

SHEILA WILENSKY (she/her)

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OVERVIEW: Enthusiastic, innovative life-long teacher; reliable, thoughtful freelance writer/editor; excellent communication and administrative skills; consummate interviewer with a track record of asking delicate and challenging questions; event planner and workshop presenter; collaborative team player. Ideas person. A recognized pioneer in education and literacy. Solution finder. Forever curious.

EDUCATION

Master of Arts in Teaching, University of Massachusetts
Bachelor of Arts, University of Connecticut
Political Science, minors in History and Psychology

WORK HISTORY

Freelance writer/editor

2010-present

Publishers Weekly, American Bookseller, Tucson Weekly, Arizona Jewish Life, Poets & Writers, Desert Leaf magazine, New England Reading Association Journal, Bangor Daily News; copyediting Arizona Historical Society, University of Arizona Press

Associate editor of the Arizona Jewish Post

Tucson, Arizona 2004-2014

- Interviewed Elie Wiesel, Lily Tomlin, Noam Chomsky, Masha Gessen, Arlo Guthrie and others
- Wrote and edited hundreds of articles, devised unique story subjects with some reprinted in national Jewish newspapers such as *The Forward*
- Awarded Jewish Press Association's Simon Rockower First Place for Excellence in Feature Writing, "Healing and Hope for Tucsonans as Jan. 8 Anniversary Nears"

Columnist AppleSeeds, Cobblestone Publishing

2001-2004

- Wrote monthly column "Branching Out" relating children's books to social studies topics

Educator/Consultant

Visiting creative writing teacher, City High School

Tucson, Arizona 2017

Social Studies department head, Sonoran Science Academy

Tucson, Arizona 2003-04

Visiting Instructor, Catalina Foothills High School

Tucson, Arizona 2000

- Taught economics and government

Educational consultant, Tucson Unified School District

Tucson, Arizona 2002-2004

- Brought children's authors to Title I conference

Social studies teacher/department head, Mt. Desert Island High School

Mt. Desert, Maine

1996-2002

- Created and taught Senior Seminar on American Society
- Incorporated study of multicultural high schools in Tucson
- Developed, launched, and managed an annual intellectually challenging trip to Boston, featuring a seminar with late historian Howard Zinn and tour of professors at Harvard University

Visiting Instructor, College of the Atlantic

Mt. Desert, Maine

- Created and taught Teaching Controversial Issues through Children's Literature

Consultant

remote

- Served as consultant for children's books publishers such as McGraw-Hill and Tilbury Houses for various projects
- Integrative Curriculum Institute at the University of Maine, Orono
 - Workshopped social studies curriculum for over 100 teachers
 - Incorporated non-academic books into the syllabus

Owner OZ Children's Bookstore

Southwest Harbor, Maine

1982-97

- Worked with authors like Barbara Cooney, Robert McCloskey, Dr. Christiane Northrup and others
- Launched multiple festivals and special events including:
 - Menopause Festival
 - Tom Chappell of Tom's of Maine business breakfast
 - It's Our World Too Day
- Workshops for teachers and librarians "Connecting History: Our Lives, Their Lives," integrating children's literature with social studies curricula
- Facilitated OZ Literacy Fund from anonymous benefactor, 50k to continue and grow community programs

Leadership

- National co-chair and on the national board for American Association of Children's Booksellers
- Tucson Festival of Books authors committee member
- Moderator and speaker at several festivals and conferences, including but not limited to:
 - The Tucson Festival of Books
 - The Texas Book Festival
 - American Booksellers Association conferences
- Board member of Our Place Clubhouse (Tucson, Arizona)
 - Led creative writing groups for individuals recovering from serious mental illness
 - Published chapbook from the workshops *A Certain Slant of Light. Emerging from the Shadows of Mental Illness* (2014)
 - Wrote and received grants from *Poets & Writers* to support Our Place Clubhouse