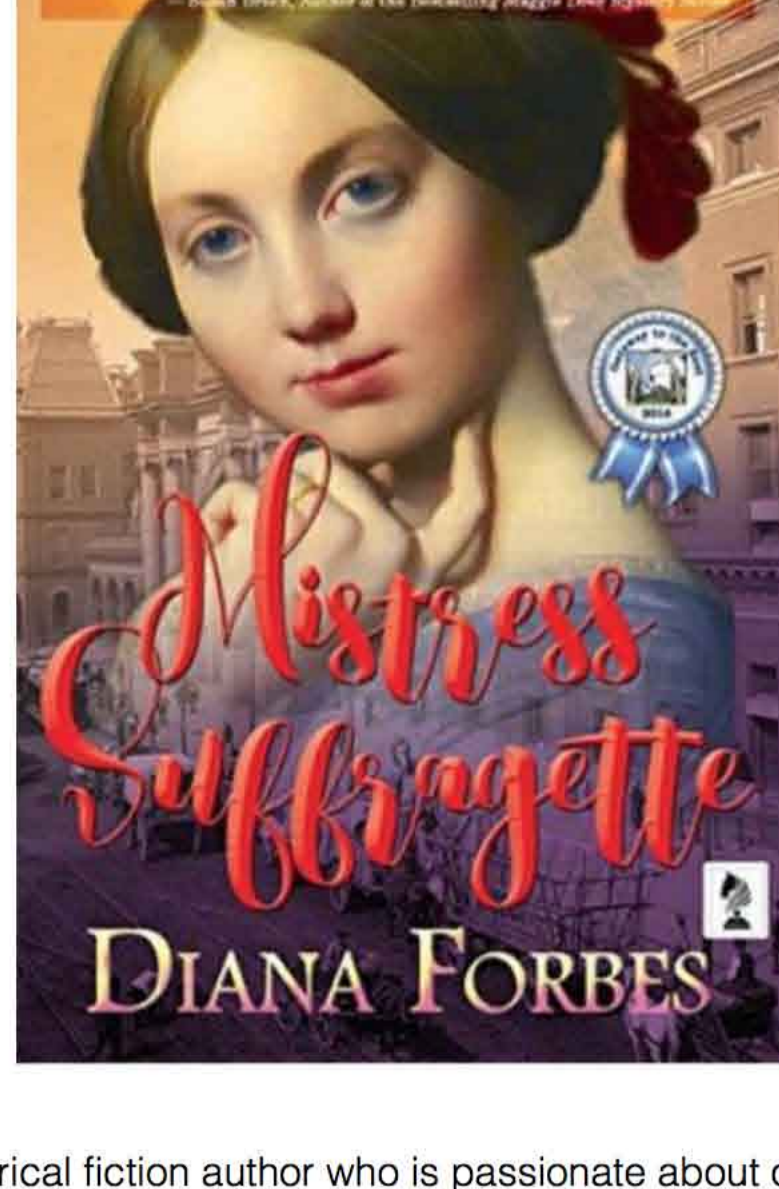


## Author Interview "Diana Forbes"

September 27, 2018



Diana Forbes is an historical fiction author who is passionate about old New York, ancestry, and untold stories.

She is a ninth-generation American, with ancestors on both sides of the Civil War. Diana Forbes lives and writes in Manhattan. When she is not cribbing chapters, Diana Forbes loves to explore the buildings where her nineteenth-century American ancestors lived, loved, survived and thrived. She is passionate about vintage clothing, antique furniture, ancestry, and vows to master the quadrille in her lifetime.

### Exclusive Interview

**You're an international Award Winning Author. What was it like winning your first award for writing, especially as this is your first novel?**

I was really ecstatic about it, actually. The first place win in the Missouri Romance Writers (RWA) contest for "Women's Fiction" made me feel like my novel, *Missress Suffragette*, had an audience of readers. I also submitted the manuscript to the Chatelaine contest before the manuscript was edited. The first place win in Romance persuaded me that the book would find a home, hopefully in readers' hearts and minds.

**Why is the suffrage movement so important to you personally and as a writer?**

I was a Political Science major in college and did not hear much about the women's suffrage movement. What I knew about it was mostly from movies and some TV specials. When I began to research it, I learned how complex it was and kept feeling that it was bizarre how it wasn't really taught in any of my classes, which were all about American Political Science. I decided to investigate further.

**You write from one of the biggest cities in the world, NYC. Do you find inspiration from where you live and is there a certain spot in the city that you like most that gives you that inspiration? Basically is there a certain cafe or spot in Central Park that you like to take notes and find inspiration?**

Manhattan is one of the best places in the world to be a writer. There is so much history here to be excavated and uncovered and treasured. I love to walk through the streets, picturing how they look today and how they looked yesterday and how they looked a hundred and fifty years before that. I am always finding out new facts about Old New York, and then I rush back to my computer and do my best to incorporate those facts. Some writers work well with a little noise in the background. But I am not the type who goes to a coffee shop and writes her heart out. Sometimes I am drawn to a particular building, and then it turns out that building was standing right there, in that exact place, during the time period in which my novel takes place. That gives me goose bumps.

I also believe that Manhattan has a superb array of writing classes. I have been taking writing classes through five separate programs. There is always more to learn about the craft of writing. I really love going to readings, as well. Writing is solitary, so we writers need to find our community.

**Your novel is thoroughly researched, how long did it take for you to conduct the research in order for it to come into existence?**

I worked on the novel for five years. Some of the research came before that. I read non-fiction books about the time period plus novels that were written during the time period. I physically traveled to each location that appears in my novel, and I also collected ephemera – menus, photos, articles, and posters from that time period. Lastly I was fortunate to inherit a box of letters from my ancestors who lived during the time along with a collection of their photographs. All in all I viewed the research as a way for me to enmesh the reader in the feel of the time period. I love that period in our nation's history, and I wanted the reader to feel my enthusiasm for it.

**Everyone who downloads *Missress Suffragette* adores it. Naturally everyone would like to know what's next on the horizon for Diana Forbes? I heard from my sources that you just launched your Audio Book. What was that process like and tell us about the voices and narrators that you have chosen for the novel?**

Thank you for your very kind words. I am writing the sequel. I love the characters, their triumphs and travails, and their stories are far from over. As for the Audio book, I was ecstatic to be able to have it picked up by Audible. The narrator, Brittany Presley, has won all sorts of awards for narrating, and I think she is very compelling. I am so grateful that *Missress Suffragette* is now available on an additional platform, and it's a really fun listen!

**Because of the success of your book many other authors are looking up to follow in your footsteps, what advice do you have for them?**

A lot of authors say, "Write what you know." But if you only write what you know, you're limiting yourself to your own experience. I feel it's just as valid to "Write what you love." Then you tackle the blank page each day with enthusiasm. Love is a powerful tool that can help with your writing.

### About the book

A young woman without prospects at a ball in Gilded Age Newport, Rhode Island is a target for a certain kind of "suitor." At the Memorial Day Ball during the Panic of 1893, impoverished but feisty Penelope Stanton draws the unwanted advances of a villainous millionaire banker who preys on distressed women—the incorrigible Edgar Daggars. Over a series of encounters, he promises Penelope the financial security she craves, but at what cost? Skilled in the art of flirtation, Edgar is not without his charms, and Penelope is attracted to him against her better judgment. Initially, as Penelope grows into her own in the burgeoning early Women's Suffrage Movement, Edgar exerts pressure, promising to use his power and access to help her advance. But can he be trusted, or are his words part of an elaborate mind game played between him and his wife? During a glittering age where a woman's reputation is her most valuable possession, Penelope must decide whether to compromise her principles for love, lust, and the allure of an easier life.

#### General Fiction Awards

- \* 1st Prize, Missouri Romance Writers of America (RWA), "Women's Fiction"
- \* Garcia Memorial Prize, "Best Fiction Book of the Year"
- \* Regional Winner, Reader Views, "Best from the Northeast"
- \* Winner, Paris Book Festival, "General Fiction"
- \* Finalist, Next Generation Indie, "First Novel"
- \* Honorable Mention, S.F. Book Festival, "General Fiction"
- \* Notable, Shelf Unbound, "Best Indie Book"
- \* Kirkus, Best Indie Books of 2017

#### Romance Awards

- \* 1st Place, Reader Views, "Romance"
- \* 1st Place, Chatelaine Award, "Romance and Sensuality"
- \* Winner, Book Excellence Award, "Romance"
- \* Pinnacle Award, "Best Book in the Category of Romance"

#### Awards In History, Literary Fiction, Etc.

- \* Silver, North American Book Awards, "History"
- \* Shortlisted, Chanticleer Somerset Award, "Literary Fiction"
- \* Finalist, Wisconsin RWA "Fab Five" contest, "Women's Fiction"
- \* Nominee, Top Female Authors, The Authors Show

### BUY THE BOOK



### More about the author

Diana Forbes's Publication History:

1. "*Missress Suffragette*" (Penmore Press, 2017) is available in paperback and Kindle versions at Amazon.
2. "Temptation," a chapter from the sequel to *Missress Suffragette*, was published in the Saturday Evening Post's "Great American Fiction" Contest anthology of winners in January 2017.
3. A selection from *Missress Suffragette* won 1st Prize in Women's Fiction in the Missouri Romance Writers of America "Gateway to the Best" Contest.
4. Garcia Memorial Prize, 2018 "Best Fiction Book of the Year."
5. *Missress Suffragette* won 1st place, Best Romance, 2018 Reader Views Awards.
6. 2018 North East Regional Award Winner, Reader Views Awards.
7. *Missress Suffragette* won 1st Place in the 2016 Chatelaine Award, in the "Romantic and Sensual" category.
8. Won the 2017 Book Excellence Award for "Romance."
9. Awarded the Silver 2017 North American Book Award for "History."
10. Awarded the Silver, 2017 NYC Big Book Awards, "Historical Fiction."
11. Finalist in the Wisconsin RWA "Fab Five" contest in "Women's Fiction."
12. Shortlisted in the 2016 Chanticleer Somerset Award for "Literary Fiction."
13. Shelf Unbound, 2018 Best Indie Book—Notable Indie
14. Kirkus Best Indies Books of 2017

### Starred Kirkus Review:

"The book feels like it was written at the time, reading like an alternate, feminist take on The House of Mirth's "well-born lady in reduced circumstances" with a decidedly happier ending. A sprightly, winning historical novel about an unexpected romance—between a young woman and her own power.