

OVER 25 YEARS OF EXTRAORDINARY RESULTS

*Foggia*<sup>™</sup>  
PUBLIC RELATIONS

LYLA FOGGIA, PRINCIPAL

✉ [lyla@foggiapr.com](mailto:lyla@foggiapr.com) ☎ (503) 227 3923 🌐 [www.foggiapr.com](http://www.foggiapr.com)

CLIENT:

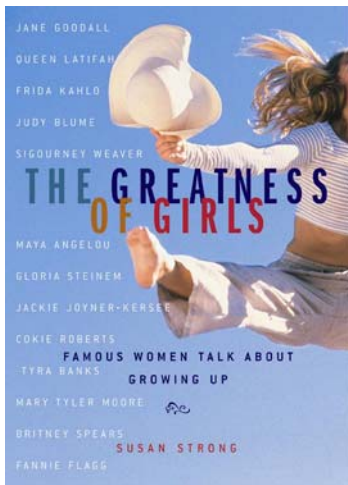
**Susan Strong**

WRITING EXAMPLE:

**Media Kit**

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

**[www.foggiapr.com](http://www.foggiapr.com)**



*A book filled with inspiration and encouragement for girls as they cope with adolescence.*

## **The Greatness of Girls: Famous Women Talk About Growing Up**

by **Susan Strong**

Andrews McMeel Publishing; \$16.95

Adolescence is no longer a simple transition between childhood and the responsibilities of becoming an adult. Young people are barraged by mixed messages from parents, teachers, friends and the media that can lead to doubts and confusion about how to think and act – unfortunately, at a time when their lives are just unfolding in terms of who *they* really are.

Susan Strong, the author of **The Greatness of Girls: Famous Women Talk About Growing Up**, calls it “a roller coaster of emotions” that girls in particular experience today. As the mother of two daughters on the cusp of adolescence, she wanted to find a way to help girls through the doubts, confusion and awkwardness of this chapter of their lives.

As a result, Strong created **The Greatness of Girls**, featuring first-person accounts by forty-two remarkable women who each reveal what it was like for *them* growing up.

Included are...**Actresses:** Candice Bergen, Carol Burnett, Mary Tyler Moore, Cybill Shepherd, Sigourney Weaver. **Athletes:** Jackie Joyner-Kersey, Sheryl Swoopes, Babe Didrikson Zaharias. **Performing artists:** Marian Anderson, Mary Chapin Carpenter, Queen Latifah, Irene O’Garden, Britney Spears. **Visual artists:** Margaret Bourke-White, Frida Kahlo. **Broadcasters:** Cokie Roberts, Nina Totenberg. **Dignitaries:** Golda Meir, Eleanor Roosevelt. **Scientists:** Sylvia Earle, Dr. Jane Goodall, Margaret Mead. **Writers and authors:** Maya Angelou, Judy Blume, Beverly Cleary, Judith Ortiz Cofer, Rita Dove, Phoebe Eng, Fannie Flagg, Anne Frank, Ellen Goodman, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Katharine Graham, Zora Neale Hurston, Patricia Polacco, Esmeralda Santiago, Gloria Steinem, Alison Townsend, Wendy Wasserstein. **Models:** Tyra Banks.

“Although all of these women have achieved enormous success within their fields, they also had obstacles to overcome, parents to contend with, and dreams to fulfill,” Strong says, adding that she hopes young readers get the message that: “You belong with these extraordinary women who made the world a better place. The only difference is, your adventure is just beginning.”

Giving girls the sense that they are not alone, readers will discover that Sheryl Swoopes struggled to convince others about her passion to play basketball. Mary Chapin Carpenter overcame her shyness by writing songs on her guitar. Candice Bergen’s teenage romantic fantasy turned into a real-life nightmare. First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt grew up with an alcoholic father and an estranged mother who was plagued by headaches. Among the others, women’s rights activist Gloria Steinem survived a childhood of extreme poverty, and fashion model Tyra Banks was devastated by her parents’ divorce at the age of six and often fought with her strict step-father.

**The Greatness of Girls: Famous Women Talk About Growing Up** makes an excellent gift to a young friend. The book also serves as a stimulating educational guide to aid teachers in exploring issues relevant to students’ lives. Many are also assigning reports to their students, allowing them to choose which woman to write about.

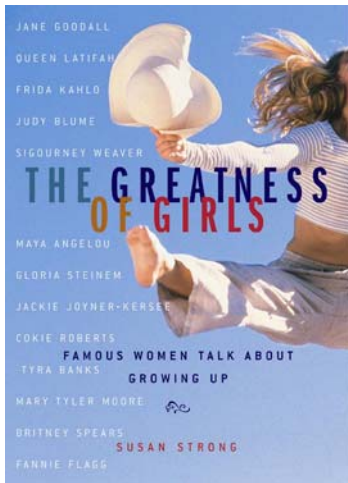
Strong is currently working on a sequel, to be called **The Boldness of Boys: Famous Men Talk About Growing Up**, which will be published by Andrew McMeel Publishing in October 2003.

\* \* \*

**For a review copy of this book, photos or interviews, please contact**

Lyla Foggia  
Foggia+Associates Public Relations  
(661) 259-6561  
E-mail: [lfoggia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lfoggia@sbcglobal.net)

ISBN: 0-7407-1880-0  
Hardcover: 5x7, 272 pages



*The story behind...*

## **The Greatness of Girls: Famous Women Talk About Growing Up**

by **Susan Strong**

Andrews McMeel Publishing; \$16.95

### **From the introduction:**

*“You are on the receiving end of a lot of mixed messages – from your parents, teachers, classmates, and the media. You look over your shoulder and wonder why other girls look like they have it together. But it’s just not so. It only appears that way. Everyone goes through the same stuff. That’s why I created **The Greatness of Girls**. It’s a book you can pick up again and again and know you are not alone. Think of this book as your very own support system. The women in this book will inspire and encourage you. Their stories will comfort you, their accomplishments reassure you, their struggles help you feel a bit braver.”*

Surviving adolescence is tougher than ever. While growing up has never been easy, girls today face challenges that simply didn’t exist for their parents’ generation. Such as the trauma of divorce, and the anger and frustration of learning to live with a step-parent and *their* kids. The constant pressure to do drugs and engage in sex, as well as drink and smoke. The need to look a certain way, in order to be accepted by their peers. Conflicts with parents and teachers. Escalating amounts of homework. And everything else that makes it hard to just be themselves and find out who *they* really are, before entering that next complex stage: adulthood.

As the mother of two daughters, Olivia, 10, and Caitlin, 9, author Susan Strong remembers well the roller coaster of emotions girls go through. Just as she was entering the ninth grade, Strong had to give up her childhood friends when her family moved from a small town in Minnesota to settle in Florida – part of a last-ditch effort by her parents to save their troubled marriage.

Once there, her parents enrolled her in a private school that had just gone co-ed. As Strong started the school year late, she realized there were only seven girls in a class of 78 boys. It was quite a change from her traditional public school back in Minnesota.

She spent all of her time socializing instead of studying, in an attempt to make new friends. “Finding my groove and the right friends were my priorities,” she now says with a laugh.

Then came the embarrassment of failing and having to repeat the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. “That was devastating, but only for a week. I discovered my friends didn’t care, since we usually weren’t in the same classes anyway. And I realized that what I had to do was pay attention. And I really started to crack down on myself. It ended up being a great five years there.”

A former television producer and magazine editor, Strong got the inspiration to create **The Greatness of Girls** while browsing her local bookstore, looking for an appropriate gift for a friend who was about to graduate from the eighth grade.

“I thought, ‘What can I give her? Is there a book? Like what did Eleanor Roosevelt go through when she was this age? Or Frida Kahlo? Is there anything about what famous role models went through growing up?’” When the store clerk told her nothing on the subject had yet been published, Strong thought, “I can write that.”

During the following year, she shaped the idea, then attended the Santa Barbara Writer’s Conference to learn how to market it. It took her two years to get an agent, then a year for her agent to find a publisher. And another year before **The Greatness of Girls** appeared.

One of the joys of producing the book, Strong says, was the fact that it allowed her to interview women she personally admired – best-selling author Judy Blume, Grammy-winning singer and songwriter Mary Chapin Carpenter, pioneering marine biologist Sylvia Earle, Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Ellen Goodman, Olympic Gold Medalist Jackie Joyner-Kersey, New York Yankees executive Kim Ng, children’s author Patricia Polacco, Olympic Gold basketball star Sheryl Swoopes, award-winning NPR journalist Nina Totenberg, Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Wendy Wasserstein, and film star Sigourney Weaver.

One of the most poignant interviews for Strong was when Kim Ng revealed (for the first time to anyone) how she had blamed her father for her parents’ divorce, refusing to see or talk to him afterwards. Then he was killed in an accident, after which she was distraught that he died without knowing how much she loved him. “Now, through

watching my mother with my younger sisters and friends with their children, I realize that parents' love for their child is so strong and resilient, very little can break that bond. Finally, as an adult, I know that my father knew I loved him." When first contacted about participating in the book, Ng told her that as painful as it was to recall, "If this is something I can do to help one girl, I'm going to do it."

"There are messages that apply to everyone," Strong says. "I always tell the women who buy it for their daughters: 'Read it first, because I think you'll find it interesting what these women went through.'"

Strong is currently working on a sequel to be called, **The Boldness of Boys: Famous Men Talk About Growing Up**, which will be published by Andrew McMeel Publishing in October 2003.

Meanwhile, during her visits to schools, she's always excited to see how teachers incorporate the book into their lesson plans. At one, each student was assigned to write a report on a woman from **The Greatness of Girls**. When Strong arrived that day, their essays along with photos of their chosen subjects were posted in the library. As another example, the book inspired reports on influential women in science in a science class.

"It's just so gratifying to see girls discovering these extraordinary role models and realizing that everyone has insecurities and problems when they're young. Yet it's what you do with your individual talents that allows you to achieve happiness and even greatness as an adult," Strong says.

"The reader won't always know who Katharine Graham is, but might be inspired by what she says. My hope is that one quote might spark an interest and encourage them to learn more about these women on their own."

\* \* \*

**For a review copy of the book, photos, or interviews, please contact:**

Lyla Foggia  
Foggia+Associates Public Relations  
(661) 259-6561 E-mail: [lfoggia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lfoggia@sbcglobal.net)

ISBN: 0-7407-1880-0

Hardcover: 5x7, 272 pages



*The author with her daughters, Olivia and Caitlin*

## ***About Susan Strong***

*Author of **The Greatness of Girls: Famous Women Talk About Growing Up***

Susan Strong is a former television producer and magazine editor. She began her career on the ground

floor of MTV in New York as a member of the team that created everything from the original concept to the network's programming niche, logo, and image. During the next six years, Strong served as a senior copywriter and producer for the Creative Services department for MTV, Nickelodeon, and The Movie Channel.

In 1986, Strong moved to Los Angeles, where she spent the next eight years working for the acclaimed Z Channel, one of the landmark showcases of classic and foreign films. During her tenure, Strong edited *Z Magazine* and served as the producer of the popular "Champlin on Film" show from 1988 to 1994, hosted by renowned *Los Angeles Times* film critic Charles Champlin. One of the most influential forces in the motion picture industry, the weekly series included interviews with almost every major filmmaker and star at the time, from Jimmy Stewart and George Lucas and Hugh Grant.

Strong grew up in the Minnesota town of Austin, then moved to Boca Raton, Florida, at the age of 14. She attended college in Boston, obtaining an AA degree from the all-women's Pine Manor College and a B.A. in communications from Emerson.

She is married to Bob Pohl, an educational consultant who helps under-performing schools around the country improve student achievement. He has also served on the Santa Barbara, Calif., school board for four years, and is currently running for the California State Legislature assembly seat in their district. They have two adopted daughters, Olivia, 10, and Caitlin, 9, and maintain an open relationship with both sets of birth families. As advocates of open adoption, Bob and Susan have served on the board of The Adoption Center in Santa Barbara.

\* \* \*

***For photos, interviews or more information, please contact:***

Lyla Foggia  
Foggia+Associates Public Relations  
(661) 259-6561 E-mail: [lfoggia@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lfoggia@sbcglobal.net)