



Boston Authors Club

January 2022 News

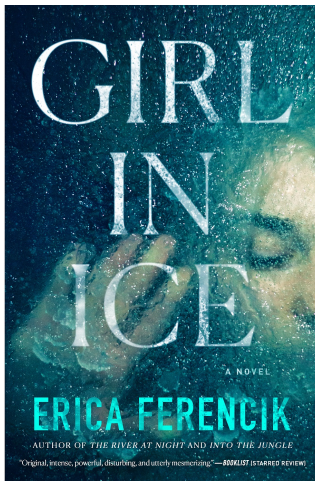
Author Spotlight Issue

2021 Publications and New Year Plans From BAC Authors

PLUS

- Featured Interview: Erica Ferencik, *Girl In Ice*
- Discovery Awards Open for Submissions
- Yesteryear: Literary Partners and 1903 Parley of Poets

INTERVIEW WITH ERICA FERENCIK: GIRL IN ICE



Girl in Ice, Erica Ferencik's latest novel, is scheduled for publication on March 1, 2022 by Simon & Schuster.

*Erica's new book is billed as a harrowing thriller set in the Arctic Circle with a jaw-dropping premise, unique locale, and great emotional depth. It follows her previous best-selling titles, *Into the Jungle* and *The River at Night*.*

In this interview, Erica talks about her inspiration for the story's premise, the research work she carried out before visiting the book's Greenland setting, and the perennial lure of thrillers.

Q: *What inspired the Arctic Circle background (in particular Greenland) for *Girl in Ice*?*

A: One bitterly cold morning in the winter of 2018, I was walking in the woods near my home, and came upon what looked like juvenile painted turtles frozen mid-stroke in the ice along the shallow edge of a pond. They didn't look alive, but they didn't look dead either.

It turns out there are some animals (and plants too!) that have this freezing-and-coming-back-to-life thing down. Painted turtle hatchlings, some species of beetle, wood frogs, certain alligators, even an adorable one-millimeter length creature called a Tardigrade or "water bear" that can be frozen to -359C and thaw out just fine. Most of these creatures possess a certain cryo-protein that protects their cells from bursting when they freeze.

A protein that we don't possess. Still, the image of a young girl frozen in a glacier in the Arctic popped into my head. From there, I asked myself: *How did she get there? What was her story?* Initially, I thought Antarctica was the best setting for the story —*what more wild and fascinating place is*

there? – but I didn't choose it for several reasons. Antarctica, as far as we know, has never had an indigenous population, and I preferred the wildlife of Greenland for certain story purposes. Also, the pure logistics of getting there – plus book deadlines – made that location impossible for me. All that said, my research trip to Greenland blew me away. I only hope I captured some of the feeling of the place, its vastness, fierceness, the stunning sense of isolation, the nearness of prehistory.

Q: How much research did you do on the scientific aspects of your plot? Were there any twists directly reflecting what you learned from science?

A: I have a tendency to get mired – okay, *lost* – in research. The way I see it, once you open one of these fascinating doors: animals that can thaw out alive, the Little Ice Age, ancient Arctic civilizations, Greenlandic wildlife, Nordic languages, glaciology, climate science, *where do you stop?* The answer for me is: know my story first. Otherwise, I will fall into the black hole of research and never emerge.

Before leaving for my trip to Greenland in August of 2019, I made sure to wrap up a comprehensive outline for *Girl in Ice*. As much as I intended to keep myself open to any and all experiences on the trip, I needed to keep a special eye out for any aspect of the place: people, culture, landscape, animals, that would figure heavily in the story. In addition to the trip, I read dozens of books on Arctic exploration, Greenlandic history, and linguistics.

To create the language for the girl in ice, I immersed myself in the sounds and cadences of living Nordic languages, among them: Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Finnish, Icelandic and of course Greenlandic, in order to get a feel for inflection and tone. I also dove into recordings of Old Norse, the main language of the Vikings, in order to create morphemes, or units of meaning that sounded Nordic, but that were just slightly distinct from known languages, so I could create Sigrid's unique tongue.

What I had to grapple with next was: *How would Val be able to interpret Sigrid's speech if there was no correlation to any living or even dead language?* I consulted some linguist friends who said that without any remnants of written language or cultural clues from a society that spoke the language – with nothing to go on, basically – you'd have to start with simple nouns, verbs, and concepts, almost like a baby pieces together her language.

There certainly were plot twists that sprung from the science – unfortunately, none I can share here.

Q: What do you enjoy the most about writing thrillers?

I have a complex relationship with thrillers as a genre, (perhaps as I do with any “genre” novels,) since formulas are involved, and reader expectations can be strict. It's understandable – you promise someone an orange, you better give them an orange. Happily, many novels these days are shedding some of these constrictions, or more often: blending them.

Don't get me wrong, I love thrillers when they thrill me, but finding good ones can be challenging. It could be that I know the formula so well it decreases my enjoyment of the novel *unless* the story offers a lot more than just thriller elements. I write what I want to read, so when I talk about my novels I refer to them as literary thrillers, or novels with thriller elements.

All that said, I love so many elements of thrillers: the twists, suspense, dread, cliffhangers, the visceral feel, the ticking clock! If I'm going to borrow from any genre out there, it's going to be thrillers.

Interview by Mary Cronin

Launch Party for GIRL IN ICE on March 1, 2022 at 7pm, Brookline Booksmith, Brookline, MA. For event details and other 2022 book events, visit Erica's website at: <https://ericaferencik.com/events/>

**BAC AUTHOR
SPOTLIGHT**

**authors!
AUTHORS!**

Ballparks and Moon Golf from David Kelly

The Triple Play Twins, the, most recent book in David Kelly's long-running Ballpark Mysteries series was released in

February 2021.

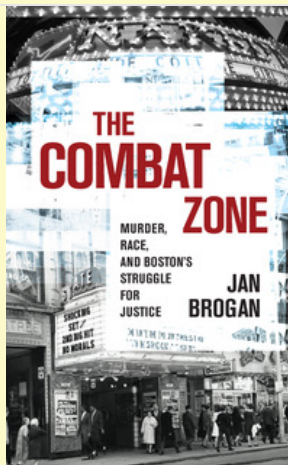
Coming up in February of this year, *The Atlanta Alibi* is a Hank Aaron mystery set at the Atlanta Braves ballpark.

David is currently working on a non-fiction picture book about Alan Shepard golfing on the moon. It's scheduled for publication by Astra/Calkins Creek in 2023.

For more updates and events from David, see www.davidakellybooks.com



The Combat Zone by Jan Brogan

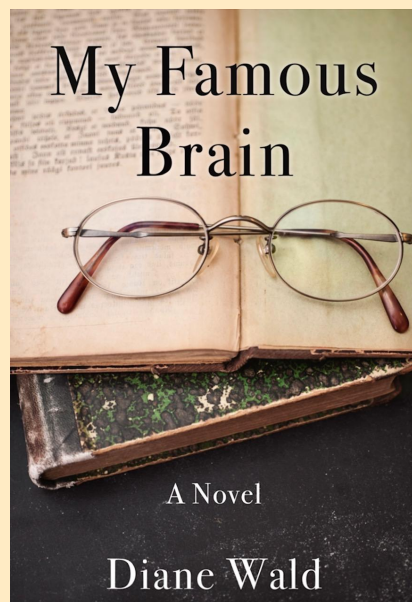


The Combat Zone: Murder, Race and Boston's Struggle for Justice by Jan Brogan, released in September 2021 by Bright Leaf/University of Massachusetts Press, chronicles the 1976 murder of Andrew Puopolo in Boston's old Combat Zone and how it changed the city and the criminal justice system. The book has received rave reviews from *The Providence Journal*, *Dig Boston*, and *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly*. It was chosen as the first selection of *Massterlist's* new book club. *Massterlist* is a *State House News* publication.

State House News publisher Craig Sandler called it "the best form of narrative nonfiction in that it covers race, class, busing, criminal justice reform and courtroom drama, but never strays far from the emotional reality of the case" and predicts the book "will profoundly deepen your understanding of our state and its capital city, and keep you turning pages in the process."

Jan will be speaking about her book at the Westwood Public Library, at 7.p.m., January 20, (live and virtual) and at the Massachusetts Historical Association at 5:30 p.m. February 23rd.

For more information about these and other 2022 book talks , visit Jan's website at: www.janbrogan.com



Helen Marie Casey's newest poetry chapbook, *Mums, the Tongue, and Paradise*, is due out from *Finishing Line Press* in 2022.

Her poem "Cavern" appears in the current issue of *Louisiana Literature* and the following five poems appear in *Louisiana Literature*: "What Winter Brings", "Trailblazing", "What Else Have You Got?", "What Is Done", and "When My Valentine Explains the Universe".

Diane Wald published two new books in 2021: *My Famous Brain* (novel) She Writes Press

<https://www.myfamousbrain.com/>
and

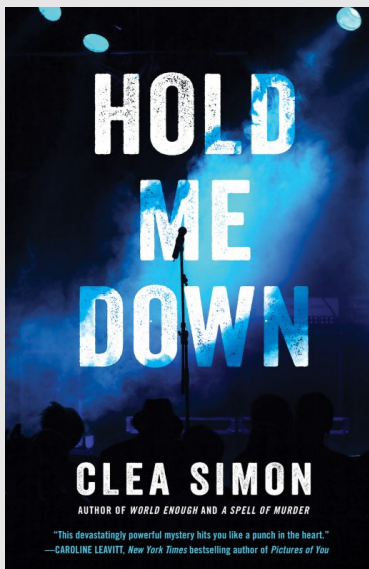
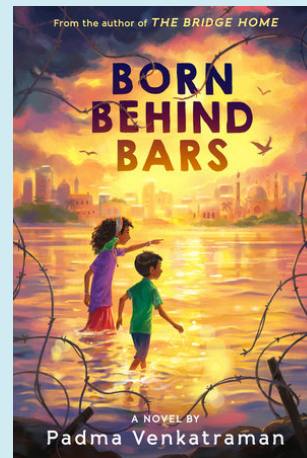
The Warhol Pillows (poetry) Finishing Line Press

<https://www.finishinglinepress.com/product/the-warhol-pillows-by-diane-wald/>



Padma Venkatraman, BAC Young Readers award winner for *Climbing the Stairs*, shares that her 5th novel, *Born Behind Bars*, has received several honors since its release to starred reviews in *Kirkus*, *SLJ* and *Booklist* in September 2021; it was a *Parents Magazine* book of the month, *Junior Library Guild Selection*, *Kirkus Best Book of the Year* and *SLJ Best Book of the Year*, in addition to receiving a glowing review in the *New York Times*.

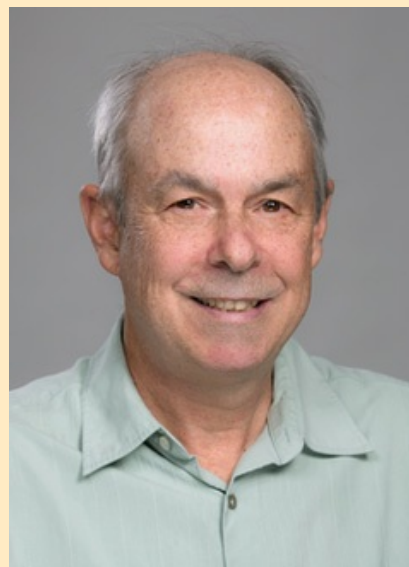
“An optimistic and earnest tale of the power of hope and the gift of family in all forms.” Starred Review, *Booklist*



Clea

Simon writes that she is still celebrating the October 2021 release of her psychological suspense novel *HOLD ME DOWN* (Polis Books).

Reviewing it in [The Boston Globe](#), Nina MacLaughlin wrote: ‘*Hold Me Down*’...conjures the rock-and-roll world, its drink, drugs, and band-dynamics, and the twin seductresses of excess and success, as she makes a penetrating portrait of friendship. “



Ralph Fletcher's forthcoming picture book, *The World's Loneliest Elephant*, will be published in summer 2022 by Christy Ottaviano books, Little Brown. The book is illustrated by Naoko Stoop.

For more info about this title and Ralph's current books, visit his website at <http://ralphfletcher.com/>

DISCOVERY AWARDS 2022 - YOUNG ADULT CONTEST IS OPEN FOR SUBMISSION



Award Information

The contest is open to participants who live within New England and who have not had a book traditionally published.

Submissions are limited to ONE excerpt per person. Please submit up to 25 pages of your manuscript

Excerpts accepted from January 1, 2022 to March 1, 2022 (11:59pm EST) only

A submission fee of \$25 per manuscript is required

Find more information and how to apply at <https://bostonauthorsclub.org/bac-discovery-award>

Yesteryear at the BAC: A 1903 Parley of Poets

Poet-Lore: A Magazine of Letters (www.poetlore.com) is America's oldest poetry journal. The journal was co-founded and jointly edited by Charlotte Endymion Porter (pictured at left) and Helen Archibald Clarke, two early members of the Boston Authors Club. The pair launched *Poet-Lore* in Philadelphia in January 1889, but they soon saw the light and moved to Boston in the spring of 1892, where they were welcomed into the BAC. Porter and Clarke spent the rest of their long and productive literary lives in the Boston area, building a reputation as poets, literary critics, and translators as well as for editing poetry collections. *Poet-Lore* was published in Boston until 1976.



According to Helen Winslow in *Literary Boston of Today*, both women came from affluent and well-educated families. Porter, who took her middle name "Endymion" from Keat's poem of that name, graduated from Wells College. Clarke "studied with governesses up to thirteen, then went to the private school of Miss Mary Anna Longstreth." In addition to her writing and editing, Clarke was a well-known composer and lyricist.

Both Porter and Clarke were keenly interested in the works of Shakespeare and Robert Browning and in fact they met when Clarke submitted an article on music in Shakespeare to *Shakespeariana*, a journal that Porter was editing at the time. They were both active in Boston's Browning Society as well as in the BAC, and they collaborated on a number of literary projects including co-editing twelve volumes of Robert Browning's complete works and six volumes of Elizabeth Barrett Browning's complete works.

Volume I of *Poet-Lore* is 611 pages long and is available on Hathitrust. Unsurprisingly, its content is heavy on the works of Browning and Shakespeare. What caught my interest was a note starting on page 32 reporting on the Shakespeare examinations given by the Melbourne Shakespeare Society. Here are a couple of the examination questions to exercise current BAC members knowledge of the bard:

"Give modern equivalents for *dowle*, *bosky*, *Kibe*, and *yare*"
"Write a note on *foison*, *pied-ninny*, and *Setebos*"

In 1903 Porter and Clark published *A little booke of poets' parleys: being a set of conversations between sundry pairs of poets assenting or anon dissenting in conveying to one another their minds on various subjects.*

Under the conversation heading **America** they quote Sidney Lanier's "Psalm of the West" thus:

*Now fall the chill reactionary snows
Of man's defect, and every wind that blows
Keeps back the Spring of Freedom's rose.*

....

The stanza ends

*And Time's full top casts down a pleasant shade
Where Freedom lies unarmed and unafraid.*

In these turbulent times one gathers hope where one can.

By Scott B. Guthery

authors!
AUTHORS!

The BAC newsletter is published the first week of every month except for the summer months. Please send news about your upcoming events, awards, and new books to bostonauthorsclub@gmail.com by 1/28/22 for publication in February.

Happy New Year! Your BAC Membership for 2022

BAC membership dues are \$50 annually for the calendar year. You can join and renew online by [clicking here](#). If you would rather pay by check, please make your check out to **Boston Authors Club and mail it to the following address:**

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