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AN INTERVIEW WITH DEBORAH O'TOOLE

We like to welcome [Deborah O'Toole](#) to the neighborhood. She is a fiction writer who also writes under the name of [Deidre Dalton](#).

Deborah's Bio:



Deborah O'Toole is the author of more than seventy books in multiple genres. She is author of *Celtic Remnants*, a novel of enduring yet impossible love and betrayal set in the turbulence of Northern Ireland. She is also author of the novels *Mind Sweeper*, *The Crypt Artist* and *Glinhaven*, along with a book of poetry known as *Torn Bits & Pieces*, a juvenile fiction series (*Short Tales Collection*), and is author of a series of articles and book reviews for *Ambermont Magazine* and *Class Notes*. In addition, she has penned a collection of historical essays now available in multiple e-book formats.

Writing as Deidre Dalton, she is author of the Collective Obsessions Saga, an eight-part series which chronicles the lives of two families sweeping a span of more than one-hundred-forty years, all set against the backdrop of a Gothic seaside mansion in Maine. Books in the saga include *The Advent*, *Quixotic Crossings*, *The Twain Shall Meet*, *Enthrallment*, *The Keeper's Journal*, *Hearts Desires*, *The Twilight* and *Megan's Legacy*. The novels were released by Club Lighthouse Publishing.

Also writing as Deidre Dalton, Deborah is author of the Bloodline Trilogy, which follows the magical journey of one family through time. The trilogy includes *Bloodfrost*, *Bloodlust* and *Blood & Soul*. The books are scheduled for release by Club Lighthouse Publishing through 2021.

Writing as [Shenanchie O'Toole](#), Deborah is the author of ten cookbooks and more than forty titles in the exclusive *Food Fare Culinary Collection*.

What inspires you to be a writer?

I think being an only child lent itself to creating stories of my own. I was always looking for ways to entertain myself as a kid, and my first instinct was to make-up stories and dramatic

scenarios. This became more complicated as I grew older, of course. The stories became darker, more detailed and intricate. The urge to write never left me, it just seemed to grow stronger with the passing of time. Nowadays, I can be inspired by seeing a complete stranger walk by – the more eccentric the better, naturally. Ideas and inspiration can be gleaned from just about anything: people, animals, cities, movies or other books. Memories are also a great trigger. The creative supply is endless.

Why do you write?

This will sound trite, but I've always felt compelled to write. There isn't a time in my life that I haven't been writing one thing or another, from childhood up to the present. Stories, poems, articles, blog posts, there has always been something to do with writing every day. On top of that, I truly love writing. It feels like second nature to me, the thing I always go to above anything else apart from reading.

What genre do you like to write in and why?

Fiction is my preferred genre. It probably goes without saying but creating stories in my head is much more to my liking than researching material to write an article or essay about non-fictional people, events or periods of time. Constructing an entire story with a cast of characters completely created in your head is an amazing process, sometimes very difficult and frustrating, but when it comes to fruition there is nothing else more satisfying.

For example, the characters and events in the Collective Obsessions Saga (*the 8-part series I wrote as Deidre Dalton*) took years to construct. The story itself evolved over a period of 140 years, so I mapped out a detailed family tree to avoid inconsistencies and created a spreadsheet to track character idiosyncrasies and descriptions. The characters seemed to come alive and take on quirks of their own. I never heard my characters actually speaking to me, but they did develop faces and personas of their own in my imagination.

The books became one enormous project which involved years of writing and re-writing, with several pit-stops in between as I went about my daily life.

There were times I become daunted by the size of Collective Obsessions, but because I knew the characters and the story so well, I never lost faith. The process was still very long, however. There were days I felt as if I was getting absolutely nowhere, but then there were other days that it flowed smoothly, which in turn restored my confidence.

What is a fun fact about Deborah?

I like to handwrite everything first, before creating or adding to a text document on my computer. To make it sound even stranger, I like to write on a quadrille pad with a black pen. Sometimes at night I shut off my computer and handwrite into the wee hours. The next day, I'll input my scribbles and more often than not come up with new angles, dialog and scenes as I'm typing along. It's been this way for me without fail for many years, so I'm not messing with something that works splendidly for me.

On a personal note, people who know me claim the more I like them, the more I tease them unmercifully. I do enjoy tormenting people to get a reaction. It must be an Irish thing.

What advice do want to give to writers?

Never give up. Even during profoundly distressing periods of writer's block, I never gave up. Rejection letters made me push harder. Also, never stop writing. The more you write – whether it's a story, a blog entry, an article or a letter – the more you hone your skills. Even if it's a few paragraphs or a few pages each day, just keep writing. Sometimes it reignites inspiration and fosters new ideas. It's difficult to explain, but it works for me.

Thank you for stopping by and we look forward to your next book.

Deborah's latest book is "Megan's Legacy" (writing as Deidre Dalton), which is available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble and Club Lighthouse Publishing. The paperback edition of the book was released in November 2018.

<https://deborahotoole.com/collective/mlegacy.htm>