

BLOODLETTER

CRIMINAL ENTERPRISES

Chapter News

READINGS AT THE MYSTERIOUS BOOKSHOP

On Wednesday, January 16th, the New York/Tri-State chapter held its traditional open mic meeting, during which members read from either published work or works-in-progress. This year, our meeting was held at The Mysterious Bookshop.

The following authors shared their work:

- **D.M Barr** read from her novel *Slashing Mona Lisa*.
- **Elizabeth Zelvin** read from her short story, "Death Will Give You A Reason," the latest in the Bruce Kohler mysteries.
- **Joan Ramirez** read from an unpublished psychological thriller.
- **Carrie Smith**, author of the Claire Codella series, read from a new, not yet published stand-alone novel, *Sanctuary*.
- **Elizabeth Crowens** read from her unpublished novel, *Dear Mr. Hitchcock*.
- **Leila Walsh** read from her novel, *Death Knows No Boundaries*.
- **Nina Mansfield** read from her work-in-progress, a YA paranormal thriller *In Deep*.
- **Mary Jo Robertiello** read from her detective procedural, *The Lemrow Mystery*.



Chapter members and guests listen attentively to the readings at The Mysterious Bookshop. Photo: Laura Joh Rowland.

- **Nancy Good** read from her first mystery novel, *Killer Calories*, a Melanie Deming, High Fiber Low Fat Mystery.
- **Roz Siegel** read from *Book 1 A Pilgrims Landing Library Mystery*, her new unpublished series of Romantic Suspense set in Pilgrims Landing (settled 1640) in the Hamptons on the East End of Long Island.
- **Lori Robbins** read excerpts from *Linked to Murder*, the sequel to her award-winning debut mystery, *Lesson Plan for Murder*.
- **Rhonda Barnat** read from a novel in progress entitled *Fake Blue*.
- **Cathi Stoler** read from her novel *Bar None, A Murder on the Rocks Mystery*.
- **Catherine Maiorisi** read from *The Blood Runs Cold*, the second book in the NYPD Chiara Corelli Mystery Series

READINGS AT THE MYSTERIOUS BOOKSHOP (CON'T)

The evening was highly entertaining. The readings ranged from the comic to the serious and included a little bit of every mystery genre. After the readings, members had a chance to buy each other's books. The line for buying books was long, but worth the wait! This writer certainly cannot wait to read the books she bought.

Afterwards, a number of chapter members went out for a bite to eat at Benares, for delicious Indian food. We look forward to returning to The Mysterious Bookshop in the near future.

-Nina Mansfield is the author of the YA Mystery Swimming Alone, and many short stories and plays. She is a Member-At-Large of the NY/Tri-State Chapter of Sisters in Crime.



Roz Siegel read from her unpublished work. Photo: Laura Joh Rowland



Chapter president Catherine Maiorisi reads from her newest mystery novel. Photo: Laura Joh Rowland



Chapter members had an opportunity to sell their books at The Mysterious Bookshop. Photo: Nina Mansfield.

THE INTERROGATION ROOM An Inquisitor Questions Our Members

This month in *Bloodletter*, we were lucky enough to shine our spotlight on three published mystery authors and get them to confess to some of the secrets of their literary success. These talented ladies, in alphabetical order: **D. A. Bartley**, a former attorney, academic, and well-travelled member of Daughters of Utah Pioneers who traces her family history back to the earliest days of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; **Terrie Farley Moran**, a proud grandmother, Derringer and Agatha award winner and author of the beachside Read 'Em and Eat cozy mystery series and co-author of Laura Childs' New Orleans scrapbooking mystery series; and **Elizabeth (Liz) Zelvin**, a psychotherapist, poet, singer-songwriter and author of the Bruce Kohler Mysteries, the Mendoza Family Saga and three dozen published short stories, many of which have been nominated for Agatha and Derringer awards. Liz has also contributed to and edited several of SinC NY/Tri-State Chapter's *Murder New York Style* anthologies.

SIC Inquisitor: *What is the most successful promotional tool you've used to promote your work?*

D.A. Bartley: My first book, *Blessed be the Wicked*, was published by Crooked Lane in August of 2018, so I'm very new to this game. I'm learning as I go. I was fortunate to be reviewed by *Publishers Weekly*, *Library Journal*, *Murder Books* and *Crime Reads*. I've done some bookstore events, participated on panels at ThrillerFest and Bouchercon, did a blog tour, and my protagonist, Detective Abish Taylor, was profiled in the inimitable *Dru's Book Musings*. All wonderful experiences, but I really have no way of measuring how successful any of it was in terms of promotion. At its most basic, I believe promoting a book is about helping readers find your work. Once they have, you hope they like what they read enough to tell their own friends and family. And, maybe, they'll consider buying your next book, too.

THE INTERROGATION ROOM (CON'T)

Terrie Moran: I originally joined Facebook in 2010 to stay in touch with far-flung family and friends. As time went by, I was amazed to meet terrific cozy writers and interesting cozy fans. I've been invited to a number of FB parties and I have thrown few. I love ongoing conversations about books and I enjoy fun giveaways. An unexpected advantage to all the fun is that my readership has expanded.

Liz Zelvin: I'm a long-time champion at giving away books for free. I've given away 150,000 copies of my books, mostly e-books back when Bookbub was affordable, but also hardcovers of my first three novels at SinC booths at ALA and PLA. [But] this doesn't mean that 150,000 readers read my books or bought subsequent books in the series.

The most successful promotional tool for me in terms of sales has been one I didn't control: placement of my first Mendoza Family Saga novel, *Voyage of Strangers*, by publisher Lake Union Publishing, in a small promotion with a big readership. Specifically, a couple of times, it was on the landing page of Amazon Fire for 24 hours with only three other e-books, offered for 99 cents or \$1.99, and readers could have any one of the four free and buy any or all or none of the other three at the discount. The e-book sold many hundreds of copies during those 24-hour periods, so *Voyage* has indeed been an Amazon bestseller.

SIC Inquisitor: *Who is your favorite published mystery/crime author, your favorite book of theirs and why?*

D.A. Bartley: There are too many mystery writers I love to name one single favorite. I grew up devouring Agatha Christie and then moved on to P.D. James, Elizabeth George, Linda Castillo, Tony Hillerman, Craig Johnson, Julia Dahl, Zygmunt Miłoszewski, Martha Grimes, Ann Cleeves, Tana French, the list goes on. My current favorite book is Linda Castillo's *Among the Wicked*. Castillo's writing is tight, clean, and evocative. Her characters draw you in, her descriptions make you want to stay, and the plot makes it impossible to leave. I've never been to Ohio, but I feel like I have.

Terrie Moran: Ngaio Marsh, author of the magnificent series featuring Chief Inspector Roderick Alleyn. My favorite book is *Artists in Crime*, published in 1938, in which Alleyn meets the artist Agatha Troy, who, while not exactly president of his fan club, has an allure Alleyn cannot deny. I always think of this story line as the precursor of the romantic tension between peace-officer and amateur-sleuth that we see in so many cozy mysteries today.

Liz Zelvin: I have three favorites, all oldies. Even though I read modern mysteries, these older ones have a memorable quality I find lacking in books by even the best authors writing today.

First, Dorothy L. Sayers, *Gaudy Night* (1939). From the Golden Age of mystery, Sayers's masterpiece is rich in characters, serpentine in plot, glories in breaking rules (no murder, for one), triumphant in *finally* breaking Harriet Vane's resistance to Lord Peter Wimsey's love in the most satisfying way. It's also a makes-you-think novel in its exploration of feminism and the painful choices intelligent women of the 1930s often had to make between work and family.

Josephine Tey, *Brat Farrar* (1949), with its endearing characters that not only spring to life but make the reader want to go home with them. The mystery is woven organically into the story of a family haunted by an old loss, but big-hearted enough to welcome a stranger looking for somewhere he can belong.

Janet Neel, *Death's Bright Angel* (1988). The first and best of seven police procedurals, and so much more: a perfect character-driven detective story with delightful, fiercely intelligent characters.

SIC Inquisitor: *Writers' Conferences: Do you go? If so, have you benefited and how? Which has been your favorite? If you don't go or haven't gone, why not?*

D.A. Bartley: I love conferences, but I understand why they're not for everyone. I've been to ThrillerFest a number of times (it's local, after all) and I went to Bouchercon this year for the first time. I'm registered for Malice Domestic and want to explore several others. What I like best about conferences is the chance to meet

THE INTERROGATION ROOM (CON'T)

each other online, but there's nothing quite like hanging out in person. And the stories about having a drink with your author idols? Completely true. There were a few times at Bouchercon and ThrillerFest where I had to pinch myself because I was chatting with some amazing author like it was the most normal thing in the world. It's fabulous. Writers are so kind and generous. I'm grateful to just be part of this wonderful writing world.

Terry Moran: I have attended Sleuthfest, Bouchercon and Malice Domestic, each a number of times. Benefits are legion. In fact, when I went to my first con, Sleuthfest, more than a decade ago, I was such a newbie that I did not know organizations like Sisters in Crime and Mystery Writers of America existed. After a conversation with the late Jerry Healy, I came home and joined both immediately. Conferences are where I get to spend time with my mystery friends, both writers and readers, which recharges my batteries. Malice Domestic is my favorite conference, because it is geared to the cozy and traditional mystery family which is exactly where I fit in.

Liz Zelvin: I've never gone to writer's [craft] conferences, but that's a very personal choice based on my lifelong history as a writer and editor and having opportunities to learn the craft of writing and revising fiction in other ways. Besides workshops and personal critiques, I have learned a great deal from agents who were willing to offer constructive comments in their rejection letters. Really. Since I started writing mysteries, I'd had access to wonderful critique partners when I needed them, though I've never had an ongoing, long-term, face-to-face group or partner. I've learned that different "critters" may have very different takes on my work. That's very helpful. I'm still learning how to put a suspenseful plot together. There's always more to learn.

On the other hand, I have been to many reader conventions—many Malices, two wonderful Bouchercons, a couple of Killer Nashvilles, and quite a few smaller events. To me, the biggest benefit is networking [even though] I've never felt that writing was a lonely occupation.

***SIC Inquisitor, aka D.M. Barr,** is an award-winning non-fiction writer, and fiction author of mysteries such as **Slashing Mona Lisa** and **Expired Listings**. Her solo attempt at erotica, written under a different pseudonym, won the Golden Flogger Award for best BDSM novella 2017. She is currently working on her fourth novel from her home in the Hudson Valley.*



The Inquisitor, aka author
D.M. Barr.



Author D.A. Bartley



Author Liz Zelvin



Author Terry Moran.

THE POLICE BLOTTER

Member News

Rona Bell's short story, "**Prey of New York**" was included in Other Distinguished Mystery Stories in *The Best American Mystery Stories 2018*, published by Houghton Mifflin, and selected by Otto Penzler and Louise Penny. This story appeared in the Sisters in Crime book *Where Crime Never Sleeps: Murder New York Style 4*, edited by Liz Zelvin.

Barbara Brett's *Secret Agenda: Who's Castrating the Wolves of Wall Street?* won a Silver Medal in the 2018 Global Ebook Awards

Multi-genre author, **Elizabeth Crowens** made the cut as a quarterfinalist in the 2018 ScreenCraft Cinematic Book Competition for her Hollywood suspense novel, *Dear Bernie, I'm Glad You're Dead*. This contest is for novels that promise book-to-film adaptation.

Mariah Frederick's novel *A Death of No Importance* has been nominated for a 2019 Mary Higgins Clark Award.

Catherine Maiorsi's novel *A Matter of Blood* was published in Jan 2018 by Bella Books.

Lori Robbins' Lesson Plan for Murder won the **Silver Falchion for Best Cozy Mystery**, and was a finalist for the **Reader's Choice Award**. It also was named a finalist for the **Next Generation Indie Book Awards**, in the category of Best First Novel.

Cathi Stoler's novel *Bar None, A Murder on the Rocks Mystery* was published by Clay Stafford Books, Oct. 16, 2018. Her short story, "Where To Now" was published by **Mysterical-E** in the Fall Issue (Nov. 2018).

DISTURBING THE PEACE

Upcoming Chapter Events

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2019

**Agent Bernadette Baker-Baughman
with the Victoria Sanders Agency**

**The Jefferson Market Library
Sixth Avenue at Tenth Street**

Meet and greet: 6:00 pm

Question the agent: 6:30 to 8:00 pm

Optional dinner after

After completing a Master's Degree in Writing at Portland State University, and spending several years in-house (first editorial, then marketing) Bernadette began agenting in 2005. She's been with VSA since 2010. Bernadette is drawn to strong storytelling in all genres, though she has a special interest in thrillers, contemporary novels, magical realism, young adult, and books for kids. She is also open to pop-culture, gift books, and memoir. She loves smart writing, high concept books, work with great emotional resonance, and humor. She is always looking for authors with a distinctive voice and has represented a number of *New York Times* bestselling and award winning writers and illustrators, including Leslye Walton, Faith Erin Hicks, Tony Cliff, Maris Wicks, Liv Constantine, and Carson Morton, to name a few.

DISTURBING THE PEACE

Upcoming Chapter Events

Tuesday March 19th, 2019

TBA

**The Jefferson Market Library
Sixth Avenue at Tenth Street**

Saturday, April 13th, 2019

Hallie Ephron Writing workshop

\$25 for members

10 am - 3 pm

This replaces the regular monthly meeting

Fourteenth Street and Fifth Avenue

May 2019

TBA

June 2019

Annual party/meeting

Date and place to be announced

NY/TRI-STATE SISTERS IN CRIME MEMBERS:

TO HAVE YOUR NEWS LISTED IN THE POLICE BLOTTER, OR TO JOIN THE EDITORIAL STAFF OF *BLOODLETTER*, PLEASE CONTACT NINA MANSFIELD AT NINA@NINAMANSFIELD.COM. PLEASE INCLUDE "BLOODLETTER" IN THE SUBJECT LINE.

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR SISTERS IN CRIME DUES YET? BE SURE TO PAY BOTH YOUR NATIONAL AND YOUR LOCAL DUES SO THAT WE CAN KEEP SUPPORTING YOU.

ARE YOU FOLLOWING US ON TWITTER? FOLLOW @NYSINC. IF YOU ARE A MEMBER, MAKE SURE YOU CONTACT US TO BE ON OUR TWITTER LIST. YOU WILL BE RETWEETED!