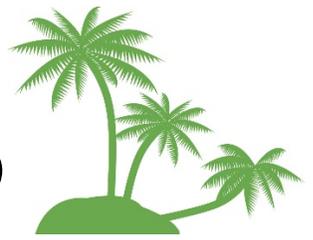


# KEYNOTES



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*The newsletter of the Romance Writers of America / New York City Chapter #6 AUGUST 2019*

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**NEXT MEETING: SATURDAY, AUGUST 3<sup>RD</sup>**

**LOCATION: TRS, 40 EXCHANGE PLACE, 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR, 12-4PM**

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## **TOPIC: Finding The Right Literary Partner**

**SPEAKER: LATOYA C. SMITH**

**Bio:** Latoya C. Smith is an award-winning editor and literary agent. She has been featured in Publishers Weekly and USA Today, as well as on various author, book conference, and book blogger websites. Latoya provides editorial and consultation services as well as representation through her company, LCS Literary Services.





Beatrix Potter

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## CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

LaQuette, Kay Blake, Maria Cox,  
Anna DePalo, Kate Dunn, Maria Ferrer,  
Robin Lovett, Michael Molloy, Blue Saffire,  
JN Welsh,

## MEETING INFORMATION

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.

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



## SEPTEMBER THEME

### RESEARCH

**When Research is too much.  
What to do when you have more research  
notes than novel.**

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

DEADLINE: 15<sup>th</sup> of the month

## RWA/NYC BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Publicity: Maria Cox, Jean Joachim,

Michael Molloy

Website: Ursula Renée

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PRO Liaison: Anna Bierhaus

**RWA/NYC**, PO Box 3722,

Grand Central Station, New York, NY 10163

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[rwanycblogginginthebigapple.blogspot.com](http://rwanycblogginginthebigapple.blogspot.com)

## KEYNOTES DEADLINE

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. Thanks.

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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: HOT WITH A PURPOSE**  
**BY LAQUETTE**

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One thing that drives me crazy as an erotic romance author is the assumption that writing explicit sex is easy or worse, somehow inessential to story development. If you believe writing sex—be it explicit or otherwise—is as easy as sticking two dolls together and making them kiss, you have underestimated what erotic romance is all about.

The purpose of erotic romance is to use sex as an essential expression of not just physical attraction, but of emotional connection between your characters. If you're writing sex as just a placeholder, then you're missing a huge opportunity to have readers connect with your characters on an emotional level.

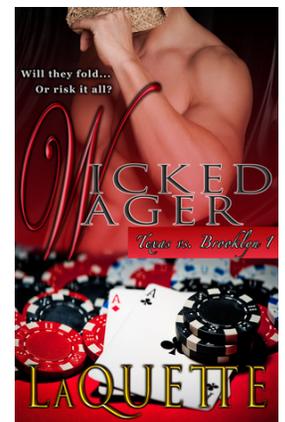
Although scorching hot love scenes may not appeal to every writer's tastes, that doesn't mean their existence should be trivialized. When done well, the explicit and raw nature of high-heat love scenes are a representation of the invisible, yet unbreakable bond that tethers the couple. The fire on the page will and should engage the reader's senses to help them experience just how deep the characters' emotional connection runs. It takes skill to pull that off. The notion it's easy is both offensive and inaccurate.

Writing high-heat love scenes that both help develop the story while entertaining your reader takes careful mastery of both the psychological and emotional development of the characters. The author is constantly keeping a close eye on what and how the character would respond in any given situation, including sex.

For instance, a character who's grown up in a conservative and or repressive world may come to the idea and execution of sex in very different ways from someone who is sexually uninhibited. Or, they could be ready to throw caution to the wind and jump into their sexual revolution with abandon. Either way, if you aren't keeping their psycho-social background at the front of your mind, you risk creating instances where your character does not seem true to themselves, and your reader's investment in the story will wane.

Whether you write erotic love stories is completely your choice. But once you make that choice, know that it's not all about the act, but the experience. The physical is a manifestation of the emotional. The two are intrinsically linked and trying to deliver one without the other will shortchange your readers. If you opt not to write it, give it the respect it deserves. In skillful hands, an erotic love scene can be an incredible tool to grant the reader insight into the emotional background of your characters and the depth of their connection. Keep it sexy! 💋

*LaQuette-President of RWA/NYC, is the 2016 Golden Apple Award Author of the year winner. She writes bold & sexy tales for diverse characters who are confident in their right to appear on the page. Represented by Latoya C. Smith of the LCS Literary Agency. Visit her at: [LaQuette.com](http://LaQuette.com) and [LaQuette@LaQuette.com](mailto:LaQuette@LaQuette.com).♥*



**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS !**

*Claudine  
Gandolfi  
Reshma  
Gidwani-de Vries  
Tani Hanes  
J.L. Lora  
Lydia San  
Andres  
Jessica Scott  
Diana Stewart  
Charlotte J.  
Welsh*

*Arthur Costigan  
Megan Steer  
Taylor V. Donovan  
Nisha Sharma  
Joanna Shupe  
Sarah MacLean  
Denny S. Bryce  
Maureen Anderson  
Kelly Newton  
K. Raydo  
Kimberly Culzac  
♥*

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**CHAPTER MINUTES: JULY 6  
BY SECRETARY KAY BLAKE**


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*Attendance: 14 members*

Harper Miller, VP, Communications called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.

Secretary Report (Kay): There are currently 114 members as of right now.

Kathryn Hayes When Sparks Fly Contest – Harper: There is about a month and a half left to enter the contest. Members encouraged to use graphics and pre written messages to promote the contest via social media. Contest ends on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Brooklyn Book Festival – Michael (Publicity): Information will be sent out soon regarding tabling options and volunteering on the chapter loop. Price to have a spot at the table for 2 hours is \$40

Keynotes: Contact Falguni with articles. Articles due by the 15th of the month. Deadline can be pushed back to the 20<sup>th</sup>. Send articles to [keynoteseditor@gmail.com](mailto:keynoteseditor@gmail.com).

RWA NATIONAL CONFERENCE INFORMATION:

- Members are encouraged to download the RWA 2019 app to coordinate their schedules for Nationals.
- **NYC Nationals Mixer** – Partnered with CIMRA and The Philly chapter of RWA Tuesday, July 23, 2019. Price is \$30. Opportunity to meet Editors and sell yourself. No HARD sell.  
*Publishers & Agency's Attending:*
  - Sourcebooks Casablanca
  - --Harlequin
  - --Dreamspinner Press



## CHAPTER MINUTES CONTINUED

- Kensington
  - Berkley/Penguin Random House
  - Donald Maass Literary Agency
  - Prospect Agency
  - LCS Literary Agency
  - Nancy Yost Literary Agency
- General Meeting is on Wednesday, July 24, 2019 at 11am at the hotel. Members are encouraged to attend.
  - Wednesday, July 24, 2019 there will also be a Town Hall Membership Meeting to talk about diversity and other things. Members can ask questions.
  - Lady Jane's Salon- There will be a special Lady Jane's during Nationals on Wednesday, July 24, 2019. Called *Welcome Back to the Big Apple, RWA* at Madame X. Readings from Evie Dunmore, Angelina M. Lopez, Felicia Grossman, Nita Brooks, Melonie Johnson & Brenda Jackson. Starts at 7 p.m. \$5 Admission
  - RWA Nationals 2019 Non Publisher Party/Indie Author Meetup- Thursday July 25, 2019, there will be an Indie Author Meetup hosted by Harper Miller & Laura Von Holt. Location is Hurley's Saloon 232 W, 48<sup>th</sup> Street between Broadway & 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Time: 7pm to 10 pm. More details will be posted to the loop. Evite link will be available soon.
  - Members are encouraged to bring a book bag as publishers will be giving out lots of books.

Round Robin begins. Meeting adjourned at 12:39 p.m.

Speaker: Taria Reed. Topic: The Right Cover for the Right Market.♥

*Secretary Kay Blake is an award winning author of contemporary and interracial romances. Visit her at [www.authorkayblake.wordpress.com](http://www.authorkayblake.wordpress.com).*



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**JOIN THE RWA/NYC BOARD**

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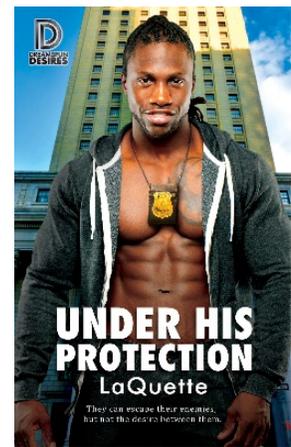
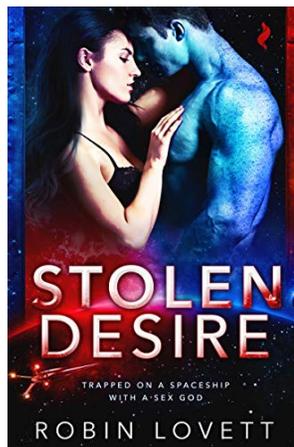
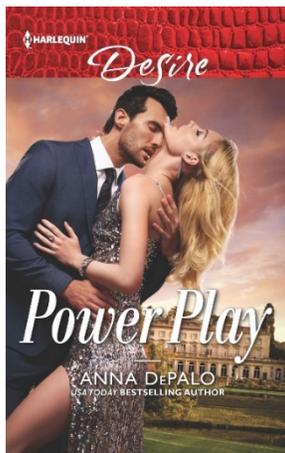
Are you interested in joining the RWA/NYC Board of Directors? All Members in good standing are welcome to run. All positions are open --- President, two Vice President positions, Secretary and Treasurer. Feel free to talk to the current Board Member are her job. Email President LaQuette at [president@rwanyc.com](mailto:president@rwanyc.com) if you are interested in running. Elections will be in the Fall. ♥

## MEMBER NEWS

**Anna DePalo** is pleased to announce that the third book in her The Serengetti Brothers series will be released on September 1. Look for **POWER PLAY** from Harlequin Desire at a bookstore near you. It will also be available in eformat.

Congrats to our Chapter President **LaQuette** whose book, **UNDER HIS PROTECTION**, won the Pink Heart Society Reviewers' Choice Awards for Romantic Suspense.

**Robin Lovett** is pleased to announce the release of her new book, **STOLEN DESIRE**. It's about being stuck on a spaceship with a Sex God. Oh La La! ♥



## CRITIQUE GROUP INFORMATION BY KATE DUNN

The next RWA-NYC Chapter critique group will take place on Monday, August 12, from 6-8pm (come at 5:30 for eating/ chatting; critiques start promptly at 6pm). We will be meeting at Cafe Isadora ([www.cafeisadoras.com](http://www.cafeisadoras.com)) 16 East 52nd between Fifth and Madison, on the second floor. There are plenty of good food options there.

This group is open to all chapter members. We welcome participants willing to read submissions and offer feedback, even if you don't have anything to submit that month. Thinking critically about other people's work is a great way to learn how to improve your own.

If you would like to participate, let us know and we will send you an invitation to the August Google Group. Submissions of approximately 20 pages are due by August 5. If you have any questions, please email either one of us and we will be happy to chat with you. Dates for the rest of the year appear below. Happy writing! ♥

For more info, write to Kate ([kdunn707nyc@gmail.com](mailto:kdunn707nyc@gmail.com)) and Candace ([cklucas1949@gmail.com](mailto:cklucas1949@gmail.com)).

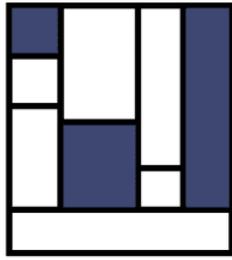
**Future dates:** September 16    October 21    November 18    December 16



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**BROOKLYN BOOK FESTIVAL**  
**BY CHAIRMAN MICHAEL MOLLOY**

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# BROOKLYN BOOK FESTIVAL

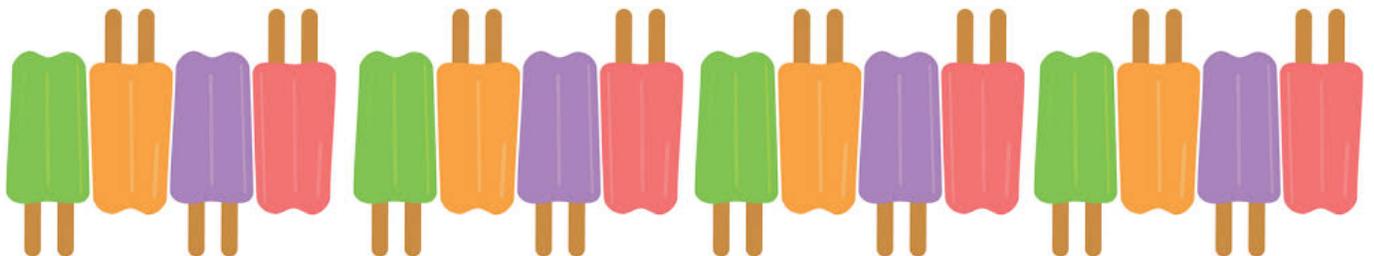
September 16-23, 2019

"The New York Chapter is once again committed to the annual Brooklyn Book Festival. We will have a canopied booth (placement still to be determined) at the event, which will take place on **Sunday, September 22nd**, from 10 am until 6 pm, rain or shine. The BBF will be held on the grounds of Borough Hall and the Kings County State Supreme Courthouse in Downtown Brooklyn (Montague and Court Streets).

"We will be offering eight two-hours slots to our members wishing to sell books or just to discuss their current projects in progress on a first-come, first-serve basis. A fee of \$40.00 will be required to obtain a slot, once they become available on the chapter website. But the modest charge is well worth the investment considering that this event not only attracts readers from around the New York City area, but also from around the country and internationally. The world is literally your oyster.

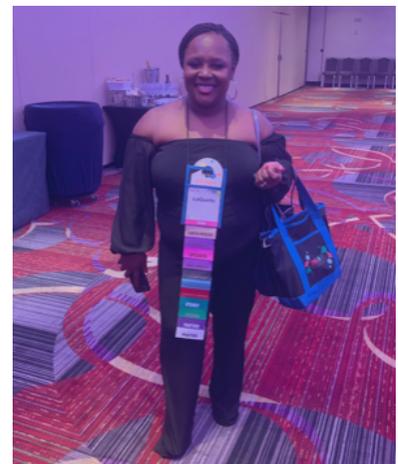
"In addition, we will also be offering eight two-hour volunteer spots. You will become ambassadors and advocates for the chapter in particular and for the romance genre in general. You will also serve as recruiters for new candidates to join our chapter.

"We encourage everyone to be part of the chapter's role in the BBF. Even if you choose to be a spectator, cheer our authors and volunteers on! And let's not forget the plethora of speakers on different topics and other exhibitors. There is something for everyone at the Brooklyn Book Festival."♥





New York City & Pennsylvania Chapters get the Party Started!



RWA/NYC & PRW MIXER --- CONTINUED

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September's Keynotes will contain more news on the RWA National Conference & more photos.

Send us your thoughts, photos & notes from conference to [keynoteseditor@gmail.com](mailto:keynoteseditor@gmail.com) by August 15. ♥

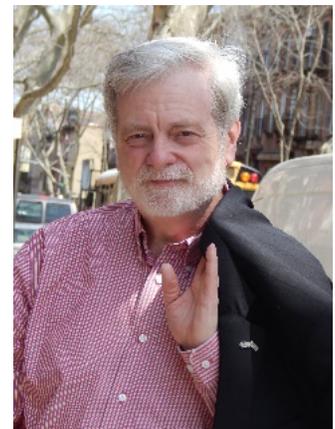
## MONTHLY THEME

## LET'S TALK ABOUT S-E-X !

**KEEPING THE HERO IN CHECK**  
**BY MICHAEL J. MOLLOY**

I suppose one might think that this writer treats sex like the stereotyped male you see and read about over and over again. Raunchy. Debauched. Lewd. You get the idea. But the truth is I prefer a more sensual intimacy rather than something over the top. That's reflective in the romance stories I write. And while I may let a male character go a little further in a suspense novel, I tend to keep the hero well in check in a romantic tale.

You won't see many alpha males in the stories I compose, although I have a future romantic comedy project down the road where the hero is actually a conceited, smarmy womanizer who undergoes a character arc change as does the all-business, no-nonsense heroine. Whatever seductive thoughts my hero has in the back of his brain, he always allows the heroine to make the first move when it comes to the bedroom. And even there I emphasize the soft close contact between the man and the woman without going through the randy details. No erotica here. Besides, I'm of the firm belief that male writers in the romance genre are judged differently than female writers. A woman can write a sizzling sex scene and can get away with it. A man doing the same...well, let's just say he may be frowned upon. That's a poison pill I will never take. Now you know a little more about me and my writing style. My stories simply wrap their arms around you. And to me, that's the best of all.♥



*Michael J. Molloy is a big fan of authors Stephen King, Frederick Forysth, and even Nicholas Sparks. He was influenced greatly by the late Frank McCourt (ANGELA'S ASHES). He has written two traditionally published books through Gypsy Shadow Publishing – THE DIAMOND MAN and SADISTIC PATTERN. He just completed a contemporary romance novel entitled SWEET GREETINGS FROM CARTHAGE, based on a true story. You can also visit him on [www.facebook.com/molloyauthor](http://www.facebook.com/molloyauthor) and follow him on Twitter [www.twitter.com/AuthorMJM](http://www.twitter.com/AuthorMJM).*



## GIVE ME THE SEX BY JN WELSH

In celebration of this month's "Hot" issue. I thought it would be fun to answer questions about sex in romance.

### **Do sex and romance go hand in hand? Should they?**

Sex and romance may go hand in hand but I don't think they have to. I enjoy writing both scenes that pull on the emotional heartstrings without the sex as well as writing sexy scenes that both pop the balloon, get readers excited, and deepen the connection between my characters.

### **What level of hotness do you enjoy writing?**

I like a high heat setting on my books---open door, open everything. If I can embody what my characters are feeling then that helps me develop a well-rounded, emotional scene. Scene that aren't just about what's happening with what hole and where (lol) but also what *emotional* hole needs to be filled for the characters so that my readers are in deep (puns, puns and more puns)!

### **In this day and age, should the bedrooms door be kept wide open or should they be closed again?**

It depends on the reader, really. I'm sure there are readers who want only open door or only closed door but I'm inclined to believe that readers want a good, well-written and satisfying story. I like mostly open door but sometimes I like closed door. If the romance between the characters makes my tummy drop like I'm on a rollercoaster, then the author has won me over and that can be done with either.

### **Is erotica dead? What about sweet romances, are they still around?**

Erotica will live on forever, and yes there are still some sweet romances out there. I haven't read one lately but I know authors who write pretty sweet.

### **Who do you —and your heroine! — want to have sex with.... the bad boy/girl, cowboy, billionaire, town sheriff, CEO, FBI agent, prince, werewolf, vampire, angel, Horseman, other or all of the above?**

LOL...sneaky. My heroines and I like bad boy DJs with big hearts these days, however, I do like an unexpected hero and that can be found in pretty much all the above!

### **What about Love is Love is Love? Are male-male romances getting hotter? Selling better?**

Yes, yes and yes! There are some really great stories out there. They are fun and deep, and everything romance and finding love ought to be. Once you get reading it's hard to put down. With the call for more diversity in literature for all, including but not limited to LGBTQ+ books, we are seeing not only male-male but a full lovely spectrum. Still a well-written book is a something that everyone can enjoy.

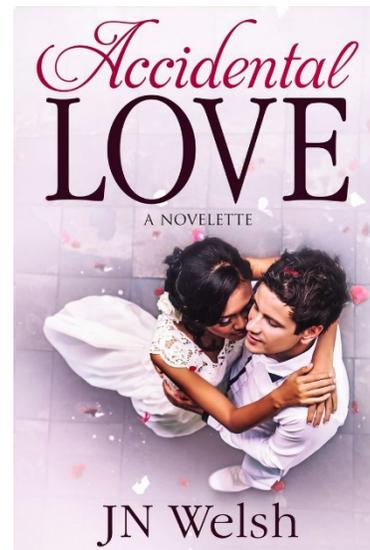


**Is there such a thing as too much sex?**

Dare I say, yes? Sometimes I think too much sex is a way to disarm the reader from focusing on the sex, especially in erotic romance, but sometimes if I find myself skimming over the sex then either, I've had enough, or the scene isn't doing anything for me. This, coming from someone who enjoys these connective moments in books!

And there you have it, my answers and insights to sex in romance. What are yours?♥

*JN Welsh is a native New Yorker. She writes entertaining, often humorous, and provocative tales about strong, career-driven, multicultural heroines of color who are looking for love. Her punchy, flowing dialogue, and mostly big city stories are heartwarming and stick to your ribs. When she's not writing she can be found dancing, wine-ing, rooting for her favorite baseball team, and/or indulging in countless guilty pleasures. Visit her at [www.jnwelsh.com](http://www.jnwelsh.com).*




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**EROTIC ROMANCE ISN'T GOING ANYWHERE**  
**BY ROBIN LOVETT**


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There will always be a place for erotic romance on book shelves and in readers' hearts. Sex is a part of life, and sexual empowerment is one of the vital purposes the romance genre serves in our culture. It may fade in and out of the lime light with trends in the market, but erotic romance is without a doubt here to stay.

I'm a super fan of out-of-this-world sci-fi erotic romance. I enjoy writing it. Some people call it bonkers or bananas, and it is—full of sex planets and ultra-hot aliens with wicked sexy skills...mm-hm. But it's also a ripe place for readers to explore the depths of their fantasies without shame. Erotic romance has the power to free our inhibitions around physical pleasure and help us go after what we desire. Something that can be very difficult in a culture that often regards women's sexuality as something dangerous to be repressed, punished, or abused. Romance is a pressure place where sexuality can be celebrated. As long as there are women who enjoy having sex, erotic romance isn't going anywhere.♥

*Robin Lovett writes sci-fi erotica and contemporary dark thrillers. Learn more about her at [www.romancelovett.com](http://www.romancelovett.com). Follow her on Facebook and Twitter too.*





## WHAT WORKS FOR YOU BY BLUE SAFFIRE

When it comes to the topic of sex, I'm a firm believer in doing what works for you. Much like we do in our real sex lives. If you're not ready for chaps and whips don't jump into the bed of a Dom. You know?

For me each book is different and calls for what it needed as it unfolds. As an author with two pen names I take the approach that feels right for the genre, voice, and character. Ultimately, I think the readers get the best results from me staying true to those three things.

I've also written under a different pen name from Blue Saffire and Royal Blue with completely closed doors. The lack of sex in my books reflected in the sales and reviews. However, this could have been unique to me. I was holding back from opening the door on the sex scenes because of my belief system at the time. I think that readers were able to sense this in my writing and called me on it.

I now burn the pages with the graphic heat level I write with. In times that I dial back it seems the readers call for more. Although I still believe in keeping the balance. Everything has to fit.

I believe every sex scene should belong and not just float out of thin air. Several things go into this decision. Is it the right time? Are the emotions right to place the scene at that moment? Will the sex scene move the story and characters forward in my head and on the page? It all comes down the main characters experience for me. It has to be right for them.

If the characters have a great experience the readers will have a great experience as well. After all the readers are escaping into the world of the characters we create. My main focus is the experience. Do I have your attention, emotions, your breath? Yes, I want to leave you breathless and in need of a change of underwear. LOL.

But this is what works for me and the readers that engage my worlds. The next creator many not have this type of comfort level to open the door. I say if you're not feeling it, don't open the door. Reading can become an intuitive experience and if readers can sense the discomfort of an author it bleeds into the rest of the book and can take away from the overall, otherwise great book. It's better to remember there's a market for everyone. You just have to find your zone and listen to your vibes and your readers vibes. Your heat level is our own. Own it! Be you and let your book climax the way they should.♥

*Blue Saffire, award-winning, bestselling author of over thirty contemporary romance novels and novellas,—writes with the intention to touch the heart and the mind. Blue hooks, weaves, and loops multiple series, keeping you engaged in her worlds. Every word is meant to have a lasting touch that leaves you breathless for more. Blue and her husband live in a home filled with laughter and creativity, in Long Island, NY. Both working hard to build the Blue brand and cultivate their love for the arts. Creativity is their family affair. Visit her at [www.bluesaffire.com](http://www.bluesaffire.com).*





## ROPES, FLOGGERS, WHIPS, OH MY! BY MARIA FERRER

For a writer of erotica, a BDSM Writers Con is the place to be!  
Reading about “the lifestyle” is one thing; actually, seeing it live is another.

First, let me say that BDSM is not romance. Romance is flowery, sexy, risqué, with lots of I love you’s and “romantic” gestures. BDSM is not. BDSM can be sexy but it doesn’t do flowers or candy. It’s about whips, paddles, ropes, blindfolds and pain. Lots of pain. However, it’s also about respect, mutual consent, play scenes and after care.

As I watched the BDSM play scenes, I was mesmerized by the care the Dominant took with his Submissive. The titles were somewhat jarring; there is no equality in that equation. And her wearing a collar was off putting; alright, offensive...sort of. The Dom proceeded to tie up and blindfold his Sub and was flogging her steadily. Not a romantic image, is it? Or is IT?

Suddenly I noticed something important that changed my view of the BDSM “Hero.” As he prepped her for the coming pain, he was taking care to check that the ropes were not too tight, that the blindfold wasn’t uncomfortable, that the 10 strokes were not more than she could take, even as she begged to be hit harder. Here was tenderness at its core. He was not just dishing out pain; her wellbeing was his primary concern. He untied her; wrapped her in a warm blanket; took her in his arms and gave her water; checked her pulse, her temperature. Here at last was the true BDSM Hero – a loving, caring, romantic hero.



The BDSM relationship is about pain, but it’s also about love and after care. He may not use romantic words or bring gifts, but he is a Hero. And isn’t that we all long for? A Hero who doesn’t just give us a quick thank you kiss for the great orgasm and turns over, but one who takes us into his arms afterwards and makes sure we had as much pleasure as he did, and makes sure that we are safe, and, most importantly, makes sure that we are back in our heads and feeling alright in the aftermath. Gotta love that kind, considerate Hero, whether he comes with whips or not.♥

*Maria Ferrer writes erotica under the name of Del Carmen. She’s published stories with Penthouse, Ravenous Romance and Cleis Press. This article was first published in Keynotes August 2017 issue, but the BDSM Hero was as caring then as he is now.*

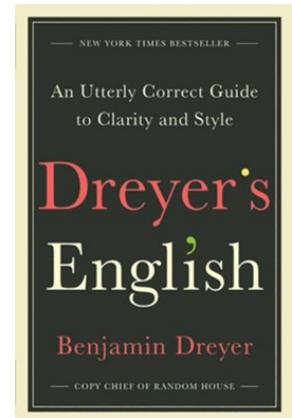
## GOLDEN APPLE AWARDS

The winners of our Golden Apple Awards are below. Our GAA reception will be in September.



Lifetime Achievement: **Brenda Jackson**  
Author of the Year: **Alyssa Cole**  
Agent of the Year: **Rachel Brooks**, Bookends Agency  
Editor of the Year: **Cat Clyne**, Sourcebooks  
Publisher of the Year: **Sourcebooks**  
Bookstore of the Year: **WORD Bookstore**, NYC♥

## BOOK REVIEW BY ANNA DE PALO

**DREYER'S ENGLISH: AN UTTERLY CORRECT GUIDE TO CLARITY AND STYLE**  
**BY BENJAMIN DREYER**


Author: Benjamin Dreyer (copy chief of Random House)

Published: 2019; Formats: hardcover, ebook, audio

Follow on Twitter: @BCDreyer

Anna's Review Rating: FIVE STARS ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

About the Book: Part I: The Stuff in the Front: This section starts out with addressing rules and nonrules, segues to 67 things to do and not do with punctuation, and detours into how a little grammar is a dangerous thing. The grand finale is my favorite chapter: "The Realities of Fiction." Too many fine points for this review, but I'll give you this nugget: "Go light on exclamation points in dialogue. No, even lighter than that. Are you down to none yet? Good."

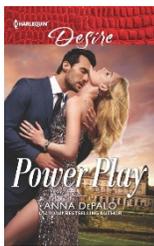
Part II: The Stuff in the Back: This section discusses frequently misspelled and confused words, as well as giving some notes on proper nouns. For example, here's the entry for Barbra Streisand: "It's a bit late in the history of Western civilization for people to misspell her first name as 'Barbara,' but it still happens." This section ends with chapters called "The Trimmables" (ever find your manuscript has been heavily seasoned with phrases like *close proximity* and *blend together?*) and "The Miscellany" (things that "decency forbids").

Who It's For: Anyone who writes.

Why I Recommend It: #1 Amazon Best Seller in *Business & Professional Humor* (you read that right: a grammar guide that's laugh-out-loud funny). It's so good that I first borrowed it from the library and then bought a copy from Barnes & Noble for my reference shelf. Also, this guide addresses the subtleties of grammar in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. If you want someone to give you permission to disregard a few of the longstanding orthodoxies of English prose, this is it (I'm looking at you, anyone who has ever split an infinitive, or described a person with *that* instead of *who*).♥

Favorite Quotes: "Only godless savages eschew the series comma."

"One does not...use quotation marks for emphasis. That is why God invented italics."



\*Thanks to Kelsey Browning of Romance University for inspiring this book review format with her online posts.

*Anna DePalo is the USA Today best-selling author of more than a dozen romance novels. Her next book, POWER PLAY, the third in The Serengetti Brothers series, will be released on September 1, 2019 by Harlequin. The first book, SECOND CHANCE WITH THE CEO, received a starred review from Library Journal and won the NECRWA Readers' Choice Award. You can find Anna online at [www.annadepalo.com](http://www.annadepalo.com), [www.facebook.com/anna.depaloauthor](https://www.facebook.com/anna.depaloauthor), [www.facebook.com/AnnaDePaloBooks](https://www.facebook.com/AnnaDePaloBooks) and [twitter.com/Anna\\_DePalo](https://twitter.com/Anna_DePalo).*

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**WELCOME TO MY WRITING DEN!**  
**THE ANTIDOTE TO THE ‘DOG DAYS’ OF SUMMER: READING!**  
**BY MARIA COX**

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Writers hear this all the time, “If you want to be a better writer, you need to be a better reader.” This is very true, but, what is also true is that we need to read effectively. See, reading effectively can help make a huge difference in the quality of work we produce.



Below are simple tips to ensure you’re getting the most out of your reading experience this year:

**1) Be sure to read books you enjoy.**

This may seem logical, but many a time we may feel as if we have to read ‘certain types’ of books because it is expected of us as writers. But, really, reading should be *fun* so reading mandatory books (e.g. the classics, poetry, Shakespeare, etc.) is counterintuitive. Read what you enjoy and you’re likely to read more, simple.

**2) Read the type of material you aspire to produce.**

If you wish to be a best-selling author, you should be reading books written by best-selling authors. So, find an author you admire and read as much of his/her work as possible.

**3) Keep a log of the books you’ve read.**

Keep an online journal for reference. Sites such as Goodreads are fantastic for record-keeping. If you’re ‘old school’, however, keeping a paper journal works just as well.

For those unfamiliar with Goodreads, I highly encourage you to visit their site and learn about its community of readers and writers.

Happy summer reading.♥

*Maria Cox is an award-winning romance writer. Maria is also a PRO member of Romance Writers of America and the past Treasurer of RWA/NYC. Maria served two terms 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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**WANTED: MEMBERS' SOCIAL LINKS  
BY CHAPTER KAY BLAKE**

For new members, and members who have been with RWA NYC, I am sending a call for social media links. If you have any website links, Twitter links, Instagram links, or Facebook links that wasn't given or you just want to update them, please send the links to me at [info@rwanyc.com](mailto:info@rwanyc.com). Thank you. ♥

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**ABOUT PAN  
(PUBLISHED AUTHOR NETWORK)**

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**

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.♥