

# KEYNOTES

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*The newsletter of the Romance Writers of America / New York City Chapter #6*    OCTOBER 2017

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**NEXT CHAPTER MEETING: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7  
TRS, 40 EXCHANGE PLACE, 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR, 12-4PM**

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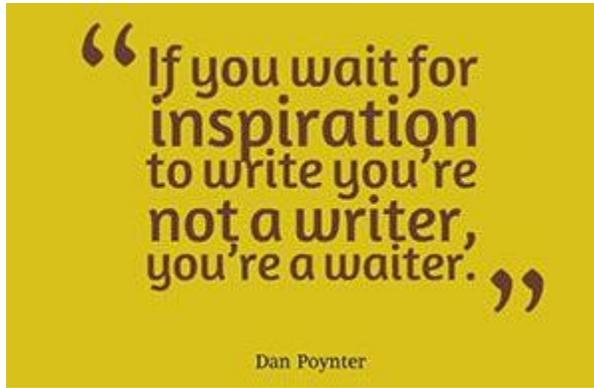
**TOPIC: "DOING IT ALL OVER AGAIN  
WRITING NOVELS IN A SERIES"**

**SPEAKER: ELOISA JAMES**

*New York Times* bestselling author Eloisa James explains how to hook readers, drive sales, and build a reader community by designing related, interwoven plots. We'll talk about designing multiple books, pitching a series to editors, and creating that all-important reader excitement that drives the sales momentum of each book upward.♥

**BIO:** Eloisa James is the author of 24 *New York Times* bestselling historical romances, and a Shakespeare professor at Fordham University in New York City. *People Magazine* raved that "romance writing does not get much better than this," and CBS Sunday Morning recently celebrated her as a "reigning queen of romance." Eloisa also published a memoir about the year her family moved to France, the bestseller *PARIS IN LOVE*, written, as the *Chicago Tribune* wrote, with "a dry sense of wit and an elegant sense of style." Eloisa is the mother of two and, in a twist that could be pulled straight from the pages of a popular romance, her husband is a genuine Italian knight!






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### THANK YOU!

To Our Contributing Writers & Photographer  
 Maria Cox, Alexis Daria (photos),  
 Barbara James, Kate McMurray,  
 Harper Miller, Alice Orr, Holland Rae,  
 & JN Welsh

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## 2017 CHAPTER CALENDAR

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Oct 7    Nov 4    Dec 2

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## MEETING INFORMATION

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RWA/NYC meets the first Saturday of each month. Meetings are held at TRS, 40 Exchange Place, NYC. 12 noon. Membership is at the discretion of the Board. Annual dues are \$40. Make all checks payable to RWA/NYC. There will be a \$20 fee on returned checks.

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## NOVEMBER THEME

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### TIPS AND TRICKS FOR WRITING MORE, BETTER, FASTER

PLUS! We welcome articles on all topics, book reviews, conference notes, etc. etc.

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## KEYNOTES DEADLINE

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Send articles to [keynoteseditor@gmail.com](mailto:keynoteseditor@gmail.com) by the **15th of the month**. All articles must be typed and up to 500 words. Send pictures as attachments; not in article.

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## RWA/NYC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**ATTENTION:** The Board welcomes all comments/suggestions/etc. Please send emails to [info@rwanyc.com](mailto:info@rwanyc.com).

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: HOW IT'S ALWAYS BEEN DONE**  
**BY KATE MCMURRAY**

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A couple of years ago, my mom and I went to Philadelphia for a bit of historical tourism. We dropped by the Franklin print shop, and while the friendly park ranger was demonstrating how people in Benjamin Franklin's time used lead type to make documents, my mother kept interrupting to explain some concept of early printing. Mom is something of an expert in typography and how books are made—she worked in publishing, specifically production, for close to forty years—and she'll happily tell you about how books were produced in olden times. Although the industry wasn't using lead type anymore in the 1970s when my mom got her first job, this was still an era before computers and digital files were used, and books used to be made with film.

When I got my first job in publishing almost thirty years after my mom did, we'd moved past film and were working with digital manuscript, but almost everything was still done on paper. In my editorial assistant days, half of my job was mailing boxes full of paper to editors, proofreaders, authors, and reviewers. I took a copyediting class in 2004 in which we learned copyeditor's and proofreader's marks and discussed the relative merits of using purple instead of red pencil. We had to build shipping time into our schedules.

Now, in my corner of publishing, we do nearly everything digitally. From manuscript files with tracked changes to proof PDFs being marked up digitally to final printer proofs being reviewed from a web app, the whole process can happen without any paper at all.

The finished project hasn't changed much, unless you notice the little details. Books can be reprinted from digital files instead of large sheets of film, meaning the text of reprinted books remains sharp instead of degrading over time, for example. Digital graphics mean cover artists have more tools at their fingertips and can push the envelope with cover design. Some books don't get print runs at all but are instead available digitally in formats readers can download instantly.

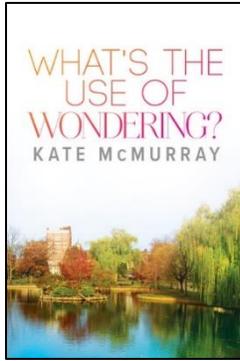
My mom gets nostalgic for the good old days, but it's hard not to see how technological advances have improved the industry. You could argue that there have been drawbacks, too—I've seen some of those first-hand—but on the whole, I think the advent of digital publishing has largely been good.

We don't want to go back to lead type, do we?



But one of the things I've run into quite a bit since getting more involved in my own writing career and meeting other authors is this longing to return to the good old days.

And in some ways, I can understand. Before digital publishing brought about a boom in self-publishing, there was less competition for reader attention, or at least it felt that way. Some sub-genres of romance used to be more popular. Authors used to have more time to review edits and make revisions. There wasn't the same pressure to produce.



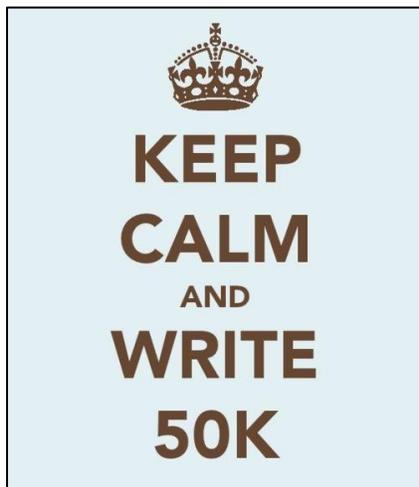
But in a lot of ways, I'm happy to leave the old days behind. One thing I'm extremely happy about is the attention paid to stories by and about people of color and LGBT people. These have always existed, but there's far more attention paid to them now, and authors have more room to explore different kinds of narratives. (For example, many books with gay characters published in the 70s and 80s ended tragically; now gay romance and happy endings for gay characters are increasingly popular.) Indie publishing has also opened doors for new kinds of stories to be told—authors who write stories traditional publishers aren't interested in still have options to get their books out there.

So this longing to go back to the old days seems to me a like a longing to go back to metaphorical lead type—to a time when the process was slower and more profitable perhaps, but also a time when the market was ruled by white authors and there wasn't much room at the table for other voices. It was a time before the boom in erotic romance, before the popularity of LGBT romance.

We *should* change, I would argue. The industry needs to adapt to new technology, to new progress. If publishers were still putting out the books they produced in the '90s, romance would be a very boring genre indeed; we need authors to reinvent and innovate and try new things. I've never subscribed to the idea that we should do things just because that's always how we've done things; that's no way to move forward.

That goes for every part of our industry, from how books are made to what's between the pages to organizations like RWA. As RWA shifts its focus to professionalism, education, and forwarding the interests of *all* writers, we as an organization can make real, positive changes to the industry. I personally don't want to go back to the way things have always been done, because that way doesn't work anymore here in the twenty-first century. Let's do things in new ways and keep moving forward.♥

*Kate McMurray is an award-winning author of gay romance and an unabashed romance fan. When she's not writing, she works as a nonfiction editor, dabbles in various crafts, and is maybe a tiny bit obsessed with baseball. She has served as President of Rainbow Romance Writers, the LGBT romance chapter of Romance Writers of America; and as Vice President of RWA/NYC. She lives in Brooklyn, NY. Visit her at [www.katemcmurray.com](http://www.katemcmurray.com).*




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## NANOWRIMO CHALLENGE: ARE YOU READY?!

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**November is National Novel Writing Month.**

The goal is 50,000 words in 30 days.

Register today at [www.nanowrimo.org](http://www.nanowrimo.org).

Then let us know on the Chapter Loop that you are registered so we can all become Writing Buddies. Good luck and Write On! ♥

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**CHAPTER MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 9**  
**BY SECRETARY JENN WELSH**

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*Attendance: 16 members*

**President Kate McMurray** called the General Meeting to order at 12:11pm.

**Meeting minutes** approved, motion by Kate McMurray, Harper Miller seconded.

**Treasurer's Report:** Maria Cox reported that we have \$6,475.05 – increase resulting from applicants of the Kathryn Hayes contest and Golden Apples ticket sales.

**Secretary's Reports:** 83 active members confirmed. Some of the new members are in attendance.

**Golden Apples:** To be held on September 28th at Hudson Station. Members should have received invite with PayPal link to purchase tickets. Stacy listed the industry people attending including but not limited to Source Books, Kensington, Harper Collins, Grand Central and Entangled. Any question you may have can be directed to GoldenApplesRWANYC@gmail.com

**Kathryn Hayes "When Sparks Fly" Contest:** All entries are in and judges are needed. If you have not already signed up to be a judge for the contest then please contact Laquette at Laquette@novelsbylaquette.com.

### COMMITTEE REPORTS

**Newsletter and Blog:** Keynotes theme for next issue is: Celebrating the Deliciously Strange. Articles should be approximately 500 words. Articles should be submitted between the 15-20th of the month. Again, let Maria F know about any book releases or author news so it can be including RWANYC Twitter feed, Book Cover Fridays and Keynotes. There is a recurring column in Keynotes called A Room of One's Own. Send articles to the Keynotes team at: keynotes@gmail.com

**Publicity:** Brooklyn Book Festival – The festival will take place on September 17th. Booth number 339. Authors Featured: Gemma Snow, Kay Blake, Ursula Renee, Harper Miller, Blue Sapphire, JN Welsh and Michael Malloy. Thanks to Michael for his hard work organizing the event.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Board elections are coming up. If you are interested in any of the positions, please contact Kate McMurray so she can put you on the ballot. Voting takes place in October.
- Reviving Critique Group – Kate will send out an email about the critique group to those who were interested in participating. The critique group needs someone to spearhead the effort. More details coming soon.

Round Robin begins. Chapter meeting adjourned at 12:32pm

Speaker: Norma Ramirez from Kensington on First Page Critiques. ♥



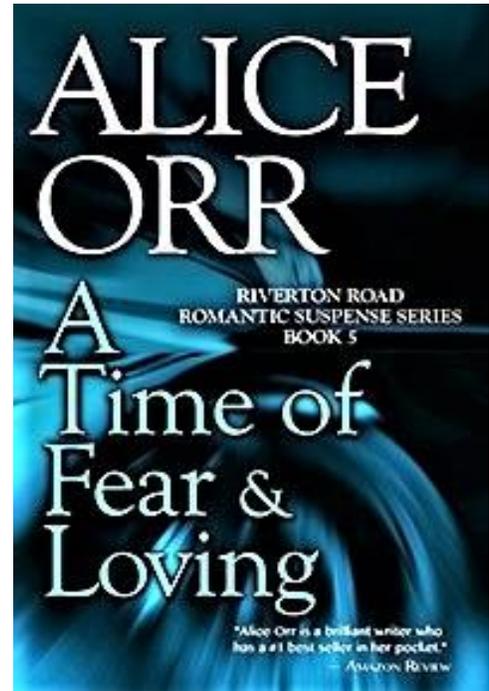
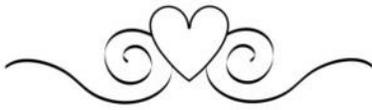
**MEMBERS ON THE SHELF**

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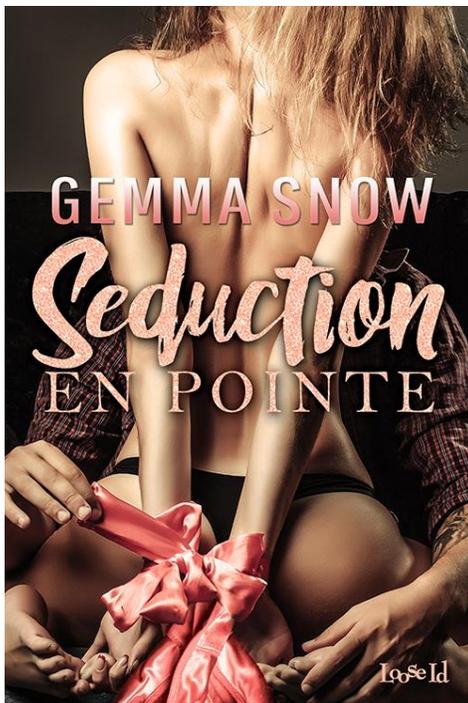
**MEMBER NEWS**

**Alice Orr** is releasing book 5 of her Riverton Road romantic suspense series, *A TIME OF FEAR & LOVING*, on October 20. Watch for it!

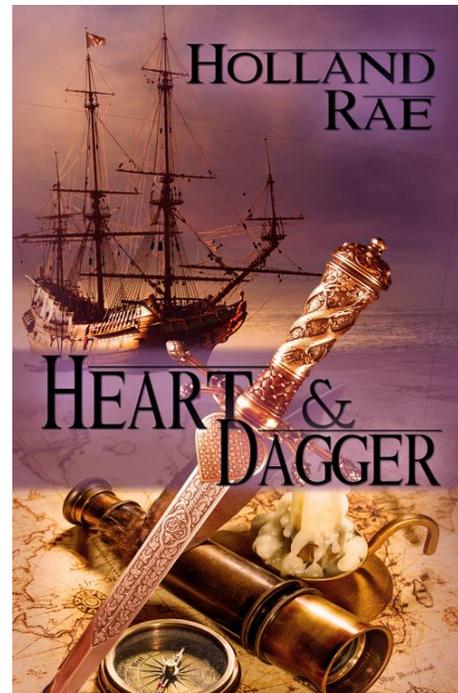
**Alexis Daria's** debut novel, *TAKE THE LEAD*, is available now. ♥



**A TIME OF FEAR & LOVING**  
By Alice Orr



**SEDUCTION EN POINTE**  
By Gemma Snow



**HEART & DAGGER**  
by Holland Rae



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**ABOUT PAN  
(PUBLISHED AUTHOR NETWORK)**

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The purpose of the Published Authors Network (PAN) is to establish within the RWA framework a network of communication and support to effectively promote and protect the interests of published romance authors; to open channels of communication between those romance authors and other publishing industry professionals; and to encourage professionalism on all levels and in all relationships within the publishing industry.

To be eligible for General PAN Membership: RWA General or Honorary members in good standing should have earned at least \$1,000 on a single novel or novella that meets the definition of Romance Fiction.

To be eligible for Provisional PAN Membership: RWA General or Honorary members in good standing should have: (1) contracted for the publication of a novel or novella for an advance of at least \$1,000, but said work is not yet commercially available ("Option One"); or (2) published a novel or novella, but not yet earned \$1,000 ("Option Two"). Works offered through Predatory Publishing companies shall not qualify.♥



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**About PRO**

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The purpose of the PRO Community of Practice is to establish within RWA a network of communication and support to effectively promote and protect the interests of romance writers in the areas between manuscript completion and PAN eligibility.

To help members reach the next level, PRO focuses on the business side of writing rather than craft. This program is available to any active General or Honorary member who: (1) is not PAN-eligible and (2) has one complete original work of romance fiction of at least 20,000 words, or multiple complete original works of romance fiction which combine for a total of at least 20,000 words.♥

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**FREE PUBLICITY!**

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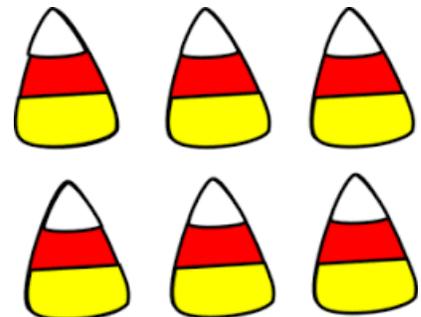
Have a new book out? Entered and won a contest? Have an interesting topic, research, tips you want to share? An event, book, conference you'd like to review?

Keynotes is a FREE Promotion Opportunity. We welcome all subjects.

Send in your articles, news, book covers, reviews, etc., to [keynoteseditor@gmail.com](mailto:keynoteseditor@gmail.com).

Articles will also be published on the Chapter Blog for DOUBLE the promotion!

Deadline: the 15<sup>th</sup> of every month. Take advantage of us!♥

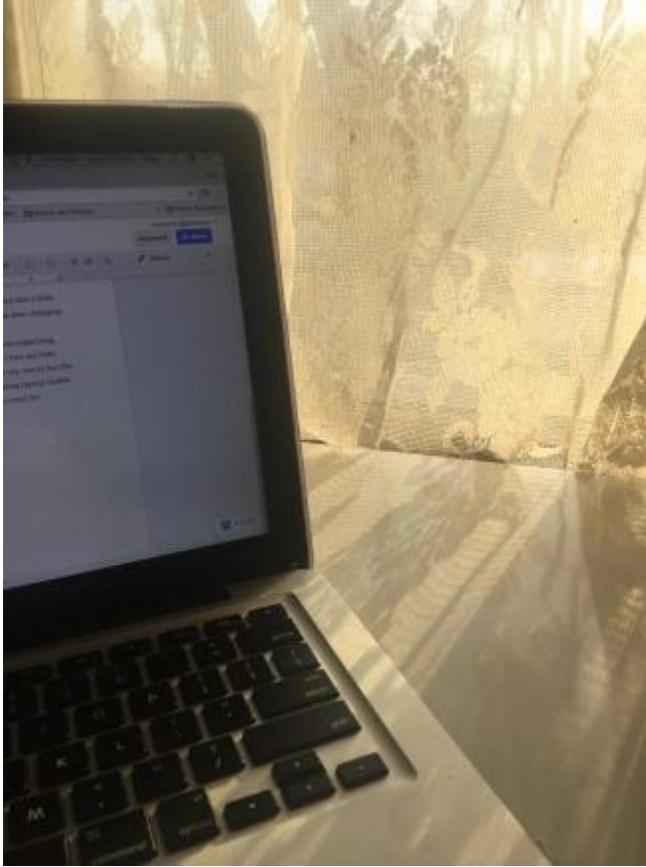


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**A ROOM OF MY OWN: THE WRITE LIGHT**  
**BY HOLLAND RAE**

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*This is a new monthly feature. Members are invited to share their writing room with us.*



My bedroom is my office. Sometimes, we fold up the futon bed and the room feels a little more like a professional study. But most days, my clothes are spilling out of open drawers, a pile of sweaters sits atop my dresser, and I fantasize about one day having a workplace to call all my own. Of course, there's something to be said about the overly crowded bookshelves, (I do believe we're past the thousand mark for this personal library), and the two large bulletin boards, full of maps, storyboards, series outlines and character portraits.

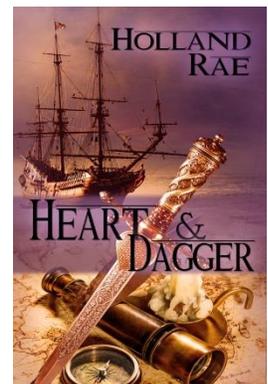
But with or without a folding bed and my personal Library of Congress, there is one remarkable thing about this room. With the exception of four years I spent away at college, I have lived in this room permanently for over twelve years, and my favorite thing about it has always been the light.

Part of the reason I can't fit any more books into my study/bedroom, is because two of the walls are entirely lined with windows, facing south

west and south east, so I get both the rising of the morning sun and the setting of the late afternoon sun in my peripheral, without ever having to move my chair.

It is a simple, but altogether peaceful detail that makes this crowded not-office feel a little like an island, with strips of lacy shadows that form through the old curtains, and the ever-changing time teller of when I need to pull the shade down.

There are many things I long for in an office – a white board for planning and organizing, endless bookshelves, a cupboard that magically fills itself with peanut M&Ms, but I love my little corner desk in my sea of madness. It wobbles, old and tired from years of being at my mercy, but the bright light that streams from both sides of the world, both sides of my ever-glowing laptop, makes me feel hopeful, enlightened, and always just a little bit happy. Sometimes all you need for inspiration is a little bit of sunshine.♥



**MONTHLY THEME: CELEBRATING THE DELICIOUSLY STRANGE**

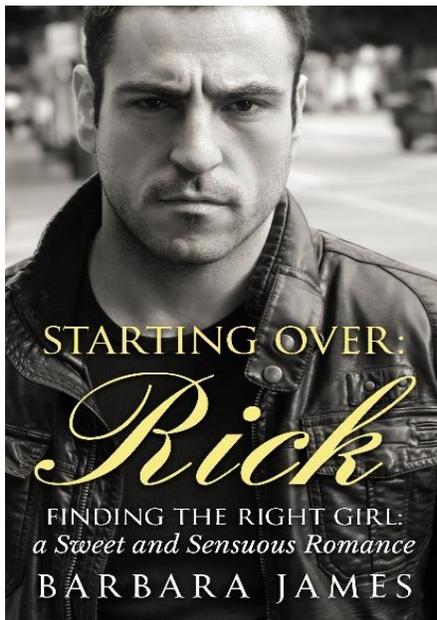
*This month our members are talking about the importance of time and place within a novel.*



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**RENEGADE CHARACTERS**  
**BY BARBARA JAMES**

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On June 12, 1967, the United States Supreme Court held in *Loving v. Virginia* that the State of Virginia could not deny Richard Loving, a white man, and Mildred Loving, a black woman, recognition of their marriage. Asked whether he wanted to say anything to the Court, he said simply, "Tell the Court I love my wife." All state laws banning interracial marriages would henceforth be illegal.

Back then, Annelise Perigault, the African American heroine of *STARTING OVER: RICK*, and the hero, Rick Santelli, would have each been considered edgy renegades. They dated, loved each other, and married interracially. Rick was an Italian American man born in Brooklyn, New York in the wake of the interracial tensions and violence that rocked New York City in the 1980s. His family had always been open-minded about race relations.

But through a modern lens, Annelise is an anomaly and a paradox, a deliciously strange young woman. She is a regular churchgoer, religious, and conservative. Yet, she identifies as a feminist. She is a member of a liberal Protestant denomination that ordains women and which tends to adhere to a more liberal view of sexuality and relationships.



She has no qualms about having sex in a committed relationship, and as an empowered young woman, she requires a partner who is mature and responsible enough to get on board with what she requires.

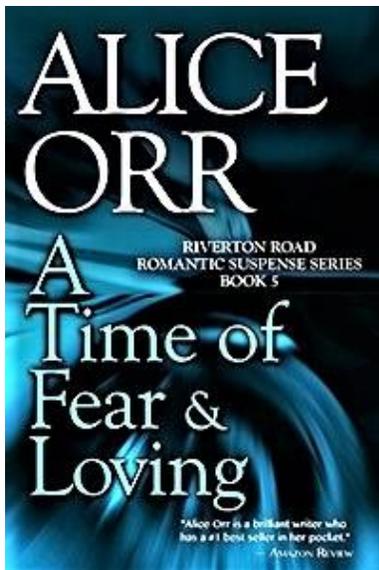
Fifty years ago, *Seventeen Magazine* published ads for hope chests, because it was fairly common for young women to get married when they were a few years out of high school. Annelise would have been considered traditional, yet modern. But in today's world, she is a renegade. She is a recent high school graduate and an honors student in college who hopes to get her B.A. while she gets her "Mrs. Degree." She might be inexperienced, but she has some serious game. A grown up relationship with a man ten years older doesn't intimidate her.♥

*Barbara James is the author of the recently published novel, STARTTING OVER: RICK. It is available on Amazon. Her website is [www.barbarajames.net](http://www.barbarajames.net).*

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## HOW I CONSTRUCTED RIVERTON ROAD BY ALICE ORR

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I was born and raised a North Country girl. I grew up on a one-block street in a town a lot like Riverton, the setting of my Riverton Road Romantic Suspense series.

The winters were hard, but summers were soft. Spring was welcome, and fall blazed with color. The North Country ended a couple of dozen miles away at the dark green waters of the Saint Lawrence River and its beautiful Thousand Islands, a summer wonderland where we lived in shorts and tee shirts and bathing suits, sandals sometimes too, but I preferred barefoot. Winter was another wonderland filled with sleds and toboggans and my personal favorite, ice skates.

I return to the North Country now mostly by imagination, and I have a vivid one. I return to the North Country when I write my books. The above description is the child of that vivid imagination. It describes the setting for my Riverton Road series, which is born in the fondest corner of my hometown and native countryside memories.

I do not remember a single murder happening while I was growing up in the North Country. I didn't know about any passionate romances either, although I'm sure they happened. There were whispers about a lady who lived across the street, but I can't even be sure about that randy tale because, when I came into earshot, everybody stopped whispering.

Nonetheless, I conjure both diabolical murders and steamy love scenes in my stories. The same way I conjure Riverton and the Kalli family of Riverton Road, the Miller family of Riverton Road Hill and the Women of West Main Street still to come in Book 6 of the series.



I began world-building with the region, the North Country, which does bear a marked resemblance to where I grew up and later returned for some of my adult life, including the magic time when I met my husband Jonathan. Perhaps, that magic touches the love stories I tell.

Next, I created Riverton, and the resemblance to my hometown grew dimmer. Some familiar outlines are there among the map coordinates, but the details that fill those outlines come from the vivid imagination I mentioned earlier. Riverton is more the town I would have liked to grow up in, more the town of my fantasies than of reality. My fantasies tend to be intense and dramatic. Therefore, Voila! Diabolical murders and steamy love scenes appear.

Friends from back home may carp about me running fast and loose with their North Country, but, when it comes to constructing the world of my Riverton Road, I never let facts get in the way of telling a good story.♥

### **Riverton Road Romantic Suspense Series**

Book 1 – A WRONG WAY HOME

Book 2 – A YEAR OF SUMMER SHADOWS

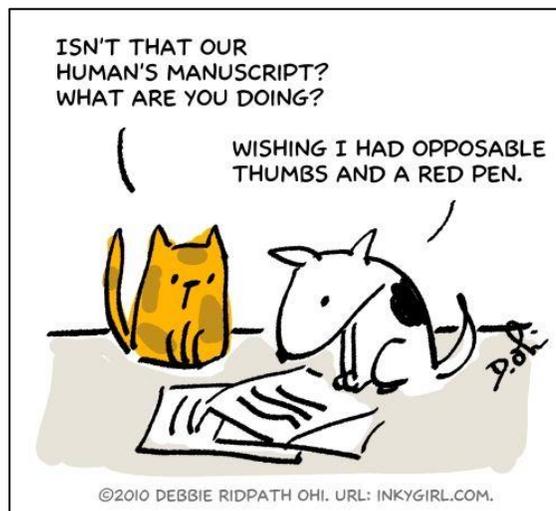
Book 3 – A VACANCY AT THE INN

Book 4 – A VILLAIN FOR VANESSA

Book 5 – A TIME OF FEAR AND LOVING

Book 6 – A THING WE LOST – In progress

*Alice Orr is the author of 16 novels, 3 novellas, a memoir and NO MORE REJECTIONS: 50 SECRETS TO WRITING A MANUSCRIPT THAT SELLS. A former book editor and literary agent, Alice now lives her dream as a full-time writer. She has two grown children and two perfect grandchildren and resides with her husband Jonathan in New York City and New Jersey. Visit her at any of these addresses: <http://www.aliceorrbooks.com>; <http://www.facebook.com/aliceorrwriter>; <http://www.twitter.com/AliceOrrBooks>*



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**WELCOME TO MY WRITING DEN!©**  
**BY MARIA COX**

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**HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH**

Hispanics have had a profound influence on society. With a strong commitment to family, faith, hard work, and service Hispanics of all walks of life have excelled and prospered and reached once unimaginable heights.

In celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month (celebrated September 15 - October 15) I present to you three notable Hispanic authors; in alphabetical order below:

**Isabel Allende** (August 2, 1942 - ); A Chilean writer Ms. Allende also pens in the “magic realist” tradition. In 2004, Ms. Allende was inducted into the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and she received Chile’s National Literature Prize in 2010.

**Gabriel Garcia Marquez** (March 6, 1927 – April 17, 2014); Also known as ‘Gabo’, Mr. Garcia Marquez was a Colombian novelist, short-story writer and journalist. He was one of the most significant Latino writers of the 20th century known for popularizing a literary style labeled as ‘magic realism’. Mr. Garcia Marquez was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1982.

**Mario Vargas Llosa** (March 28, 1936 - ); A Peruvian-Spanish writer, Mr. Vargas Llosa is not only an accomplished writer, but he is also a politician, a journalist, and essayist. Mr. Vargas Llosa won the 2010 Nobel Prize in Literature and is one of Latin America’s most noteworthy writers.

For more information on Hispanic Heritage Month, visit the official website:  
<http://www.hispanicheritagemoth.org/>

Happy reading!♥

*Maria Cox is a PRO member of Romance Writers of America and also the Treasurer of RWA/NYC. Maria has also served as President of the Phoenix Writers Club. Maria has been writing stories since she was a young girl. She picked up her first romance novel when she was just eleven years old and has loved the genre ever since. Maria writes sensual romance, stories that showcase strong, sassy, and sexy characters. When not writing fiction, Maria works as a technical writer. She lives in Queens, New York. Please visit her site [www.mariacox.net](http://www.mariacox.net) and/or follow her on Twitter*



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**GENREPALOOZA & PHOTO ALBUM  
BY HARPER MILLER**

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Harper here. On August 23<sup>rd</sup>, I attended my first NYC writer's mixer! Authors from the Mystery Writers of America, the Horror Writers Association, and the Science Fiction & Fantasy Writers of America mingled with the NYC chapter of RWA, and it was pretty spectacular.

Confession time: I went into the event with preconceived notions. I expected the mixer to be dominated by men and ladies from our chapter. I was pleasantly surprised to see a decent amount of women representing Mystery and Sci-Fi writers. Sadly, there weren't many women Horror writers in attendance. I ended up chatting with a bunch of people who asked tons of questions regarding what it's like to be a romance author.

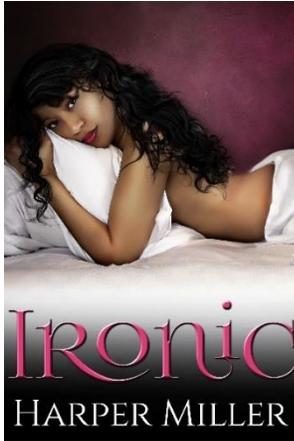


Seems I'm not the only one who came in with preconceived notions. A few Sci-Fi writers I spoke with assumed that we Romance writers are all making bank. Ha. Haaaaaaa! If only that were the case. I explained that although the genre fuels a good portion of the publishing industry, not all of us are rich. We all have to put in work individually to get noticed, and when you're a PoC you have to put in additional work to get yourself noticed. I think I provided a perspective that many were surprised to learn.

Also, everyone I interacted with was impressed with how well RWA helps writers hone their craft and grow their brand with workshops and our annual national conference. One mystery writer I spoke with said the largest industry event she'd attended counted 300-500 people in attendance; she couldn't imagine attending something as big as Nationals. Have to say, I was pretty proud that we do it big. Go big or go home, right?

While I connected with a lot of people, I ended up talking to Carol Cooper for an extended period of time. Okay, to be completely honest, we ended up spending most of the evening chatting. When you click, you just click! Carol is a Sci-Fi/Fantasy writer who's also a journalist, AND she's in the process of getting her PhD. Ironically, she and I connected through our love of *Game of Thrones*. I swear, it doesn't matter where you are, you will find someone who is a *GoT* fan. It's inevitable. After chatting for about two hours, it was time to call it quits and head back into the writing cave before my editor sent out one of Ramsay's hounds to locate me. Carol and I exchanged contact information with the promise of having drinks in the near future.

Perhaps a strong friendship will blossom from our interaction! I attended the mixer on a whim and left with a writer friend I intend to keep in contact with.



To my fellow chapter members, I suggest you attend next year's gathering. An open bar has a way of livening up a crowd, loosening tongues and creative energy. My conversation with Carol inspired one of my character's backstory! Although I won't be able to start writing the character for a couple of more months, the seed has been planted and my notes have been added to my NaNoWriMo file.♥

*Harper Miller is a thirty-something native New Yorker. She's traveled the world and lived in a variety of places but always finds her way back to the Big Apple. A lackluster love life leaves time to explore new interests; for Harper it is writing. THE SWEETEST TABOO: AN UNCONVENTIONAL ROMANCE is her debut novel.*

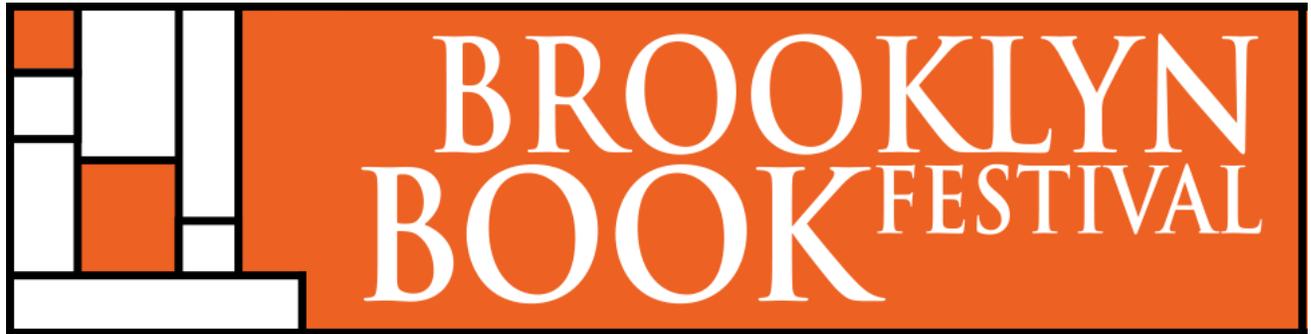


Enjoying the Genrepalooza gathering were Ron from Lady Jane's Salon; and RWA/NYC Chapter Members Harper Miller; President Kate McMurray and Maria Ferrer.

Also present were Elizabeth Mahon and Wendy LaCapra.



BKBF 2017 PHOTO ALBUM



RWA/NYC once again had a booth at the Brooklyn Book Festival on September 17. Many thanks to **Michael Molloy** who coordinated the event and gathered authors and volunteers. See you next year!♥



Michael Molloy and Jenn Welsh

Chapter Members Michelle Alerte, Harper Miller, Kay Blake and Ruby Scalera.





Blue Saffire



Ursula Renée and Kay Blake



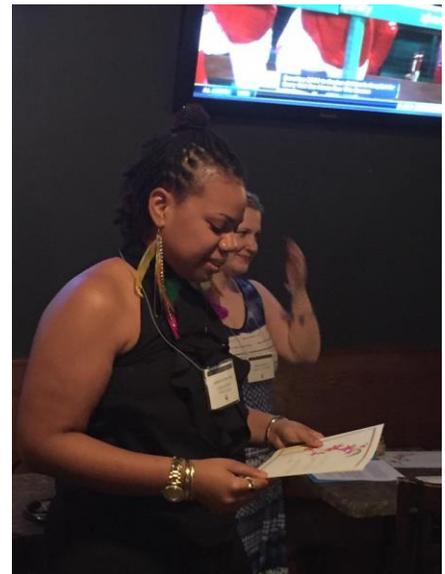
Monica Yang and Jenn Welsh

**GOLDEN APPLE AWARDS 2017 PHOTO ALBUM**

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Vice President Stacey Agdern had lots of fun hosting RWA/NYC's annual Golden Apple Awards on September 20. Here are some photos of that beautiful night thanks to our photographer-at-large Alexis Daria.♥







*See you next year!*

