Twitter Thread by Amy Fritz



Amy Fritz
@amyfritz



Who wants to know what it's like to go on the record with a reporter? Pull up a chair. I'll tell you.

I should clarify that I've done this a grand total of 1 time and with only one journalist. :-) I can speak to my experience and what helped.

"Going on the record" generally means you're taking some sort of risk. I knew this. I thought it over for a very long time. I hoped someone else would go on the record. I kept waiting for that person to show up. And one day I realized, hmmmm..... maybe I should be that person.

I knew of @bobsmietana because I had seen his work. He's passionate about religion reporting. He loves the "God beat". If you have a story to tell and it involves something related to a faith community, you want someone who understands that faith.

In addition, @bobsmietana lives in the Nashville area. (That's widely known now. Sorry, Bob). He understands Middle TN. It has a rare air of it's own when it comes to religion reporting.

If you're a journalist, you know the conversations regarding the possibility of going on the record can take a while. It's not a one time conversation. It can many conversations.

When I first shared my post on my site about our story, Bob reached out. I wasn't ready to go on the record. That was 10 months ago. He didn't press the issue.

Months later, I was ready. It started with a conversation regarding what kind of reporting this would be. Later, I collected my thoughts, wrote out some bullet points and set up a time to chat.

I was clear about what I wanted to talk about. My boundaries were respected. I had a chance to say everything I wanted to say & gave him a chance to ask questions in return. Then it was time to sit in the vulnerable place of not knowing what it's going to look like in the end.

I should have said this earlier. If you're considering going on the record, I highly recommend thinking through who your target audience is and why you want to tell your story at the outset.

Understand that you can have suggestions, but an ethical journalist is not going to allow you to dictate how they report the story. That's a good thing if you're working with a good journalist. Please choose a good journalist. Read their previous work.

You're probably going to feel like passing out while you wait for the article to drop. And once it does, you have no control over the outcome. So, it's a tiny bit like parenting ;-)

Bonus tip: If you can choose a journalist who once had a critic write a song about him, I highly recommend it. I hear there is a masterpiece entitled Dear Bob somewhere in the universe.

If you're interested in the Dear Bob origin: https://t.co/wjn8ZQ5G0g