

# BLOG BYTES



by Kristopher Zgorski

This issue we will feature a few blogs that contain content of interest to crime-fiction readers but which expand their coverage beyond that genre—while also targeting specific readers and writers.

*Women Writers, Women's Books* (<https://booksbywomen.org>) was launched in 2011 as a platform for contemporary women writers to encourage and promote the visibility of women writers. There is much to explore here, including book excerpts, essays related to recently released work, and, of course, tips and techniques. One recent post dealt with “How to write unlikely characters your readers will love.” But probably my favorite feature of this website is the “Authors Interviewing Characters” posts where the author of the book literally conducts an interview with one of the female characters in the work. This may sound like a gimmicky exercise, but it often results in some profound discoveries about both the book itself and the author. There is also an Agents Corner tab where posts mostly cover the business side of publishing, again centering on writing by women.

Similarly, The Publishing Triangle (<https://publishingtriangle.org>) calls itself an association of LGBTQ people in publishing. Website content comes from staff and freelancers who represent all areas of the publishing journey, so the information is wide-ranging and relevant. Here readers and writers will find a focus on materials written by queer writers and/or works with LGBTQ+ themes. The News tab focuses on timely updates about industry developments and events related to queer publishing—mostly in the New York City area, but with many that are also available virtually. The Resources tab links to a plethora of information about everything from “Conferences & Festivals” to “Podcasts” and even behind-the-scenes needs like “Web Design” and “Retreats.” Founded in the late 1980s, The Publishing Triangle has a strong legacy of supporting queer artists and creating a community of camaraderie. They contribute in many ways, not the least of which are their many annual awards, including The Joseph Hansen Award for LGBTQ Crime Fiction. Submission guidelines for all the various award categories are available on the website.

*Whispering Stories* (<https://www.whisperingstories.com>) is a U.K.-based blog established in 2015. Featuring five reviewers with varying book interests, this is a great visit for those looking to see what bookish news and books are trending overseas. The coverage here is not only crime novels, so it's also a place to get a feel for trends across publishing. All of the reviewers use a standard star-rating system with five stars reserved for “masterpieces” and three stars for “good” books. Like many blogs, they choose not to cover books that would

rank lower than three stars, so visitors can expect mostly positive coverage when they visit this site. Each review also features a brief synopsis and a well-written and spoiler-free analysis of the novel which will help readers to determine which books are the right fit for them. *Whispering Stories* also features guest posts that allow authors to dig deeper into topics of their choice, typically related to their most recently released work. Their author interviews are also a great way to learn more about the writers behind the books.

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