

The Rock Publication Interview 10/27/05

Monica F. Anderson

THE ROCK: Who is Monica Frazier Anderson, tell us something about you?

AUTHOR: Monica Frazier Anderson is a mother, author, humorist, speaker, and Doctor of Dental Surgery. My left brain is well developed, but I prefer to use the right/creative side.

THE ROCK: Where are you from, and currently residing?

AUTHOR: I'm a native Texan. I currently reside in Arlington, Texas.

THE ROCK: Are there any other writers in the family?

AUTHOR: No published writers that I'm aware of but there are a lot of storytellers.

THE ROCK: When did you start writing?

AUTHOR: Can't remember when I met my grandmother, when I started walking, or when I started writing. It's my passion.

THE ROCK: What prepared you to become an author?

AUTHOR: Too many years of school – twenty, not counting continue education courses. I've also attended workshops, seminars, and classes on the craft for years. Also, I wrote a column for eight years for a major daily in the DFW metroplex.

THE ROCK: What inspired you to become a writer?

AUTHOR: Hmm, I love words. I've been an avid reader since childhood and I love a good story. I've always longed to be part of the literary tradition of sharing slices of life in novel form. And it's a lot easier than dentistry. LOL

THE ROCK: What inspired you to write your book?

AUTHOR: When I wrote my weekly column, I covered a lot of topics from motherhood to divorce and depression. I received a tremendous response from readers who related to these topics but didn't feel they could share their feelings as openly as I shared mine. That got me thinking about a way to relate the consequences of "spiritual anorexia" aka depression without sounding like a doctor. My novel is the result.

THE ROCK: Tell us about your newest creation. What is the premise?

AUTHOR: Faith Henry, my heroine, is the first female mayor of a suburban community near Dallas, Texas. She seems to have the ideal life, but things are

never as they seem. Her spouse is emotionally unavailable, her children are selfish, and her enemies at City Hall are constantly conspiring against her. When a reporter reveals a secret from her past, she drops in the polls and falls into the arms of her administrative assistant. Think the passion of *Unfaithful* with the emotional dilemma of *Bridges of Madison County* with a contemporary, suburban twist.

THE ROCK: Any publishing contracts in the working?

AUTHOR: I have an agent in D.C. She's shopping another novel around. I've received some positive response from editors but nothing I can take to the bank. It's a tough genre and industry to break into, but I'm optimistic and I'm not sitting still waiting to be discovered.

THE ROCK: Have you ever self-published? Why or why not?

AUTHOR: Yes. My last book, a collection of columns, was self-published. I do a lot of motivational speaking and people always asked for a book of my columns. So I published a book of my columns.

THE ROCK: What are "traditional publishers" looking for?

AUTHOR: They seem to be looking for a proven entity. It's not enough to just be a good writer. You have to bring readers with you – either from your celebrity status or sales from your self-published efforts. Most of the authors I know who have major publishing contracts began with a self-published book.

THE ROCK: If you were a publisher, what would be your niche? Why?

AUTHOR: Wow. Great question. I think my niche would be mainstream novels with a lot of humor or short stories.

THE ROCK: For an author, is having a publishing contract with a "traditional publisher" important professionally? Why?

AUTHOR: Having a publishing contract gives you some legitimacy with people who don't know the industry; however, writers and most readers are looking for a well-written story. Having a contract doesn't always mean you have a good story. Of course, being self-published doesn't mean you have a good story either! LOL. The contract makes distribution and promotion easier because it opens doors for you.

THE ROCK: What are some of your professional and

personal achievements?

AUTHOR: Oh, I've got a bunch of awards for community service, blah, blah blah. I'm a member of the Writer's Colony at Eureka Springs. I've had poetry published in two anthologies. My best personal achievement is a son in college and one about to finish high school. Now that was work!

THE ROCK: Who are some of your favorite authors?

AUTHOR: Og Mandino, Dr. Maya Angelou, Ralph Ellison, Amy Tan, J. California Cooper, poet, Gwendolyn Brooks, and John Grisham.

THE ROCK: Where do you want to be in 5 years?

AUTHOR: Living in Atlanta, writing/speaking full-time. Smelling the roses I planted in my garden. Wait. In exactly five years from this moment? I want to be asleep. It's 6 AM.

AUTHOR:

THE ROCK: Thank you, Monica Frazier Anderson.