



## PURVEYOR OF RAD: LAURA RUBIN

December 13, 2016



Laura Rubin has been quietly inspiring us since the day we heard about her. She's the kind of person your calendar revolves around when she replies, "yeah, let's grab a drink." All-in-all, she's pretty great. We had the opportunity to rummage through her past and talk about what's next in one of our all-time favorite interviews. Check her out and follow along at [@allswellcreative](https://www.instagram.com/allswellcreative)

### **Where are you currently?**

On a plane

### **Tell us about your most recent adventure.**

Last week I drove a full F150 from Montauk, NY to Kent, CT without GPS or a co-pilot. It took me three ferries and a lot of backroads to get from one out-of-the-way location to the other. I feel like I'm getting too dependent on GPS in general so wanted to give it a shot. Remember actual maps that, you know, fold? There was a lot of that. It was fun but there's a good reason for Google Maps.

**Favorite Song?**

That's an impossible question.

**Favorite Food?**

Fried chicken from Herb's Deli in Montauk

**Favorite Drink?**

Cold Bud bottle on a hot day or a Hot Toddy on a cold day

**Favorite Saying?**

"I don't have problems, I have choices."

**Tell us about your job. Describe your day-to-day.**

I wear a bunch of hats. About 15 years ago I founded Left Left Right, a communications consulting company that serves a handful of thoughtful brands and charities. More recently I started AllSwell, a blank notebook company that has organically grown to also provide creative workshops and trips (most recently to Tono, British Columbia). I'm also the Editor at Large of Whalebone Magazine and on the boards of two charities -- Eastern Long Island water quality non-prot LIMPIA and surf therapy program A Walk On Water (AWOW).



Tell us about AllSwell! Where did it come from and where is it going?

AllSwell was born from a surf check gone awry. I was on the East Coast and got skunked one morning so I sat down and wrote in my journal instead. "Swell or no swell, all's well." A life long journal-keeper I like to both write and draw. I wanted one lightweight notebook where I could do both (lined and unlined pages). It didn't exist so I made it, got them printed up in Maine on recycled materials. People liked them. I sold out of the first printing. So I made some more, and that printing sold out. A couple of years later we now have 3 styles of notebooks and our experiences for people that want to tap into their creative voice and explore that through cool experiences.

**Can you talk to us a little about how you balance strategy and creativity?**

Well, the best strategy *is* creative. Strategy implies taking in information, anticipating markets and visualizing the best possible ways forward. Really, anything can be an inspired, creative act -- from making breakfast to planning a trip. But to me the most profound creative act is mapping out a life that is uniquely your own. Ultimately, that's what I hope AllSwell helps people wake up to.

**What moment are you most proud of when you look back the past couple of years?**

Bringing AWOW to Montauk, NY / the East Coast.

**When you think of AWOW, what is the first word that comes to mind?**

Heart

**Tell us a little about AWOW and why you first got involved?**

I first learned about AWOW from a friend when we were down in Cardi. We were hanging out at the camp site after some buddies nished a longboarding competition. I pointed to the sticker on the back of his camper van and asked "What's that about?" My friend (Peli) completely lit up and talked about the experience of AWOW with such conviction and goodness that I was inspired to check it out. The first time I volunteered at an event my face hurt from smiling at the end of the day. It's just pure love.

Here's the official word: A WALK ON WATER provides water therapy through guided surf instruction to special needs children. Surfing is used as a tool to gain self confidence skills and promote the therapeutic benefits of the sport's positive effects. Children experience the true "stoke" of surfing and a sense of accomplishment as family and friends cheer them on from the beach. Brothers and sisters also participate, helping to solidify an often strained bond between siblings. Our surf events focus on both the athletes and their families, who are treated to a well-deserved day of relaxation, healthy food and lifestyle guidance."

**How can our community help?**

You can learn more about the organization and its schedule by following @awalkonwater. We're always looking for sponsors to help us bring the program to more destinations. We're currently planning the 2017 season so if you have ideas, don't be shy. Reach on out.

### **Best Book Recommendation?**

"Bird by Bird" by Anne Lamott is the best book on the process of writing. It's accessible, wry and encouraging. And I keep a copy of "The Gift" by Haz by both of my beds (one on each coast). He was one bad-ass poet. Makes Rumi look like a wuss.

### **What inspires you to create?**

Anything, everything. Mother nature, love, travel, good art, bad art...



### **What is your favorite place to travel to?**

Home. My favorite part of a trip is when your eyes are full, your head is stuffed with new memories and you're ready to bring all that home with you. Maybe it's because I've spent so much time on the move but now the return trip is what's sweetest.

### **Tell us about growing up! Where were you? Siblings? Any defining characteristics?**

My older brother and I grew up bouncing back and forth between the East Village, NYC and the 'burbs. It was actually a really good combo -- enough grit to keep things real but enough nature to provide some degree of innocence. I think that's why I've been comfortable living in multiple locations as an adult. Movement and change aren't overwhelming. It's the norm.

### **Is there a quote or a saying that you've heard that inspires you in your mission?**

"Fear is the cheapest room in the house. I'd like to see you living in better conditions." - Haz

### **Any exciting projects coming up? Tell us about it!**

So many good things in the works! Planning next round of AllSwell trips for 2017 with Tiny Atlas Quarterly and Earth Missions: underwater photography in Tahiti, river surfing in Oregon, returning to Tono for fall swell, and more. No bad options. Hit us up via DM @allswellcreative if you're keen to come join us. We have a lot of fun. We're kind of professionals at it.

