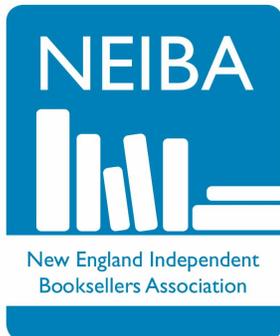


From: **New England Independent Booksellers Association** nan@neba.org
Subject: This Week from NEIBA: And the Drugan Scholarship Goes To...
Date: July 18, 2018 at 1:19 PM
To: nan@neba.org



NEIBA News

July 18, 2018

www.newenglandbooks.org

2018 Rusty Drugan Scholarship Winner

(with Support from BPRNE)

The Rusty Drugan Scholarship for Emerging Leaders is awarded annually in memory of Wayne "Rusty" Drugan, Executive Director of the NEIBA from 1992 to 2006.



Nicole Brinkley

Oblong Books & Music, Rhinebeck, NY

Nicole Brinkley is an independent bookseller at Oblong Books & Music in Rhinebeck, NY. She loves dragons and plants. The rest tends to change without notice. She is the floor manager, the weekend manager, and runs all website, social media, and newsletter content—so it's really faster to call her the Keeper of Keys and Grounds at Oblong. Her favorite books to handsell include *An Enchantment of Ravens* by Margaret Rogerson, *A Darker Shade of Magic* by Victoria Schwab, and *The Gauntlet* by Karuna Riazi.

When she's not at the bookstore, you can find her running a website devoted entirely to young adult literature, advocating for a more inclusive publishing world on Twitter, or tending to her growing collection of succulents.

QUICK QUESTION!

Have you submitted numbers to ABA's Abacus effort?

Yes

Select

No

Select

Notes From the NEIBA Advisory Council

INTERVIEW WITH A BOOKSELLER



What would interest booksellers about another bookseller? I am not quite sure myself, but today, let me introduce you to **Ellyne**, one of the established booksellers here at **The Bookloft**. She was a pro when I was a newcomer 6 ½ years ago and has had a hand in making me the bookseller I am today. I asked her a few questions about being a bookseller and here are her answers:

How long have you been a bookseller and why did you become one?

I've been a bookseller for about 15 years. I decided to sell books because I needed the money. That's funny, but true. I did need income, but, also, a lifetime of reading turned into a reader's life. Whatever that means.

What do you enjoy most about bookselling?

Seeing a customer's face when they realize that you've given them exactly the book that they didn't know that they were looking for - that is a wonderful feeling.

What is the most challenging aspect of this job?

The most challenging aspect: the customers.

What genre/s do you like to read?

I have been an eclectic reader: fiction, non-fiction, science fiction, poetry, mystery, and biography (but not memoir). Now I can't seem to tolerate sci fi or fantasy and I'm embarrassed to say it, but I read poetry only when I'm shelving poetry, pulling poetry or dusting the poetry section – and I do enjoy reading it then! Fiction is still my main read, but I read mystery as escape, especially before bed, preferring murder to stories of life's daily mayhem. At present, reality is too painful to read about before sleep. I now read memoir; recently loved *I Am, I Am, I Am*. Also love Etgar Keret's *The Seven Good Years* and Aharon Appelfeld's *The Story of a Life*.

You have been labeled as “literary” readers, would you say this is accurate?

Guilty: I buy books about quantum physics, but never find the right time to read them. When I was younger I read many classics, but I also read the worst junk; now lyrical writers are a treat. I loved discovering Jaimy Gordon's *Lord of Misrule* and continue to love *This is How You Lose Her* for the writer's voice, despite the writer... Literary? I don't know. I just like beautiful writing and storytelling.

Name the five most recent books you've read.

Trident K-9 Warrior (a work-related read; other work, not bookselling), *Kudos* (didn't love it), *The Heads of the Colored People*, *What Ever Happened to Interracial Love* (did love it), and, and...

What book have you recently read expecting to love and did not end up giving a 5 cookie rating to? I really would prefer not to answer this one because, these days, it is difficult to distinguish between mood - mine - and a 'cookie rating'. On another day, in another month, I could love a book that,

today, gives me a headache after reading a paragraph. Also, this is so often a question of taste rather than quality.

What is your favorite book to hand sell?

The flavor of the moment. That depends on the customer and on what I've recently read. I will push something I've just read and loved. *Emperor of All Maladies* was a tough sell. So fascinating and so well written, but people didn't want to read about cancer. I regularly recommend *City of Thieves* to people - especially men - who come in and say that they have a hard time getting into a book.

What other "artistic" or creative activities fulfill you other than reading?

Who has time to be artistic? Too busy reading!

If you could do any job at your bookstore what would it be? (A job exists or one created for you)

Selling/recommending is the best part of being a bookseller, the best part of the job – that and talking to customers. So many of them are so interesting. We get a lot of authors and that's always fun. I don't think I'd get as excited about George Clooney as I did about Bernhard Schlink. I totally embarrassed myself the first time he came in: "You're Bernhard Schlink, the Bernhard Schlink," I said, wide-eyed, after looking at his credit card. Lovely man.

Without thinking, tell me the first word you associate with the following:

Dusting - Ahhhhhhhh

Sci fi - not my cup of tea

Arcs - love them

Cats - love cats, too

Who would you say is the most challenging customer to help: kids, teens, parents, grandparents, vacationers, other?

Ellyne: The most challenging customers are 1) those that take any book I give them without even looking at the book so that I later feel burdened about whether I gave them the right book (but I get over it) and 2) every parent who has a child who reads way above level. Most of those parents don't get that an 8-year-old is capable of reading an adult book, but incapable of understanding it.

Describe your ideal book club;

Ah! I already have my ideal book club: a variety of customers who come in at different times and who have read different books and are willing to talk about the books with me.

How do you read? (Format and place)

I read books that you can hold in your hand. I read at the table, in the comfy chair and in bed; generally moving from one to the other as the day progresses.

Coffee or tea?

Coffee, coffee, coffee. Unless I meet Zazu for tea.

Favorite sweet?

Chocolate and ice cream run neck and neck.

What's the cutest thing you've seen in your bookstore? The strangest? The most unexpected?

Cutest/Strangest/Most unexpected: Think I'll keep those to myself.

Why do you think people still read physical books?

It feels good to have the weight of the book be physical as well as emotional. Physical books are just a different experience, a tactile experience.

What's the best question you've ever been asked about books or reading?

What's the name of that blue book I saw in here last week? How can one top that recurring question?

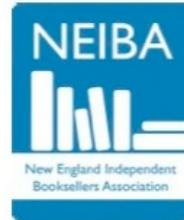
What makes working at a bookstore fulfilling?

Again, when I give someone a book and see that the prospect of reading it excites them. And I have to say that having customers return and tell me that they loved the book that I recommended, gives a real jolt of joy. I have a moment, then, where I do not feel humble; also, when a customer says that they always read my staff picks. That's a moment to savor.

~ Julia Hobart, NECBA Co-chair, [The Bookloft](#), Great Barrington MA

NEIBA Best Sellers

for the week ended
Sunday July 15, 2018



Based on reporting from the independent booksellers of
NEIBA and IndieBound

Click **HERE** for list

Help Wanted

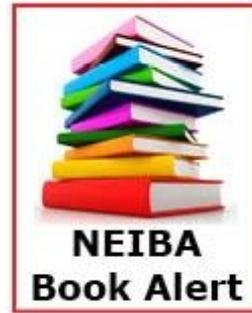


More Than Words, Boston MA – **Director of Bookstore Retail and Event Operations**

If you love working with people, diving into the world of books while staying up to date on current industry trends, creating amazing customer experiences through visual displays and have a knack for motivating teams to reach and exceed sales goals, this is the perfect position for you! Your creativity and retail experience will be fully utilized to launch and grow a brand new social enterprise bookstore, marketplace and event space in the South End of Boston. This new bookstore is currently under construction in the thriving New York Streets neighborhood in Boston's South End, surrounded by Ink Block, the Troy and a ton of retail and restaurant operations. The 4,000 square foot space will be a center for engaging events and rental opportunities.

As Director of Bookstore Retail and Event Operations, you empower staff and youth to manage the day to day bookstore and marketplace operations – driving sales, managing inventory, displaying merchandise, overseeing financial reporting, providing exemplary customer service, and building and maintaining relationships – all while fostering an environment that creates a community space where all are welcome. You will supervise 2-4 adult staff business training managers including a new position – Associate Director of Events – to launch our new social enterprise event space and create a vibrant calendar of arts and culture events and rental opportunities.

[Click here to read the full job description and to apply.](#)



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