And the giving can continue after the event, as people can watch a saved version of the telethon. It would be cool to have organizations show their events going on at different locations, like the Jerry Lewis telethon.

At first I’ll have to rely heavily on PayPal and Ustream. But some day I’ll probably need my own merchant and live streaming. It would be interesting to have sponsors come into the middle of the show and interact with the audience live. Of course, sponsors could have their own entire show.

Sponsors (advertisers) who pay the most get their names at the top of the site. Sort of like auction advertising. As they bid more, they get more priority.

Well, I got Ubuntu installed inside VMWare. But now what. How do I get Ruby, Rails, or a database set up inside?

Forget that for now. I just want to get *something* running. So I downloaded some code for a shopping cart written in Ruby.

Uh oh. It’s twenty four megabytes. And there weren’t any graphics files inside. Twenty four megabytes of all code.

And I still have no idea how to run it. When I enter ‘rails server’ on the DOS command line, it tells me that’s not a valid command.

### Tuesday, March 15, 2011

I need to redirect my blog to a different mission. I could make it partly a blog about developing a social commerce site starting at minimal knowledge.

I could also write about things that would be of interest to authors and video producers. Like something about the latest technologies and web services that they might be interested in. Or business trends.

I could feature creatives and entrepreneurs, asking how they use the latest technologies. Like Jennifer Crawford’s Jellyvision on Ustream. I’d also ask what they would like to be available. That would give me some insight on what features to incorporate into my social commerce site.

I bought a used Ruby book online. Several source said that it was the bible of Ruby. But I looked through the whole thing on Amazon – the entire book was available to browse – and there wasn’t anything about Rails in it. So there weren’t any suites of code to try out on a web site. Why can’t I find a set of files to try out? That’s all I want to play with right now.

I haven’t thought much about a name for my site. Social commerce? Lisa’s list? Too boring.

### Wednesday, March 16, 2011

When I have a prototype going, I should go around giving a class or tutorial on How to Sell Your Book or Business with Social Media. Then walk people through how to sign up and show examples of putting on online events.

I ran across Sol Chea’s profile on LinkedIn today. We’re connected on LinkedIn, so I see his profile occasionally. He’s programming some social media for his current company. He listed Ruby on Rails as one of his skills. I should talk to him and ask how much web programming he knows. I bet he could program up what I’m trying to do. I should take him to lunch and see if he’s interested. I should ask a bunch of questions to find out how well connected he is and if he could handle co-running a startup.

I tried running some of the massive code that I downloaded, but when I’m in that directory, it says I’m missing a .dll file. But I’m not missing that .dll file when I try to run the code I automatically generated. I think it’s a classpath problem, but I don’t know where to set classpaths.

### Thursday, March 17, 2011

I ordered a bunch of used Rails books today. The other book I ordered was an old version, and it was only Ruby. Two of these books actually have practical applications. So they say. And that’s what I was really looking for.

I was also looking through a video processing book. A whole bunch of math. But it didn’t tell you how you could actually DO video processing. If I ever write a text book, you’ll be able to go through steps to actually accomplish something.

### Friday, March 18, 2011

Someone suggested that I integrate my ecommerce idea with Facebook instead of its own web site first. There might be some merit in that, since Facebook already has fan pages and it already has a customer base.

I was thinking that people wouldn’t get to be fans unless they purchased something, to encourage real fans. Although people could have around five free fanships. Creatives and entrepreneurs could buy extra fans, so they don’t game the system for free. New fans would be the first x people who requested a free download. That could be part of a daily freebies hunt.

I’m also not sure if Facebook’s terms allow people to sell downloads. There is a way to do it in MySpace. I’m not sure what MySpace’s terms are. I think people could still rate products after preview or download, but I’m not convinced there would be a way to display products or their ratings.

I was thinking about calling my site Perfect Airspace, the invention I came up with at the FAA. Or just Airspace to make it shorter. And to remind the FAA and contractors that I’m not coming up with great ideas on their behalf.

I could even form magazines, starting with techie magazines. Each magazine would have a topic that people would write about. People would submit articles, entrepreneurs would submit relevant ads, photographers and videographers could submit their work.

There would be a voting period where people could review up to five articles – first and third are selected from new/unreviewed articles, the remaining are selected by the reviewer based on the keywords they select. After a certain number of reviews, the magazine would be compiled into a .pdf or kindle format and sold. The writers and artists may or may not get a commission. They might get a flat fee. Topics for future magazines would emerge from the most popular topics submitted or requested for review.

### Thursday, March 31, 2011

Here are some reqs/description of the ecommerce site:

Easy fan page/personal site, with a blog feature or tweets

Fans can retweet

A good search function for products

Paypal

Votes/ratings

Retain email address, authors can message fans

Fans are updated once a week if their authors have new products

First 10 product customers get free product in exchange for review – after review the first 10 pages, then they get entire book

Listing of current free products

Books are in searchable categories

Offer isbn

Legalese

Display top rated, most purchased/downloaded for the week

Format for mobile

Automate graphic design if no graphic supplied – select color, title

Weekly online book newsletter

### Sunday, April 10, 2011

Rob Pegoraro wrote a column about digital rights management of ebooks for today’s Post. I thought I should keep a few of the comments:

For ability, does e-reader have a convenient way for me to jot down my thought / reflection while reading? Not adding some side note to the text itself.

Re "copy text from a book to quote elsewhere, although Barnes & Noble is a welcome exception." The Kindle had the feature for quotes from books to Facebook and Twitter in July 2010. First used on Kindle 2's and DX's. The Nook just started using it in the last month or so, I think...

Re authors and DRM - I was reading forums for reactions to the restrictive 2-week, one-time-ever loaning of e-books set by publishers when they even allow lending at all. (a few Big6 publishers don't allow that, and both MacMillan and Simon&Schuster won't allow loans of their e-books to public libraries) and I was surprised at the extreme unhappiness from authors over the idea that Amazon (and B&N) would allow even a one-time loan of a book, asking people to understand they lose money that way.

ebooks, like music and movies, want as much or more money than traditional media, but without those costs. Many copy music and movies because of the high costs, lower costs and sales will go up. ebooks are the same, they are too expensive and in some cases more expensive than the paperback. Many give or donate used books and what does the publisher get, nothing. People should be able to do the same with ebooks. High costs and restrictions lead to copying, lower costs and little or no restrictions lead to sales.

I love my Kindle - and I haven't bought any books for it and don't intend to. There is a lifetime's worth of reading available free from the Gutenberg project.

I know a couple who bought a Kindle and a Nook to compare. The Nook won because more libraries have more books for it and because it's better for lending books. Lending is the key issue. I like the idea of wireless transfer of the book. You can't read it while another person reads your copy. It's just like a real book. Also, anyone who ignores the reality of the vast difference of revenue lost by non-restricted digital lenders versus CDs or books is in a false world. Digital rights matter and should be managed. however, they should be less restrictive.

My son got me a Kindle for Christmas. I was surprised to find out that I needed to purchase only from Amazon.com.

I'm an author with ebooks out under a "Big Six" print publisher's imprint (DRM-shackled), my own Starstream imprint for some of my backlist titles (DRM-free), and two other smaller publisher labels--one of which, E-reads, offers DRM-free editions where permitted by the retailers. (At the time those books were released, Amazon required DRM for publisher-issued titles, as opposed to indie titles.) Right now, my own imprint titles are selling better than most of the others--and those are books that I gave away for free, for two years!

I'm also a reader of ebooks, and as a customer I find it offensive that I have to maneuver around technical restrictions to read a book on my device of choice--which might be my Sony Reader, or perhaps my PDA, or in the future could include any of a variety of platforms.

DRM doesn't deter piracy; knowledgeable users can remove it in moments. It probably does deter casual sharing, but frankly--as an author--I'd rather take my chances with casual sharing, and in return gain new audience and maintain a friendly and trusting relationship with my readers.

The "out" for music artists is that most of them can tour to suppliment their income (since they can't rely on sales of CD's or digital files to live on. But authors don't have live performances to fall back on.

At BooksOnBoard (www.booksonboard.com), we have wrestled with the DRM question and customer experience for the last five years. For the last few years, we have included a lock icon next to the format on each title to indicate DRM; if there is no lock icon, there is no DRM. Our customers strongly prefer non-DRM because it simplifies downloads and transfer of titles between devices, as well as allowing them to print or cut & paste enticing excerpts to friends or social media groups - and that stimulates sales. More than 75% of our customer support issues have been DRM-related. Non-DRM titles require very little customer support. The publishers dictate whether a title is DRM or not, premised on their policies or specific author agreements. We have numerous publishers who do not have DRM and this has helped facilitate increased sales, not less. We have seen no indication of any piracy, although there likely is some on a limited scale. There are arguments for DRM as well. For example, if a new Harry Potter title came out in ebook form priced at $25 with no DRM, the temptation to share it for free might be overwhelming for many. It would be interesting and likely instructive to see hard data for select titles in the music industry pre and post DRM.

BooksOnBoard has audiobooks.

### Monday, April 18, 2011

I need to build an environment that is like Second Life, but is for small business owners, artists, software developers, etc. Not only would they each have a web page, but for a small premium, they could have their own virtual environment for events. There could be a free auditorium with limited capabilities for initial events.

Start with people just sitting in chairs around a conference table. Later they can modify their clothing. Eventually they can attach objects to themselves, then move around. One of the fun things of a meeting in Second Life is all of the funny objects you can play with to entertain each other.

Then they could have their own stores with their product on shelves. It could all be standardized at first to make things simple. Standardized freebie Tshirts with their logo would be automatically created. Then eventually there could be fun hunts.

This could spawn an industry of graphic designers who would customize stores for seasoned creatives. And publicists who would work for the creatives to manage their social media.

http://vypersim.com/VyperSim\_Home.html

http://opensimulator.org/wiki/Main\_Page

http://unity3d.com/ -download engine, create web based virual env

http://powerstationne.com/

http://im-tel.org/?q=blog/2010/may/4/fcvw-workshop

http://www.metaversestandards.org/index.php?title=Main\_Page

http://squeakland.org/resources/articles/article.jsp?id=4100

Mycybertwin.com

### Tuesday, April 26, 2011

According to my web stats, a bunch of MITRE people were looking at my web site today. I was going to show it to Gigi and Yec at some point and tell them to send it around, but I like the idea of them being able to say they knew nothing about it if anyone asked them.

I want to write some research proposals to develop virtual worlds that can be run in web browsers – even if a new type of web browser has to be invented. And virtual worlds that start with a small learning curve. Subsequent versions of the web browser can assume previous knowledge of the environment and have more complex capabilities.

The purpose of the virtual world would be to hold virtual events at virtual shopping centers, or town centers. Books, movies, software, and other electronic items would be available for immediate purchase at the malls, not just during the events, but for people who are browsing.

People would meet friends at these malls and have private chats. You could read people’s profiles to get to know something about them, just like in Second Life. Later on, after the events, people could invite each other to other virtual events featuring related creative speakers. They could also come back to the mall to shop or to meet fans who were unable to attend a previous event.

### Tuesday, May 3, 2011

Went to Peter Corbett’s DC Tech meetup group tonight. The focus was a panel of all-women startup executives. It evolved into a short set of stories about nasty things said to some of them throughout their careers, such as how any pregnant woman will run her company into the ground, Is this Bring Your Daughter To Work Day because I’ll bring my daughter and have her talk about her ideas too, and Whose girlfriend are you?

I should have people post their stories on my blog or Facebook page about what people have said to them to tell them You Don’t Belong.

### Thursday, May 12, 2011

I went to the Federal Virtual Worlds Conference. There wasn’t anyone there who had anything to do with SBIR proposals, but it gave me a better idea of what’s going on in that community and I met some good people that I can keep in contact with through Second Life.

### Wednesday, May 18, 2011

Requested resumes from guys at the Arlington Ruby Users Group meeting. I seemed to get a favorable response. I had been worried because I sent an email to Jim, the group leader, last week and hadn’t heard back. But he is interested and knows a friend who may also be a good candidate.

### Thursday, June 2, 2011

I was supposed to have a meeting with the Fairfax Mason small business governments contracting counselor. But I had the time wrong. They called me to ask where I was. I offered to come in right away, but we did the session by phone instead. Which was probably a better idea, since it was useful to be able to pull up web sites.

Talked to Capital One about my $200 for signing up with them. I’ll have to go to the branch and argue it out with them. Then I got a letter in the mail saying I can get the $200 by signing up for a personal account with them.

I made an appointment with a contracts counselor at Arlington Biz Launch, which is their small business consulting group. I’m going to have them review my cost proposal for the SBIR.

### Friday, June 3, 2011

Working on my SBIR proposal. The problem/solution definition is shaping up, but the proposal is still too much of a mess to hand to Jim and Scott.

I haven’t heard back from them again yet. But I got a LinkedIn invitation from Scott today.

### Friday, June 3, 2011

Had a meeting with the CodeSherpas in their Reston shared office space.

### Tuesday, June 21, 2011

Met Sol at the Safeway near MITRE to talk about including him somehow on the SBIR. I told him we should meet in the basement of a parking garage, like Deep Throat. I have to admit, a Safeway is probably the most unusual place I’ve ever had a business meeting.

He seems very interested. He wants to meet again in a couple of weeks to talk about the startup aspect of the project, regardless of whether the SBIR gets funded.

### Thursday, June 23, 2011

Web 3.0 will be interactive web sites. People who are all logged on to the same site at the same time will be able to chat. Except, there are so many sites that it’s unlikely to have more than one person on a site at a time.

People could leave comments on sites to be interactive…but that’s not really very exciting or necessary. That might even be sort of like StumbleUpon.

### Wednesday, July 20, 2011

I sat in on a webinar from a guy who was kind of a sham. It was actually a sales pitch to entice people to pay him probably a whole lot of money to ‘set up their business.’ All he was going to do was some simple web development, then get them to sell his friends’ very expensive scams online.

Anyway, it made me think about who is my audience and what exactly is my niche as a futurist. Anyone can be a ‘futurist.’ You don’t even have to be involved in technology to call yourself that. It could mean that you’re working toward the future of education, politics, or anything else.

My goal is to focus on how the future affects creative small businesses and women. Some of the underdogs. I could focus on other underdogs, such as minorities or gays, but while I sympathize with them, I don’t really represent them.

And hopefully this will help people stop thinking that I want to create cutesy little stories for little girls about women who do math. There’s nothing cutesy about what women engineers put up with. When I say RoleModels, I mean that we don’t have to be the barefoot and pregnant waifs society still tells us to be.

I also went to the Arlington Ruby Group meetup. Sean brought his wife’s famous cupcakes as usual. We should start a cupcakes and programmers salon house where we sell cupcakes and host events, talks to draw in customers.

Where else could I host events and possibly share profits? Cupcake in Vienna, the Soundry. Molly’s Yogurt. I could host events in my home or at the library to develop a list, but if I move to a retail location later, then it would be like bait and switch. I could hop around locations while growing a customer list, that way I don’t commit to any one business. Some businesses, like the Soundry, may feel like they don’t need me, they can use existing staff to plan events and grow an audience. And maybe I should spend time developing the startup first, then the events will make more sense.

The event would be talk by an author who has an ebook or a filmmaker who is selling online. Then there would be a demo from an app developer. This would be the Tysons Corner/Reston version of DC Tech, alternating between locations in Tysons and Reston every month. If it gets popular, once a week and charge app developers to present.

### Thursday, July 21, 2011

Sol hasn’t gotten back to me. I’ve sent him several email messages. Maybe he’s too busy, or maybe he’s no longer interested.

My new futurist web site for RoleModel Enterprises is shaping up. It’s supposed to have a metallic console look. A few YouTube tutorials taught me how to make some nice text and graphics with Gimp. And I made a few interesting animated gifs with my video editing software. One is similar to a star background I was fond of in 1995, when I created my first web site.

### Tuesday, August 2, 2011

Sol says he wants to meet later this month. He said he’s working on a web site for a relative, but according to his Facebook page, he’s launching another startup with another Lisa from ASU. She still lives in Phoenix, so I don’t know how he knows her. Maybe through a relative. Anyway, if he learns something from this project and still has time for working on something with me, all the better.

I’m responding to some of the HARO queries. I haven’t looked at those for awhile, since I’ve never gotten any responses back. Some of the queries aren’t reporters, rather people looking for customers or others to mooch off of. I found a site that is trying to get people to sell code through their site. I almost responded until I saw what they were about. I bookmarked them as a potential competitor.

### Wednesday, August 3, 2011

I was interviewed by a reporter for the New York Post. He’s doing a story on people who quit their jobs in a flamboyant way. I burned my career in a flamboyant way.

### Monday, August 7, 2011

Well, I was mentioned in an article by Brian Moore called “Out Like A Lion.” But of course it didn’t mention the name of my movie or company, so it wasn’t like anyone was going to go look at my web page to find out more.

### Monday, August 14, 2011

I reserved a room at Tysons library for Authors & Apps. I asked for authors and app developers to speak and received a few offers. I sent out a few notices asking people to sign up to find out details about the attending event, but only six people signed up.

### Friday, August 19, 2011

I selected two app developers for Authors & Apps. The only people who submitted were people who had apps related to books. So I think I didn’t advertise correctly. That’s OK, as long as people come.

Hopefully when I put out an announcement about who is presenting and when, people will sign up. I should also reserve another meeting place for November. When I asked for potential presenters for an undecided time, I got no response.

### Saturday, August 20, 2011

I need to do what I used to do to get enjoyment and connections out of gatherings: don’t focus on me, focus on getting to know everyone else. In this case, I need to go to techie meetups and find out what everyone does. Go in there, and show an interest in each person.

I used to be the one who made everyone feel welcome when they came to an event where nobody knew each other. I liked that role. I even said that was my strong point at an interview once. The interviewer looked at me as though I was from Mars. It’s also what I liked about teaching class. I need to fill that role again.

### Tuesday, August 23, 2011

In addition to author talks at art festival booths, it would be cool to arrange author talks on metro cars and street corners. Although reading out loud during a commute might anger some riders. Would Saturday be best?

Also, I wanted to keep it a Northern Virginia thing, preferably Fairfax County, because DC already has a lot of good events. Are there street corners in Arlington that get a lot of foot traffic?

It would be cool to do app demos too. I’d probably need a battery-operated mini projector that could project onto a bright sidewalk.

### Wednesday, August 24, 2011

I went to the Mobile Development DC (MoDevDC) meetup for the first time. I made a brief announcement requesting coproposers for my research proposal. Several people seemed interested in being a part of it. A former MITRE coworker was there. He seemed to think I must be up to cool things.

### Thursday, August 25, 2011

I had lunch with Yec today. Like last night’s event, it was somewhat a lesson in appearances. I have ideas, I’m working on getting funding and a team. So it looks like a successful business. Nothing I have to explain away.

I went to a brainstorming session for DC Week. I’m glad I went because I got to submit my Authors & Apps idea as a session that I would lead.

I ran into Adam Zuckerman again. He said he holds office hours at a coffee shop occasionally. Sort of like my Writers Commitment Group. Except more yakking and probably a much better exchange of ideas.

He meets a lot of people by showing up to interesting tech events and taking an interest in people. I like the way he does that. He comes across as someone who has something to offer. I think he mostly has tech legal advice to offer. Probably also a good network of people who can make things happen.

I need to learn how to make things happen. Specifically, how to get people to program my startup. But maybe if I can just get people to sign up for the site, I can get it to come together. How to get people to sign up…have a kludgy prototype, and an audience for authors & apps. Once I have that, I can start asking for help from connections. Perhaps sell some vouchers to raise money to pay for developers.

I also need a better blog policy. Heck, I need a better web site. Nobody reads my blog anyway, so .maybe I don’t need to worry about the blog until I get an authors & apps audience. Or maybe I should just post on BlogHer. I need a better twitter method also – better people to follow and get some good followers. At least change Facebook so my new twitter handle posts to Facebook and change my blog so it posts to my new twitter account. And have a device around so I can post cool stuff to twitter when it happens, not only when I’m sitting around the house.

### Friday, August 26, 2011

My InteractiTV project needs to automatically store where people first met each other. I wish I could put notes in LinkedIn about that. InteracTV.com is taken. How about EconAcTV.com for economic activity? Too politician-y and not consumer-y.

I like Adam’s idea about office hours. It’s professor-like and suits me. I could do it at the Soundry. People could come in and talk about tech events and volunteer to help out. I could offer free business ideas and be a sounding board. If people want longer individual sessions, they could pay for a one-on-one.

Maybe I could have a hackathon to build my prototype. What would be the legal implications of who owns the code? I could offer free downloads to anyone who helps out.

Peter Corbett and others put on DCWeek, which I think is paid for by DC. He probably asked them for funding to do it. Perhaps I could put on Fairfax County week. But I might need some marketers. Maybe sending to the Facebook and meetup lists would be good enough.

### Monday, August 29, 2011

I’m wondering if Researching Web 3.0 is not the best thing to put in a tagline for a general creative audience. Perhaps ‘Inventing new ways to build community using technology’ is better. Although does it have the wrong connotation for online community builders? I think what I’m doing is aligned with what they do.

Virtual spaces for gathering; when you can’t be there physically.

### Wednesday, September 21, 2011

Ralph Sklarew invited me to a futurist breakfast and was surprised to see two people from my running group. Mary Ellen Seale, a deputy director at the Department of Homeland Security, and Colleen Marzec, a museum techie.

I talked to Jasmine Sante about being the Tysons organizer for her Web Mavens meetup. She asked what my mission would be.

Building tech community in Fairfax County. The in-person events would be run like my classes. Ralph suggested the topic be crowdsourcing tech news. This is my interpretation of the event:

Everyone comes with a recent topic in the news about technology. They get in small groups to decide which topic to mention to the larger group. Then the entire audience votes on a few to discuss. Each group reports to the larger audience about their conclusions/summary.

Or, several people mention a news topic and each group decides which they want to discuss, then summarize thoughts to the larger group.

After the breakfast, I went to a coworking meetup in Rosslyn run by a sharp young woman who is having success at marketing a phone app that a friend of hers developed. She mentioned that she wanted to rent out some coworking space to lease to others, but didn’t want to shoulder the risk all on her own.

I’m seriously considering going in on this with her.

### Thursday, September 22, 2011

Virtual events as the next generation of television: YOU will be the actors in the story you create in real time. A new way of reality TV playing out – it really is reality. Because you’re participating.

The interface will be different. An implant in your glasses so you can see the participants that are in other parts of the world. Talk to the people with voice rather than text.

It’s funny how people would rather use text than voice, so you can see the chat longer, chat asynchronously, or over top of each other, so you wouldn’t have to wait for a break in the conversation to get a word in. Perhaps you’d use voice as input, but it would post as text.

I dragged myself all the way to Rockville for a Cofounders meetup – an incredibly long metro ride, but I got a lot done on an SBIR proposal on the way there and back. I met John, a nice, smart young guy who lives near me – we had to go all the way to Rockville to find each other? He seems interested in partnering on something. And he suggested meeting next week to talk about it.

### Tuesday, September 27, 2011

Ralph gave me his ticked to Disruptation, an event I wasn’t accepted to participate in, which was fine since I wasn’t as far along with my startup as the presenters were. It was also good because the winners of the presentation contest got plaques. I won the raffle and got an iPad! Now I can learn to write apps for the Mac.

### Wednesday, September 26, 2011

I asked Stephanie for more detail on renting coworking space, but it seems she no longer wants to spend time making that happen.

I met with John to talk about startup compatibility. We decided to meet at Jammin Java in October with another guy from the cofounders meetup to do Ruby programming.

### Saturday, October 1, 2011

I’m setting up my iPad so I can picture blog on the spot – of course, that will work only in locations with WiFi. I’m not buying 3G for fifty dollars a month just to browse the internet where there’s no WiFi.

### Tuesday, October 11, 2011

I held the first Future of Books talk tonight at the Tysons library. The event was pretty good. The app developers were great speakers. Everyone was interested in their technology.

The authors didn’t talk about how technology affects their work, as I had expected. I thought that the tech person for the last author was going to talk about how they work together, but she didn’t even show up.

I brought my iPad, but the room was so dark that I didn’t take any pictures. Randy’s phone had a flash, so he took a few pictures so I could post them on my blog.

### Thursday, October 13, 2011

I fell in a hole on the way to the DC Ruby Users meetup

No, I don’t mean that figuratively. In horizontal rain, I got out of the metro, took a wrong turn, and ended up in a construction ditch one foot deep in running water. I stood in the back during the whole meeting, barefoot and soaking wet.

Dave Copeland talked about Ruby templates. Mustache uses too many curly braces. Dave likes wrestling, but hates Haml. No, wrestling is not a template. I think his wrestling pictures were an attempt to make Ruby sound more…manly? Or maybe to make it geekier. Because, you know, programming isn’t geeky enough.

Anthony Burton talked about Chef and Puppet configuration managers. He says that according to some people, DevOps is smoke and mirrors to sell books.

Anthony had it worse than I did. He came all the way from Charlottesville. With fifteen mile to go before he got to the Vienna metro station, his windshield wiper broke and blew off. He was also soaked and joked that he wanted to take off his pants and let them dry during his talk. Instead of imagining the audience in their underwear, the speaker would actually be in his.

### Wednesday, October 19, 2011

Philippa Hughes had a great Salon Contra event at her place on U Street. Hasan Elahi, an art professor at the University of Marland and former guest on the Colbert Report, talked about his art.

His most famous work of art was conceived when the FBI started investigating him as a suspected terrorist. In 2001, before the age of Foursquare, for the purpose of proving his whereabouts in the case that he may be suspected of some bombing in the future, he provided the FBI a detailed account of his location every few hours. “I can do a much better job of surveilling myself than the FBI can.”

Hassan has since been removed from the FBI’s watch list. He has even travelled to several countries on behalf of the State Department as an art ambassador. However he continues to surveil himself. Be like the government watchdogs and check out his project.

### Thursday, October 20, 2011

I said a few words at the MoDev meetup about my future vision of mobile technology.

My vision was that most people in the general public are going to have their own simple app. Eyemags.com already enables people to do this. The future of mobile is not going to be phones. MIT has already developed a device to embed in your glasses so you can see A computer screen in your field of vision. I also said that meetups would take place virtually with people from around the world coming together to network just like we do in person now.

A couple of former early Apple employees talked about working for Steve Jobs.

### Tuesday, October 26, 2011

A guy who runs his own programmers shop offered to teach a six week Ruby course. Russ Olsen, author of Eloquent Ruby, was also there to help us out with questions. “Rails is the old Chevy you throw in the ocean,” Russ explained. “What you really want is the coral.” Wha?

“That’s a horrible analogy,” I proclaimed at his eloquence.

Then Russ explained that people used to put rusting cars in the ocean as a catalyst for the growth of coral reefs. After the car disintegrates, you’re left with a nice coral formation for marine species to live in.

Rails is the structure around which to program a Ruby application. By the time you’re done, the Rails code that was automatically generated has been replaced by your code. You didn’t need the code, just the structure.

“Ah. Now it makes sense,” I said. “That’s the best analogy I’ve ever heard.”

### Tuesday, November 1, 2011

I reserved the domain name GuruTapas.com. I wanted GuruCafe.com, but it was already taken. Instead of a store like Amazon, it’s a towne center. A place to get a few appetizers of stories offered by gurus.

### Wednesday, November 2, 2011

The Founders Institute held an open house at the bar on top of the Holiday Inn in Rosslyn with an awesome view of Georgetown. Everyone had great things to say about the Founders Institute program. Of course, if anyone was unhappy with it, they weren’t at the event. It better be great. It costs $900 to get in.

Honestly, it sounds like a way to bleed money from insecure people desperate to sound like they are creating an important startup.

### Monday, November 7, 2011

I gave a talk on a panel at the Affinity Lab for Digital Capital Week. Later in the evening, I had a roundtable discussion about the Future of Books at the Martin Luther King Library in DC. The discussion didn’t go as I had planned. It was even better than I expected.

I was pleased with the venue. I had reserved a room at the MLK library in DC. The confirmation included a picture of an empty room with linoleum floor and a block wall. It said they didn’t guarantee there would be chairs.

Not only were there chairs, but we were in a remodeled section that had huge windows facing the street. As people walked by, they could look in and see the presentation slides.

After Patick’s marvelous talk, I led a roundtable disscussion about the future of books – whatever “books” might be. That was more fun than I had expected. I wasn’t sure what people would do or say. It didn’t follow the format I had planned, but I’ll have to hold more of those sessions.

A homeless person had been watching us from outside the large window. At one point he came in and grabbed some fliers about sign language from a nearby table. I think he was just curious about what was going on. It made me reflect on how good it is to have access to society and resources. Not everyone can walk into a room of well dressed people and be able to get useful information or make important connections.

### Tuesday, November 8, 2011

The Capital Technology Management Hub put on a nice startup pitch event at the posh new George Mason University conference center. Tracy Tran is on their alumni board and suggested putting the event on the DC Week calendar. I’m glad he did, otherwise I wouldn’t have known about the event. The best part of the event is that it was attended by real grown-ups – not just the 20-somethings that come to the DC tech stuff.

### Thursday, November 10, 2011

I gave a talk about the GuruTapas site I’m creating at the DC Ruby users group meeting.

### Tuesday, November 22, 2011

I went to visit the entrepreneurs’ office in Phoenix near my mom’s house, Club E, to meet them and give a short talk about GuruTapas. Unfortunately, their building was foreclosed on, and they won’t have office space again for a few months. So I met with the guy who runs Club E and chatted with him and one of his colleagues.

### Saturday, December 3, 2011

I went to a Code Retreat in Reston run by the obnoxious guy who insulted me at his disorganized programmers class last month. He was nice to me today. I think he realized he had been rude and felt bad about it.

The retreat was OK, I don’t know if I got that much out of it. But it was good to show my face and see a few people.

### Thursday, December 8, 2011

I showed up at the Women’s National Book Association’s holiday party. I haven’t been to one of their events for several years. But with my supermemory, working as usual, I weirded out a few people with how much I remembered about them.

I’ve been trying to find their events for the past few years, searching their website, but they don’t do a good job of keeping that up. I thought they had died out. So I’m glad they’re still around.

I told a few people about the project I’m working on and said I’d let them know when there’s something ready worth trying out.

### Thursday, December 15, 2011

I gave a talk about The Future of Books to a very small group at the Thomas Jefferson Library. Nice group, good discussion.

I keep working on the interface and functionality of GuruTapas.com. It’s getting prettier, but doesn’t do much.

### Wednesday, December 28, 2011

I’ve decided that I’d like two cofounders: one superstar programmer and one grassroots coordinator. My role would be The Professor. I do some programming and some grassroots outreach, but mostly I’d lead discussions among the grassroots base and help the authors.

### Monday, January 23, 2012

The fourth or fifth (depending on what you count) Future of Books event was at the Patrick Henry Library. Around thirty people came, which was about what I expected since around sixty people had RSVPd.

On my way there, I stopped at Walgreens. They had cookies on clearance for five cents a box, so I bought what they had left. Then I wondered, what am I going to do with all these cookies? So I put them out for everyone.

As with previous events, the talks were fantastic. They audience had great questions. I added twenty more people on my mailing list.

My previous email statistics were five percent opens. But then I added their names to the subject line. I think that resulted in fewer messages going to spam because thirty five percent opened the last email I sent.

Deb Cohen-Smith talked about how publishers are wreaking havoc on the libraries with their ebook pricing policies. A few library systems are suing publishers.

Which led me to think of an idea for keeping libraries in mind with the GuruTapas site. The role of libraries is changing. Libraries can be an event center around reading and books. If libraries put on free events for the public, and people check in to GuruTapas when they get to the event (the library scans their library card or their mobile device has the right GPS coordinates), then the libraries get credit for hosting those people. The more people that come, the more free books people can check out.

### Wednesday, January 25, 2012

I met with Jen Gonsalves, who worked on Howard Dean’s campaign, to discuss a possible partnership. She did grassroots fundraising and puts on events. I would like a grassroots fundraiser to presell vouchers to potential customers to raise money to hire a programmer.

She seemed too much like an employee. I asked how she would get people to get a grassroots movement to pay twenty or a hundred dollars toward buying books when the site is up. She said it depended on what authors there would be. She said if the books were only sci fi, she wouldn’t buy vouchers. Come on. There would be all kinds of authors.

She didn’t seem to know how to get authors to sign up either. So maybe I need a salesperson instead of a grassroots coordinator? I don’t expect her to be visionary, but she needs to be motivated to get people together.

### Tuesday, February 14, 2012

I asked how they got so many people to contribute five or ten dollars to Howard Dean. She didn’t know, supposedly it just happened.

I went downtown for an event that happens to be tomorrow night. In my defense, it was scheduled for tonight at some point. Unfortunately I never noticed that the date had changed.

So I crashed another event. The DC chapter of the Association of Computing Machinery had a coworking meetup. With snacks. I had met two of the guys before. Women were unbelievably well represented – almost 50%.

### Wednesday, February 15, 2012

This month’s DC Tech meetup was at the historic synagogue. It’s always huge. Usually around 500 people.

I made an announcement during open mic inviting everyone to the next Future of Books event on Feb. 28. People were starting to get chattery, so I announced Futuuuuure ooooof Booooks sort of like Piiiiigs iiiiiin Spaaaaaaace.

It got a really good giggle, but I’m wondering if it’s because Peter Corbett did something funny behind me when I said that.

### Thursday, February 16, 2012

Tech Cocktail is the cool thing for 30 year olds to go to. It’s a bar full of 30 year old boys showing their cool web startups to other 30 year old boys who wish they were as cool.

What’s interesting is that when I was just out of college, the bigger the company you worked for, the cooler you were. I thought it was unoriginal of everyone to jump on the same employer bandwagon. Now it’s unoriginal to work for a startup.

When I arrived, everyone was standing around on the sidewalk. Standing around in a long line outside a night club is a sign that you’re at a place so cool that everybody’s there. When you’re 30.

(Although when I was in my 20′s – my crowd stopped going to clubs when I was 26 – clubs were surrounded by acres of parking lot. There were no passers-by to impress by making your customers stand outside in the cold. Or in the heat, in the case of Tempe.)

Inside, everyone was squashed so close together that I ended up wearing someone else’s nametag. The jokes that ensued were the highlight of the evening.

### Sunday, February 19, 2012

I’m tired of hearing about job creation. As if They want us to think we are helpless waifs, waiting for The Man to save us. So They can have all the power and money.

In the future, we won’t need Job Creators to come save us. We’ll create our own damn jobs. We’ll hone a skill and meet people who are willing to pay someone with that skill to get a job done.

And we’ll be free to use that skill for many people, groups, projects. We won’t be beholden to one incompetent or greedy powermonger who is more concerned about making you feel unimportant than creating a useful product or service.

What does this have to do with the Future of Books? The more creative among us will be writing niche books to let others know about our skill sets and drum up business. A lot of people are already doing that. And they’ll pay people, whose skill is crafting books, people who are making writing jobs for themselves, to mold the book into something that will boost their careers.

### Saturday, February 25, 2012

I went to the Northern Virginia Writers Club meeting for the first time. Dorothy Hassan is the chapter president. I met her at Noreen Wald’s class at the Writers Center in 2007.

I met Matt Iden, who joined my Future of Books meetup group. He would like book groups in the DC metro area to collaborate more. I agree. I intend to make that a focus of my meetup efforts.

### Tuesday, February 28, 2012

Rob Pegoraro talks about the nondeath of ebooks. Cannibalize your own business before someone else does. And Amazon revoked its sales of “1984.”

Dr. William Hanff says there are no rules. And here they are… He had a lot of interesting comparisons about the purpose of books – a way to communicate stories – and the medium of books – print, hypertext, pictures… There are many ways to perceive information.

I met Angela, who runs a meetup in Maryland, but may not want to run the entire thing herself. Perhaps she, Matt, and I could collaborate.

### Sunday, March 4, 2012

I gave my first in-person reading from Diary of an Avatar. I’ve been giving them in Second Life, but this time I tried one at the Writers Center in Bethesda.

Writers crowds tend to be older than the techie crowd I often associate with. Some of them were techie enough, but others didn’t seem to relate to what an avatar was.

### Wednesday, March 14, 2012

The Cofounders meetup is an event where people who are working on startups meet potential cofounders. It’s supposed to be sort of like speed dating, I suppose. They also have a web site where you can look for potential matches. I’m not sure how it compares to dating, since I never did much of that, and I got married before anyone knew what an internet was.

With actual dating, I asked a classmate to do a project with me & hang out. I knew that getting married was something I wanted to do. But with cofounders, I’m not convinced I want to commit to a partner. I like the idea of doing projects with various people. If I find the right one, then we can become partners, but at my age, I’m not convinced that I need a steady partner, just because that’s the way everyone else does it.

### Thursday, March 22, 2012

Since I spoke at IgniteDC, I had to answer a few questions for Geoff Livingston’s blog, so I’m sharing them here:

Q: Why did you choose your session topic?

The night before I submitted my topic, I organized an event about the Future of Books. A Fairfax County librarian talked about how ebooks are affecting libraries. I was furious when I heard that publishers backcharge libraries for books already purchased after the books become more popular. Some library systems are suing publishers over this.

Q: Why should attendees be excited to hear this?

The role of libraries in our society is changing. Although much of what libraries have offered in the past is now online, libraries are still wonderful meeting places to talk about current events, our community, writing, reading, learning. The Future of Books will not undermine libraries. We will embrace libraries.

Q: Tell us what you do professionally?

Chief Futurist of RoleModel Enterprises. Developing http://GuruTapas.com an online platform where authors host online book talks and clubs and booklovers socialize. GuruTapas.com hosts free web sites for booklovers and authors.

I run the Future of Books meetup to discuss how technology affects the way we experience books and socialize through learning. I also write books about women in technology.

Q: What’s your big project/hope/thought for Spring?

Writing a proposal to create an online people-to-people library online writings and gatherings – so people in the US & Afghanistan can participate in each others’ stories. Figuring out who the right people are to help develop the technology and shape the community for this project.

People said the talk was good. A few people came up to me afterward for more details about my project. One would like to work on it, the other would like me to speak at one of his events.

They posted a video of the talk, which is fun to send out to others.

### Saturday, March 31, 2012

I gave my second in-person reading from Diary of an Avatar at the Northern Virginia Writers Club meeting. They drew a better crowd than the Writers Center and they seemed to think my piece was unexpected, yet amusing.

### Epilogue

In the days of small towns and small schools, nobody had privacy. They had community. Everyone knew their neighbors and their classmates. They didn't constantly hide indoors so that nobody would know who they were.

Flash to today: People need to promote themselves to get ahead. But people chide others - especially women - for doing so, saying that they're only inviting trouble. But if we don't let women put themselves out there, how will we ever get a female president?