



Pages of the Past

CELEBRATING
HISTORICAL FICTION

Vol. 1, No. 28, October 11, 2019

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From the Editor

Hello to all the delightful historical fiction authors and readers! I hope you're all sliding into a cooler fall season. Here in Texas, we're finally having some days lower than 90-degrees. Unfortunately our fall doesn't last too long here and we're smack dab in the middle of winter. But...winter makes for some great reading, bundled up in a comfy chair with a good book.

For the writers out there, I was wondering. Do you all struggle with the dilemma of*Squirrel!*...and we're off and chasing a new goal?

It seems every year I get towards the end of the year and move all the books, short stories and other projects that I didn't finish this year onto the slate for next year. A month or two ago I already set up my 'book schedule' for 2020, seeing what I wasn't going to get finished this year. Then I took a more realistic look at it and realized I couldn't accomplish everything I had listed in one year. So I broke it into two and set up a 2020 and a 2021 schedule.

Then...earlier this week I was working on a short story about my Grandma and Grandpa Jones to send to *Good Old Days* magazine. I titled the piece 'The Moonshiner's Daughter' and*SQUIRREL!*...I thought – what a great book title that would be!

No. I didn't come in and revise my 2020 schedule again. I'm sticking with the projects already lined up – and the Pages of the Past newsletter, of course.

I'm going to have to hang a 'No Squirrels Allowed' sign in my writing room.

Wishing you a wonderful weekend full of delightful books!

Trisha

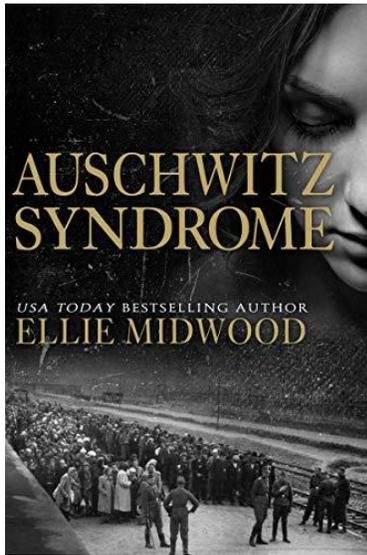
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New Release

Auschwitz Syndrome

a Holocaust novel based on a true story
(Women and the Holocaust Book 3)

Ellie Midwood



Germany, 1947.

A strange case scheduled for the Denazification Court lands on the desk of an American psychiatrist currently serving in Germany, Dr. Hoffman.

A former Auschwitz guard, Franz Dahler, is set to appear in court, and he has requested to bring the most unexpected witness to testify in his defense - one of his former inmates and current wife, Helena.

As soon as one of the newly emerging Nazi hunters and former Auschwitz inmate, Andrej Novák, recognizes the officer's name, he demands a full investigation of Dahler's crimes, claiming that the former SS man was not only abusing Helena in the camp but is also using her as a ploy to escape prosecution.

Silent, subdued, and seemingly dependent on her husband's every word, Helena appears to be a classic victim of abuse, and possibly more of an aid to the prosecution instead of the defense.

As she begins giving her testimony, Dr. Hoffman finds himself more and more confused at the picture that gradually emerges before his eyes; a perpetrator is claimed to be the savior and the accuser, the criminal.

The better Dr. Hoffman gets to know each participant, the more he begins to question himself; whether he's facing a most unimaginable love story, or a new and still-nameless psychological disorder affecting the very manner in which Helena sees the events of the past.

Partially based on a true story, this deeply psychological, haunting novel will take you back in time to the heart of Auschwitz and post-war Germany, and will keep you guessing the true motive of each side.

Book three in "Women and the Holocaust" series. Also in the same series: "Emilia" (book 1) and "No Woman's Land" (book 2).

Why Do We Write Historical Fiction?

Why do we write historical fiction? Why do readers read it? What is there about this genre that pulls so many of us into its sphere?

I was curious. So I set out on a quest to try to find out why. So, where did I go? To the first place, I daresay many of us head. As I heard in a workshop last weekend at a writing conference – the answer was GTS – Google That S**t. From the land of Google, I found where five authors had already addressed the 'Why?' question.

As a side note, it was interesting to discover Deborah Swift's answer, shared on a blog post in 2012. Deborah is scheduled to be our spotlighted author on October 25th. So you'll have to come back then and see what fascinating tidbits she has to share with us about her journey in writing historical fiction.

For a little peek into the World of Why – keep reading!

Land of Foreigners

<https://floridawriters.net/why-write-historical-fiction/>

“There’s a trend these days for readers to look for protagonists like them: girls want female heroes. People of color want to see other minorities triumph, etc. But that’s only a good thing up to a point. Don’t we also need to see how people unlike us are, in fact, like us? If the past is a foreign country, its people are always foreigners. They not only dressed and spoke differently from us—all of us now alive—they had different values and saw the world differently. We might disagree with them about a lot of things. A chance to get inside their heads without judgment should be mind-expanding, like any cultural exchange. Unlike straightforward historiography, historical fiction humanizes the people of yore. We laugh and cry with them; we discover that they had the same feelings we do and suffered many of the same basic human sorrows, whether they looked like us or not. I don’t think it’s even important that this glimpse of their hearts is mediated by a modern author, because fiction is the creation of the illusion of reality, after all. Through historical fiction, we feel for and with the people of the past as we see them before us. And that is empathy.”

Why Do Authors Write Historical Fiction?

<https://epye.com/writers-write-historical-fiction/>

“Ask ten historical fiction authors why they write in the genre, and you will receive ten different answers. Reasons may include replies such as:

I’m curious about history and the people of the past.

I love to imagine what life was like in past eras and places.

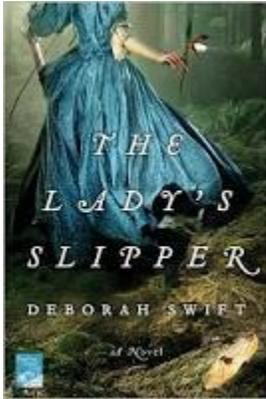
Writing historical fiction is a way to make the connections from past eras to the present.

Readers buy historical novels.”



Why I write historical fiction - Deborah Swift

<https://englishhistoryauthors.blogspot.com/2012/03/why-i-write-historical-fiction-deborah.html>



“A few years ago I would have been surprised to find I had produced a historical novel. So why write one?”

Before I came to write *The Lady's Slipper*, most of my writing was contemporary. I read a lot of contemporary fiction, and was a member of a book group that read mostly literary fiction. So what won me over to writing historicals?

The answer is that it wasn't a case of me deciding on a period and then setting the novel there, it was more that my characters demanded certain conditions to flourish and tell their story. I started with a character who wanted to paint an orchid - I had seen the rare lady's-slipper orchid myself and wanted to write (initially) a poem about it. This desire was subverted into my character's desire to capture it in paint. From then on the character grew and developed. I thought for the flower to have impact I needed a time when ideas about botany and images of flowers were new and fresh. Perhaps a time before mass printing, a time when herbs and flowers were used for healing. This led me to the 17th century when herbalists such as Nicolas Culpeper were just making their mark on history and the science of botany was in its infancy.”

Why I Write Art Historical Fiction

<https://lauramorelli.com/why-i-write-art-historical-fiction/>

“The story of *The Gondola Maker*, my first work of fiction, germinated inside my head while I was busy researching another book called *Made in Italy*. The contemporary Italian artisans I interviewed, one after another, told me how important it was to them to pass on the torch of tradition to the next generation. I began to wonder what would happen if the successor were not able or willing to take on that duty. The characters of the gondola maker and his heirs began to take shape. The story intrigued me so much that I felt compelled to write about it.

Working as an art historian involves three things: teaching, researching, and writing. Doing art historical research is a passion for me, and I also love being in the classroom and sharing the history of art with my students. Writing for scholarly journals takes years of training and discipline. I have great respect for the craftsmanship of academic writing and for those who practice it. However, personally, after writing within the conventions of academic scholarship for some years, I began to feel like I was going to burst!

One day I found myself yawning in the audience of a scholarly conference, and I realized that there was something fundamentally wrong. After all, the history of art is the most fascinating topic in the world! Why do we scholars insist on making it dull and inaccessible? I realized then that, not only did I see an opportunity, I felt called to share the excitement of art history with a broader audience through my writing.”

Tanya Landman: why I write historical fiction

<https://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2016/may/06/tanya-landman-why-i-write-historical-fiction>

“Growing up, the past seemed to me to be a place where adventures could happen. In comparison, the modern world was so restricted. We had rules. Regulations. Timetables. We were constantly supervised.

Nowadays, as a novelist, the past appeals to me because it offers so many possibilities.

Every writer who creates a child protagonist faces the same problem: how to get rid of the parents. Essentially, your character needs to be alone because otherwise – faced with danger – they would turn to the nearest responsible adult for help and the grown-up would sort out the problem. That’s wonderful in real life, but would make for a very short story.

So parents need to be killed off, or sent away, or put out of reach. But if your setting is the modern-day UK, that still leaves you with all the other support networks that are (in theory at any rate) there to protect the vulnerable. There are teachers, social workers, emergency services. Your protagonist would only have to dial 999 and help would be on its way. I have tied myself in knots with some books, having to invent places with no phone signal, or mobiles whose battery is about to die, just so my characters can be put in mortal peril. You don’t have this problem if you set your story in a place where mobile phones don’t exist.

It could be a dystopian future. But – for now at any rate - I like to go back to the dangerous past, where there were no rules, no safety nets and where anything can – and will – happen.”



Dust Bowl 1930s

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In an earlier issue, we shared some Facebook groups that focused on historical fiction. Today, instead of an author interview, we're sharing some Facebook pages.

The difference? You need to join a group to be a member of it. Although, depending on how the privacy is set up, you may be able to view the posts in a group without being a member. (Or, what one of my pet peeves is – people can add you to groups without your knowledge or approval.) On the pages, you simply 'LIKE' the page. Both groups and pages post interesting tidbits, helpful information, and share books.

Depending on how often you 'like' posts, in either groups or pages, and Facebook's mysterious algorithm of the day affects how often you'll see the posts pop up in your feed. But, we're not going to go there, because that's a nebulous subject that can't be pinned down, at least not by this non-techno person.



Historical Fiction Spotlight

<https://www.facebook.com/HistoricalFictionSpotlight/>

"History is too important to be left to historians," - Robert Harris.

Luckily, we have Historical Fiction. After all, you can't spell History without Story. And that is what History is...the Story of Us.

This page is dedicated to highlighting the greatest books and authors of Historical Fiction.

Historical Fiction e-books

<https://www.facebook.com/Historical-Fiction-eBooks-265315163590360/>

Hello and welcome to the Historical Fiction Authors Cooperative's (HFAC) Facebook page! This is where the HFAC will share updates with readers about our members' new releases, special offers, free downloads, feature books, and the latest blog posts. To help spread the word, please click 'Like' or hit 'Share' on our posts - and visit the site: <http://HFeBooks.com>.

This page is designed to share the work of the more than 50 members of HFAC: only our members are promoted here. Thanks for popping in!

The Historical Fiction Authors Cooperative is an international group of authors who first teamed up in 2010 to offer readers a selection of high-quality historical fiction e-books. HFAC membership is by invitation only, allowing us to assure the quality of the books we feature on this site.

Historical Fiction Authors Coop

<https://www.facebook.com/historicalfictionauthorscoop/>

The Historical Fiction Authors Co-op is dedicated to promoting the genre. We are a group of writers who came together over two years ago to help each other spread the word about the incredible variety in historical fiction, as well as promote each other's work. This page is our official storefront, where we'll be offering information about our new releases, promotions, sneak peeks, and other fun stuff. Thank you for liking us. Tell your friends! You can also follow us on twitter: @HisFicCoop

English Historical Fiction Authors

<https://www.facebook.com/EHFABlog/>

BONUS LINK:

Historical Fiction Reader (Blog)

<https://www.facebook.com/historicalfictionreader/>

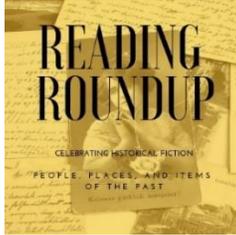
Historical Fiction Reader is a book review blog that specializes in history based fiction and nonfiction.



Ford assembly line

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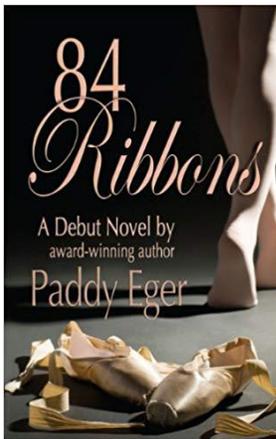
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The 1950s

84 Ribbons

Paddy Eger



Seventeen year old Marta Selbryth realizes her dream of becoming a professional dancer when the Intermountain Ballet Company in Billings, Montana invites her to join their 1957 season. As Marta's new life unfolds, she must learn to face not only the successes of dancing in the corps de ballet, but the challenges and setbacks that might crush the dream she's had for so long.

After a couple of mishaps, Marta settles into life in a boarding house located near the ballet company. Her landlady, Mrs. B., is friendly, reduces her rent when Marta's offers to bake for the boarder and later allows her to use the basement as a practice studio. The two male boarders are supportive; Carol, a fellow boarder, ignores her.

Marta spends her free time practicing when she's not spending time with her new friends Lynne and Bartley, her fellow corps dancers. Their time together becomes an important lifeline through their first year.

Madame Cospers, the artistic director, is a demanding woman. Marta begins their association poorly when she makes a disastrous choice. Expecting expulsion, Marta receives a second chance in the form of dancing the unpopular character roles during the fall and winter performances. Marta determines to dance every role with confidence in hopes of proving to Madame that she's up for every challenge.

Steve, a young college man and a reporter, spots Marta when he's assigned to write an article about ballet for the local paper. He's attracted to her and begins his pursuit. Over the months ahead, he becomes her tour guide of the area and attempts to convince Marta to be his girl. But her steadfast focus is ballet and some of her adventures with him lead to problems with Madame Cospers.

Shortly after Christmas, everything changes for Marta, Bartley and Steve. Significant events permanently influence their lives. Each must deal with exhilaration and heartbreak as well as frustration and changes that test their ability to cope.

Authors: Do you have a historical fiction book or short story that you'd like featured in Pages of the Past? Email me at texastrishafaye@yahoo.com to see about scheduling your book or short story in a future issue.

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