

December 4, 2016

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Meg Elison. I'm a Bay Area science fiction author and feminist essayist. My novel, *The Book of the Unnamed Midwife*, won the Philip K. Dick Award and was listed as a recommended work by the James A. Tiptree Award Committee. The book was also included in the 100 Best Books of the Year list by Publisher's Weekly, and the same list issued by Amazon. I have published essays and short fiction with McSweeney's, The Establishment, Everyday Feminism, Tor.com, LitHub, Motherboard, Compelling Science Fiction, and many other outlets. I'm part of the writer's room for The Mess, an East Bay sketch comedy group. My second novel, *The Book of Etta*, is forthcoming from publisher 47North in 2017.

I've known Stephanie Ann Foster for the better part of two decades. As a contributing member of my writing and critique group, The Naming Convention, Stephanie Ann gave detailed and nuanced feedback to her fellows that reflected both her academic excellence and her intimate relationship to fiction and prose. She was unstintingly responsible to both her own work and the work of others. Her critiques were always constructive and often piercing on a foundational level; she encourages those around her to do their best work. It is because of this work that I've offered to host her first reading and solicit feedback for her forthcoming work.

Having been privileged to read some of her more nascent work, I can say without a doubt that the work Stephanie Ann produces is of the highest quality and is ready for publication. I know she has had some success with licensing her plays and adaptations, one of them having been produced six times. She has published short fiction and chapters in academic works. Her literary agent has remarked on the utter originality of her work as its best feature. Stephanie Ann is also a performer and director, in addition to being a top-notch writer. In various capacities, she has worked with dozens of theatre companies around the Bay Area and maintains a prodigious web of relationships in that sphere. When I think on the wide, glittering circle of the artists I am lucky enough to know, Stephanie Ann Foster is a standout among standouts.

Much of what makes her stand out is her character. In professions often defined by flakiness and the expectation of the fragile artist's temperament, Stephanie Ann is a stalwart. She follows through on her commitments and is often found pinch-hitting and filling in for others. Just lately, she's been an excellent example to many by continuing to do all of this work with her daughter, Quinn, on her hip. The careers of women, particularly of women in the arts, tend to fade and draw to a close after their children are born; Stephanie Ann is modeling a strong example of the opposite. She is invested in the good of the world, though she is often humble about her contributions. I know she works in a food distribution program on many of her weekends, and has connected theatre programs to nonprofits, and worked for the benefit of the poorest people in her own community and the world. Stephanie Ann is well-traveled, and carries with her the wisdom that long-term traveling brings. It shows in her commitments to fairness and diversity, and her willingness to bring art to people who don't always get a chance to see it.

It is with all of this in mind that I heartily recommend Stephanie Ann Foster for any project, position, or honor that you and your organization can bestow. She is a sterling example of a professional, a citizen, and an artist in every way.

Sincerely,

Meg Elison
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