



## Promotion Assessment & Recommendations

---

The following plan was submitted as a project for CM384 Book Marketing course.

*This is a guide for author-generated promotions and to support the work of a third-party publicist. General promotional activity and bookings are the responsibility of the author.*

Book Title	Somewhere Past the End
Author Name	Alexandria Faulkenbury
Plan Developed by	Olivia Cresser

### Market (SWOT) Analysis

List the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats of the book, the author, the timing of publication, genre, etc.

- Strengths
  - Author is extremely engaged and dedicated to promoting the book.
  - Author has published works of writing in different literary and book reviews.
  - The plot of the book is extremely inviting and makes the book hard to put down.
- Weaknesses
  - Author has a mild media presence.
  - Author's website is simple.
  - People may believe that cult stories might be too repetitive and all the same.
- Opportunities
  - Author has 1443 followers on Twitter, so she can potentially increase her following on this platform.
  - The book is focused on a cult, and true crime is very popular. There are many different podcasts, YouTube channels, and blogs that discuss true crime that could be open to promoting the book since there are similar themes.

- o Author was chosen for the 2025 Debutant Ball, which celebrates women's debut novels through blog postings, social media, and in-person events. This can lead to more exposure for the book.
- Threats
  - o When you look up the title *Somewhere Past the End*, other books with similar titles pop up before this book does.
  - o If the book is put in the "Religious" category code, people may not want to read it because it's a fictional story.
  - o The lack of an explanation for where the cult members disappeared too may anger some readers.

**Who do you believe is the book's primary market/demographic?**

The target audience for this book is women aged approximately 20-30 years old. *Somewhere Past the End* is told from two perspectives. The first is from a woman named Alice who is left behind after her cult disappears in a rapture-like event. The second perspective is Alice's mother when she was younger, and it explains how she got to join this cult that Alice is born and raised into. Since the two main characters are women around the 20-30 age group I believe readers of the same characteristic would enjoy this book the most. In addition, the two main characters deal with issues that relate to misogyny and discuss topics that I think hit close to home for women of this age.

**List up to three BISAC codes under which this book will be listed by booksellers**

1. FIC044000 FICTION / Women
2. FIC026000 FICTION / Religious
3. REL020000 RELIGION / Cults

**Expertise & Relevance Assessment**

What expertise does your author hold related to the topic of the book?

The author grew up in several evangelical churches of varying levels of authoritarianism when she was younger, so she has firsthand experience with strict religion, which is a major part of the book. She said that her personal experiences helped shape some of the events and characters in the book. She also is a mother, which helped her write the two main characters.

**Social Media Assessment & Recommendations**

1. List the author's web urls, social media handles/accounts and their respective followings (if none, make note).

- Twitter: [https://twitter.com/LexiBury?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/LexiBury?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor) 1443 followers.
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/amfaulkenbury/> 345 followers
- Facebook: 828 friends
- Bluesky - 169 followers - <https://bsky.app/profile/amfaulkenbury.bsky.social>
- Website: <https://alexandriafaulkenbury.com/>

2. List the social handles/accounts of influencers/gatekeepers, including bloggers, writers, reporters, media outlets most applicable to the book.

- Debutiful Twitter [https://twitter.com/debutiful?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/debutiful?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)
- Read Her Like an Open Book <https://www.facebook.com/readherlikeanopenbook/>
- American Book Review <https://americanbookreview.org/>
- MER Literary <https://twitter.com/merliterary>
- A Mighty Blaze Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/amightyblaze/>, Podcast <https://podcasts.apple.com/za/podcast/a-mighty-blaze-podcast/id1549703512>
- Shelf Awareness <https://www.instagram.com/shelf.awareness/?hl=en>
- Bookpage [https://twitter.com/bookpage?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/bookpage?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)
- Independent Book Review <https://www.instagram.com/independentbookreview/?hl=en>
- Foreword [https://twitter.com/ForewordReviews?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/ForewordReviews?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)
- Write-minded <https://podcast.shewrites.com/>
- For the Love With Jen Hatmaker <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/for-the-love-with-jen-hatmaker-podcast/id1258388821>
- Everything Happens with Kate Bowler <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/everything-happens-with-kate-bowler/id1341076079>
- DIY MFA <https://diymfa.com/diy-mfa-podcast/>
- I Should Be Writing <https://murverse.com/podcasts/isbw/>
- Literary Blend <https://demimschwartz.com/literary-blend/>

- Moms Don't Have Time to Read Books  
<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/moms-dont-have-time-to-read-books/id1366633318>

**Online Presence: recommendations for the author**

Please develop a list of recommendations of how the author can better develop their web and/or social media presence, related to the promotion of themselves and their book.

I would definitely recommend updating the author's website to make it more interactive. I would also recommend posting more on social media and creating author-centered accounts that are separate from personal accounts in order to be able to participate in more modern book promotion methods. I would definitely keep participating in the Twitter writing groups, since this is a great way to gain exposure online and network with other writers. I would also definitely reach out to more accounts that have to do with religious trauma. I would also recommend creating a free Amazon Author's page. This page allows authors to create a profile about their novels and themselves in order to sell more copies of their books on Amazon. I would also recommend setting up author accounts on Goodreads and The StoryGraph. Finally, I would recommend considering NetGalley, which is a platform that will allow book reviewers and producers to find this book. Apprentice House currently has a deal with them, so the price to post books here is around \$100 to \$150 per month, depending on the length of commitment.

**Marketing Action Points (concise, specific recommendations)**

1. Identify three groups or organizations with whom the author has a connection, and to which this book could be marketed. What's the pitch to get their attention?  
 These can be groups or organizations that meet in-person, virtually or that don't meet at all. Examples include alumni associations, fraternal groups, office peers, religious groups, etc.

Author is a part of the Hong Kong International School organization, in addition to the American International School of Budapest organization. Both of these groups have large networks of peers and newsletters that can be reached out to. I would pitch that this book was written by a member and to support each other's achievements. Author is also a part of the Homer Congregational Church, which she has said are big supporters of her book. Since they already support the book, a big pitch isn't necessary in order to get their attention. However, the book can still be marketed as a religious journey that gives readers a new perspective on how they relate to and believe in their faith. Author is also a part of the Tioughnioga River Writers. This book can be pitched to this group again as a product of a member in order to get other members to support.

2. Which holiday(s) or designated week/month highlights provide a marketing opportunity for the title? How can the author/AH take advantage of these holidays?

This book focuses a lot on women, their independence and choices, so Women's History Month (March) may be a good marketing opportunity. Book stores may create displays and tables specifically to celebrate this month, and this book could be a part of it.

3. Identify five specific locations (independent bookstores) where the author could speak/read.
  - Cortland Free Library, Cortland NY (author's hometown)
  - Odyssey Bookstore, Ithaca NY (near author's hometown of Cortland)
  - All Good Books, Columbia SC (near where author currently lives)
  - The Book Dispensary, St. Andrews SC (near where the author currently lives)
  - Fable & Fire - A Bookshop Bistro, Rockwall TX (where author's parents live and she spends most of summer every year)
  
4. Identify three contests/competitions (and subsequent categories) where this book could be entered. Ensure these are good fits for the book. Provide the name and link for each suggestion.
  - The PEN/Hemingway Award for Debut Novel (<https://pen.org/program/pen-hemingway-award/>). This contest is specifically for debut authors and their first published book.
  - WFWA Rising Star Award ([https://www.womensfictionwriters.org/Rising\\_STAR\\_Award#GeneralInformation](https://www.womensfictionwriters.org/Rising_STAR_Award#GeneralInformation)). This contest is for unpublished fiction manuscripts written by unagented women writers.
  - Goldfinch Novel Award ([https://www.womensfictionwriters.org/STAR\\_Award#GeneralInformation](https://www.womensfictionwriters.org/STAR_Award#GeneralInformation)). This contest is for debut authors without an agent. They only require submissions of 3,000 words from the beginning of a completed novel and a 1-page synopsis, which is perfect for this book because the beginning pulls readers in very strongly.
  
5. Identify two specific TV/radio/podcast "shows" on which the author could be a guest, either to promote the book, or as an expert/reference. What's the pitch to get their attention?
  - TV station: Carolina Women ([https://www.whhitv.com/shows/carolina\\_women/](https://www.whhitv.com/shows/carolina_women/)) This station is a "female panel discussion with topics including style, fashion, health, fitness, business/event promotion, & more." They have hosted authors to promote their new books in the past, so I would pitch that the author is a woman writer who is debuting her first novel. They also focus on women,

so I would pitch that this book emphasizes the lives of the characters that are women, mothers, and wives.

- Podcast: Debutiful (<https://debutiful.net/podcast/>) This podcast hosts a different debut author each episode to discuss their first books, how they became writers, and what drives them. In the pitch, I would include that this is Faulkenbury's debut novel. I would also present the summary of the book in order to get the hosts interested, since the summary is strongly worded and makes readers more interested.

### **Sample “Author Q&A” for use when pitching interviews**

Please include a Q&A for use in publicity and to prep interviewers. 10 questions minimum.

1. Q: How did your own experience with authoritative religion inspire you to write this book?

A: I bounced around in several churches in my youth and they all had varying levels of authoritarianism. However, one thread that persisted through most of them was a lack of room for doubt or questions. Any questions were given 'answers' and any doubt was seen as an indication that your faith was not strong enough or you hadn't correctly understood some passage of scripture. It wasn't until a college professor told me that God was big enough to handle all my questions that I realized questions of faith could lead to something positive. In writing this book, I really wanted to explore that nebulous area where a person is full of doubt and questions but doesn't know how to address them in the environment they've grown up in. Obviously the Collective is more intense than any church I was a part of, but I think many readers will relate to the feelings of doubt and fear that Alice and Teresa deal with throughout the novel.

2. Q: How would you suggest people who are struggling with doubting their faith approach that issue?

A: That's definitely going to look a little different for everyone, but for me, finding a safe space to ask questions was key. The college professor who told me God could handle my questions was such a gateway for me to really explore the questions and doubts bubbling up inside me. Trusting myself was also key. In some faith communities people are taught to ignore their own intuitions as ungodly or worldly, but trusting those feelings was what ultimately led me to a faith I can whole-heartedly participate in. In that same vein, leaving one religious community or shedding particular beliefs does not mean you have to abandon your faith or belief in God.

3. Q: In your book, there's a great emphasis on mother-daughter relationships. How do you manage your time between working, writing, and spending time with your family?

A: I would venture to say that all writers who are also mothers have struggled with finding the balance between protecting writing time and being present for your day job and your family. I honestly don't have any magic answers here. Sometimes I feel like I'm balancing well, sometimes I feel like I'm failing miserably. However, a writing friend once said that when she stopped seeing her writing as something she needed to hide away and instead as something she wanted her kids to see her doing and be proud of her for doing, it changed her outlook on that balance. That perspective has really stuck with me over time and I now find myself telling my kids what I'm working on and letting them see me work as opposed to trying to do it all once they are in bed. It also helps to have a supportive partner who will take the kids to the zoo on a Saturday so you can finish your edits. As far as work/writing balance goes, I've been lucky in that I've done jobs the last several years that have allowed me some flexibility to fit in writing here and there, but I still do most of my writing in the #5amwritersclub as I tend to get the best work done when the house is quiet and still.

4. Q: What advice would you give women who are currently struggling in an authoritative religion?

A: Oh, that's a big question! I think the answer will look a little different for everyone, but what helped me was reading widely and finding people who I could open up to about my questions and doubts. There are so many great writers dealing with deconstruction these days, but I found Rachel Held Evans to be such a help to me when I was first dipping my toes into all the big questions surrounding faith and doubt. Though she is no longer with us, her books and essays are still very accessible online. There are also lots of social media groups and discussion forums for those who have left (or are contemplating leaving) difficult religious environments. It's never easy finding others to talk to about these things and sometimes it's easier to start with someone outside your situation rather than in it. Having said all that, I should be clear that I was never in the kind of situation I feature in the book. I never had to literally escape an institution or place, so if readers find themselves in that kind of situation, I would seek out specific resources or friends/family to help.

5. Q: How did Alice's character change as you got further into writing the book?

A: That's a great question. When I first started writing the book I wasn't sure if Alice was a young woman who was very devoted and then had an experience that broke open all her former ideas or if she was someone who had sprouted seeds of doubt all her life. As I wrote, I realized a growing vine of doubt was more likely for Alice because the Collective's downward tilt starts happening from the time she's born.

6. Q: Do you find yourself relating to either Alice or Teresa?

A: I'd love to say I'm more like Alice and have always been railing against oppression and looking for ways out, but I'm definitely more like Teresa. I was very much all in and had to slowly break down some of the theories of the world I'd built up. I spent some time thinking I could simply change things from the inside out as Teresa does in the novel. I also relate a lot to Teresa's attempts at reconciling the good experiences she's had with the damaging ones she's experienced in the same organization.

7. Q: How did you decide on the title of this book, and how does it connect to the story?

A: Somewhere Past the End was not the original title of this novel and it went through several iterations to get here. I had a different title in mind for a long time before a few friends encouraged me to pursue a title that lent itself more to the experience of the story. The title references something Alice says toward the end of the story, but overall I think it speaks to the search for what comes next after your life has been uprooted and turned upside down in a way that doesn't seem to have a way forward.

8. Q: Did you ever face writer's block while working on this book? If so, how did you overcome it?

A: I don't know that I had writer's block exactly, but I definitely had writing challenges. This is my first novel and I am not a plotter by any stretch of the imagination. I'd rather write the story and see where it takes me. The trouble with that is that by the end of the first draft I'd ended up in a very different place than where I'd started, so my challenge was in going back and trying to line up the characters and experiences I'd written in early drafts with where the story finished. Taking breaks from drafts really helped. Every time I finished a draft I'd try to put it away and not look at it for several weeks. Also having a few trusted



early readers was invaluable. They are the ones you can give your manuscript to and say, "I know this part doesn't make sense, but I don't know why, what do you think?" Getting that distance in either having outside readers or taking a break from the work usually helps with difficulties in the writing process. I also find that cleaning is a good way to figure out a writing problem. I've often spent a couple hours deep cleaning the house and come out of it with an idea for how to fix a plot hole.

9. Q: How did you decide what kind of cult leader Rich would be? Is he based on any real life examples?

A: I wouldn't say Rich is based on any one particular real life leader but rather an amalgamation of personal experiences with charismatic leaders and some of the cult leaders I read about in my research. I did a lot of research for this book and a few of the books I found really helpful were *The Road to Jonestown: Jim Jones and Peoples Temple* by Jeff Guinn, *Cultish* by Amanda Montell, and *Unfollow: A Journey from Hatred to Hope* by Megan Phelps-Roper.

10. Q: Are there any misconceptions about strict religions that you've encountered in your life that you wanted to address in this book?

A: I think one thing many people who haven't had any kind of experience with strict religious upbringing assume is that everything about it was bad. So I definitely wanted to explore that idea that two things can be true at the same time. You can have a very traumatic and damaging experience with a religion or religious group that also offered you hope and joy in other times. Neither one cancels out the other and it's a lifetime's worth of work to figure out how to reconcile them.

**Provide a sample press release about the book's release**

Ensure it includes info about the author, Apprentice House, and—of course—the book!  
[somewhere past the end press release.doc](#)