

MEDIA Q&A

1. Was there anything in particular that drew your interest to the rum runners and to write about the time of prohibition?

The San Juan Islands are very special and I was lucky enough to work there and to spend my summers on various islands throughout the Northwest. While working at Roche Harbor in the early '70s, a friend told me his grandmother used to be a rum runner. That got my interest going fast forward. I spent time interviewing seniors, and digging through libraries. Prohibition was a time which changed society, for the better and for the worse.

The real life stories were fascinating: outfoxing the police, pirates, swift boats. This time period possessed all the elements for a quick paced story.

2. What makes your book come to life?

Not only is the story line compelling but I am proud of my characters. They are detailed and have secrets they reluctantly share, or come to see life differently, as the book progresses.

I find the elderly interesting and their desire to right their personal wrongs before they leave this earth, a force in and of itself. And that is why I chose an elderly woman, Alexandra, with a questionable, and sometimes dark, history as one of my main characters. Alex shares the pages with Jean, the young college student, who learns to stand up for herself in an attempt to unravel the mystery of a 1930's murder.

There is romance, history and just plain fun in this page turning novel.

3. What did you do before you wrote your novel?

My life has always centered on the arts. After graduating from the University of Washington with a teaching certificate for drama and English, I performed in local theatres, commercials and movies before heading to Los Angeles. A few years later I returned to Seattle to work on a movie being filmed up here and decided to move back home. I continued my acting on camera, in print, and as a writer, producer and director. I won awards for my writing and acting, served on the Board of American Federation of TV and Radio, was a member of Women in Film, and hosted the Emerald City awards and ITVA awards nights. I taught in the public schools, developing media classes and a small video workspace. I also taught English, drama and wrote and directed the plays for the school. I won the A+ Award for Excellence in Education.

4. Do you think your experience with teaching, working in the theatre and film industry, helped with the creation of the book?

Absolutely. One of my favorite subject matters to teach, and I do love to teach, is character development. When reading and performing a variety of plays I had to become the character in movement, voice, temperament and thought process. I trained at American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco as well as local Universities and can't think of any better exposure to dialogue, rhythm, and structure for novel writing.

Working in film makes you think in visuals. And crafting a story is very visual.

5. Your father was a journalist, what role did that play in your decision to write.

My father always encouraged my brothers and me to be creative and to be hard workers. He made writing look so easy. He worked for *the Seattle Post-Intelligencer* and would leave in the afternoon, as it was an early morning paper, so we would basically be ships passing in the night. But I never saw him struggle to produce his column or any of his copy.

At first I stuck to performing on stage, not even thinking I wanted to write. But when I got to L.A. someone asked me if I could write and I said yes and that was it. I began, stumbling along the way, but keeping at it.

Dad would patiently read every word and then just say ‘wonderful.’ I guess, unlike my English teachers, (I can say that as I was an English teacher!) he knew I would find my own voice someday and didn’t want to stop me from attempting to succeed.

6. This was your first novel, how does it compare to your other writings for theatre and commercials?

Every discipline is unique and demanding. Commercials are all about time. How do I convey this product in this amount of time with the most sustainable impact?

Theatre is words, movies are visual, and a novel is a combination of these aspects of writing.

7. Without telling the entire book, is there a particular scene or portion of the book that really stand out for you and why?

There is one scene where Alex’s old friends come for a dinner at her home on the cliff overlooking the water. These are dear souls who were part of Jake’s crew of rum runners, who help keep the memory of Jake alive. They tell stories of rum running, kid with each other in a loving way, and give different perspectives into prohibition and how it affected their lives.

I hope it portrays a tribute to the elderly, their journey and wisdom.

8. You are 4th generation Seattlite, how did that influence your story? And why do you think non-locals will like *Whiskey Cove*?

When you know an area and have elders who can fill in the gaps, it helps flush out the setting for a story, you can add tidbits of information that might have only trickled down verbally.

Prohibition took its toll all over America, and spilled across our borders north and south, opening up international interest.

Can you imagine living in a time when it was acceptable, almost expected, to disobey parts of the law? The concept is alluring to all generations and walks of life.

And I think strong women are intriguing. When they finally have to expose their vulnerability, it can be startling, and show a depth of character otherwise hidden on the surface.

Those were tough times to live through, unsettling and exciting. I hope *Whiskey Cove* captures the flavor of the “Noble Experiment” and can provide a look at history in a non traditional way.