

PITCHES (DARLENA CUNHA)

Contently: A publication for writers

“The Evolution of Trolling”

This piece concentrates on the evolution of trolling from its roots in the 1980s and 1990s to today. What started out as a group of people connecting online and pulling what they call "harmless" pranks mostly on their friends or members of a specific community has spread toward lone-wolf trolling, bullying of specific individuals, and revolves more around misery than fun. In it, I have an interview with Nick Price, a one-time true troll of the 1990s, turned successful Internet troll of the 2010s, with his project "Hope that Helps" in which he tries to bring back the true meaning of trolling.

I also use examples from my life as a writer and insight from Price to expose the ways in which trolling is changing and the people who are now behind the wheel, examining their shifting audience and the effects they have on writers and others on the internet.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Darlana Cunha

Vice Motherboard: Health and Technology Vertical

“When Good Eating Goes Bad”

Good afternoon, Adrienne,

I've been doing some research into disordered eating patterns, and I was wondering if Motherboard might be interested in a piece that examines how a desire to be healthy can translate gradually into a fear of food for many people, and how they can combat this devastating psychological effect. It concentrates on the story of two women, one who simply wanted to eat healthier and didn't see her evolution into food terror until almost too late, and one who became terrified of food after being diagnosed with cancer. It studies the science behind orthorexia and other disordered eating with quotes from experts as well, and gives tips on how to maintain a personalized healthy eating goal without giving in to food anxiety.

With the upcoming holiday season, food choices are bound to be on readers' minds, and I thought this might fit well with Motherboard's voice.

I'm attaching a rough draft in case you have time to review. It runs just about 1100 words, but can be easily cut or edited.

Is this something you might be interested in?

The Mantle: A book review publication

“The Future of YA Feminism”

Good morning, Ariell,

I've been doing some YA reading recently, and I was wondering if you'd be interested in a piece that outlines the great strides YA lit has made in feminism, comparing and contrasting structure, tone, and literary tools used in two recent releases (The Half Life of Molly Pierce by Katrina Leno and Codename Verity by Elizabeth Wein).

A corner we are rounding is the separation of YA feminist lit from the traditional "coming of age" genre, and this piece explores that in addition to looking at what truly makes a feminist hero in literature and why.

Is this something you might be interested in?

I'm attaching a first draft, in case you have time to review. It runs just about 1,000 words.

Right now, it focuses only on the two recent books mentioned, but I could very easily branch that out and compare the tools used in those books to tools used in the typical coming-of-age YA literature I grew up with in the 80s and 90s, if you'd prefer a broader scope.

In terms of credentials, I've just published an investigative feature in the Guardian, as well as an investigative piece in The Atlantic along with other popular pieces there. I also write for The Washington Post, and TIME Magazine and have been published in The New York Times, The Chicago Tribune, Salon, Wired, and Dame Magazine, amid dozens of others.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Scientific American: (Print)

“What It’s Like to Be Patient Zero”

Good afternoon, Fred,

I was wondering if you'd like an exploratory feature on a family whose son is patient zero for a new clinical study on Friedreich's Ataxia, which is a disease that causes paralysis and eventual death. It has no cure. Josh Wooten has been through all sorts of anti-oxidant trials and other

experimental treatment with no luck, and when the University of Florida began looking into FA, they immediately connected with Josh. He's now donated his stem cells for a regeneration attempt. The study has three parts, first they grow his cells in a petri dish and see if placing a virus within those cells helps them to create a necessary protein to stop this disease. It worked. The next step is testing it on chimpanzees, then finally humans, then waiting for FDA approval. Josh is 18 now, first diagnosed at 10. Before then, he'd been really active. Now he can hardly walk and will be wheelchair bound within a few months. The average lifespan for someone suffering this is 35, and his parents don't know that the tests will provide a cure for him. Even if they do, there is only a small chance he would regenerate. Mostly it would stop the disease from killing him. He's doing this to help others with the disease, to cure them before it's too late. Patient zero is a self-description; there are others involved in the study, of course, and I already have interviews with three of the researchers who can clarify this, in addition to Josh and his family.

What is it like to be the patient whose cells are being used to forward treatment for a condition that stole your life from you when you were just a child? What do you go through now, in terms of the trial and in terms of day-to-day activity? How, exactly, do clinical trials like this work in their very early stages? I feel like his story, especially since he's patient zero in the only stem cell study attacking this disease, would be a really poignant way to educate about this sort of degenerative disease and condition.

In terms of credentials interesting to you, I've just had a health feature published in The Guardian. I've written science, nature and health for Good Magazine, The Atlantic, The New York Times, Aeon Magazine, Time Magazine, Backpacker, Refinery 29, Dame Magazine, Atlas Obscura and more.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Darlana Cunha