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**Barbra Rodriguez**

[www.vitalwordplay.com](https://www.vitalwordplay.com/contact)

Book coach and developmental/line editor with decades of experience. Skilled at ensuring succinct, vibrant copy that is on message and helps a client’s voice shine. Editing and coaching of [books](https://www.vitalwordplay.com/editing-info) and other long-form content is informed by decades of writing professionally about lifestyle topics, health, conservation, mindfulness, and other areas (see [Contently](https://barbrarodriguez.contently.com/?public_only=false&skill_ids%5b%5d=17) clips).

Genre covered include historical novels and nonfiction: big idea books, such as diversity topics, life science-related topics, self-help books, including with memoir elements, nature essays, social justice journalism and other narrative nonfiction, and broad spirituality, as a third-degree black belt in Aikido, a mindfulness-related martial art (such as covering energy healing modalities, and progressive Christianity).

# Skills & Experience

Coaching/Editing

* Early book idea or manuscript coaching, and developmental feedback on completed early or late drafts
* Line editing for voice and style
* Book proposals (coaching or feedback)
* Online module updating, such as for Texas physicians (txhealthsteps.com modules since 2018)
* Pitch planning, including query letter guidance and starting a literary agent list, for earlier-stage clients

Writing

* + Ghostwriting of self-help, social justice, and other select book topics
  + Book proposals (have pitched my own)
  + Jacket blurbs
  + Developing imprint analyses
  + Developing style guides for copy edits of earlier-stage clients
  + Developing book maps for early manuscripts
* Features and conference reports

# Work History

**Freelance** 2016-present

Coaching, editing clients include: Stanford University and Catapult presses for lay nonfiction; MIT Press and W, W. Norton; self-published authors (coach/edit); the climate sciences division of Lawrence Berkeley Lab; conservation organizations such as The Nature Conservancy

**Science Writer/Editor** 2003-2016

UT Austin Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center (8 years), Cockrell School of Engineering (3 years), Natural Sciences College (2 years, Communications Director)

**Senior Communications Coordinator** 2000-2002

Alvin J. Siteman Cancer Center,

Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis; Part-time freelance writer

**Medical Science Writer** 1997-2000 Washington Univ. School of Medicine in St. Louis

# Education

Author Accelerator, certified book coach, memoir and fiction, 2024, with nonfiction certification underway; UC, San Diego Copyediting Certificate Program, 2019 (aced all classes); UC, Santa Cruz Science Communication Program, 1996 certificate; Washington University in St. Louis, master’s in molecular cell biology and biochemistry, 1994; University of Missouri, Columbia, bachelor’s in biology, science education, 1987

# Activities

Writer’s League of Texas (WLOT) Agents & Editors Conference (2018-2022); Diversity Travel Fellowship, World Conference of Science Journalists, and Journalist Travel Grant, Ecological Soc. of America Conference, 2017; non-fiction book competition judge, National Association of Science Writers, 2016, and nonfiction judge for WLOT, 2014, 2015; Austin Creative Non-Fiction meetup group director, 2011-2013, Best of TX Feature Writing Merit Award, Texas PRA, 2010