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December 2016

From the Nightstand: Cindy Jones

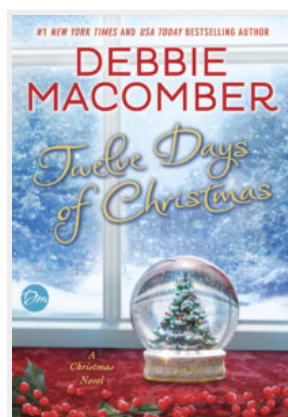
DECEMBER 13, 2016 1:17 PM

Interview conducted by *Brittany Parziale '17*, *Connections Intern*



Cynthia Jones is the Assistant to the Dean of University Library Services. She has worked at Roger Williams University since 2003.

[Current Reads](#)

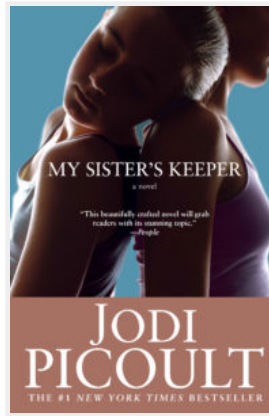


12 Days of Christmas by Debbie Macomber

Protagonist Julia Padden challenges herself to break through her neighbor's scrooge-like exterior by killing him with kindness while tracking her progress on her blog. When the two begin to fall for one another, Julia must decide if telling him the truth about her original intention is worth risking her shot at love.

Ms. Jones likes to read holiday related love stories around this time of year, and also enjoys reading fiction by authors such as Elin Hilderbrand and Danielle Steel. Although she is captivated by love stories, her main focus is reading about "people's trials and tribulations."

[Memorable Reads](#)

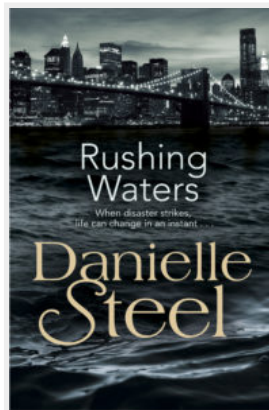


My Sister's Keeper by Jodi Picoult

My Sister's Keeper by Jodi Picoult is a book that has stuck with Jones over the years. The story follows a couple who decide to use genetic engineering to have a child who can become a medical donor for their seriously ill daughter, Kate. Kate's life becomes dependent on her younger sister Anna's life until Anna seeks medical emancipation at age fourteen to put a stop to the forced medical procedures. "What stuck with me most was the ending," said Jones. "I never forgot about it."

Though an avid reader in her adult years, Jones was not much of a reader in her younger days, which proves that it is never too late to become a lover of literature.

[Upcoming Reads](#)



Rushing Waters by Danielle Steel

In this novel, Steel tells the story of six people who get caught in the horrific flooding in New York City caused by Hurricane Ophelia. These characters' vulnerabilities, regrets, losses, and hopes are then revealed as they join together in their time of need.

Rushing Waters may be on her reading list for a while since "working full time, going to school, and taking care of a family" leaves little time for pleasure reading.

[Essential Reads](#)

Though Jones does not have an essential read, she believes it *is* essential to be discussing what books others are reading. "I get hooked on authors, read everything they've written, and then am always asking others what they are reading to gain some new ideas."



Students Guide to The Library: At Finals

DECEMBER 6, 2016 3:30 PM



Christina Driscoll

Double Major: Management and Marketing

Class of 2019

Library Tips during Finals:

I go the 3rd floor to study because it is quiet.

Find a space large enough and lay out all your material.

Wear comfortable clothes because you will be there a while.

Bring snacks and water.



Alessandro Millor

Major: International Business

Class of 2017

Library Tips during Finals:

I mostly use the library for group study space during finals. I also use the group study rooms on the 3rd floor.



Lois Morais

Major: Psychology

Class of 2017

Library Tips during Finals:

She suggests coming during lunch or dinner hours because there are fewer people. The library is a great place to get away from your dorm environment. It takes you away from the distractions of other students.



Madison Wong

Major: Architecture

Class of 2019

Library Tips during Finals:

Sleep and time management. Don't put things off until the last minute. Snacks are important!



Bryan Smith
Major: Architecture
Class of 2019

Library Tips during Finals:

Procrastination is your biggest enemy; manage your time and set goals for yourself of how much work you'd like to accomplish that day. Sleep! All-nighters just end up hurting you in the end and will make your work sloppy. Listening to chill music is essential.



Daisy Alves
Major: Architecture
Class of 2019

Library Tips during Finals:

Go to the library every chance you get. Go to the third floor, the quietest floor. Seeing other students working hard and studying away motivates you to study as well.



Did You Know...???

DECEMBER 5, 2016 3:55 PM



Annually the University Library features the John Howard Birss, Jr. Memorial Library Exhibition. This year's exhibit will be in celebration of the 50th year anniversary of Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude*.

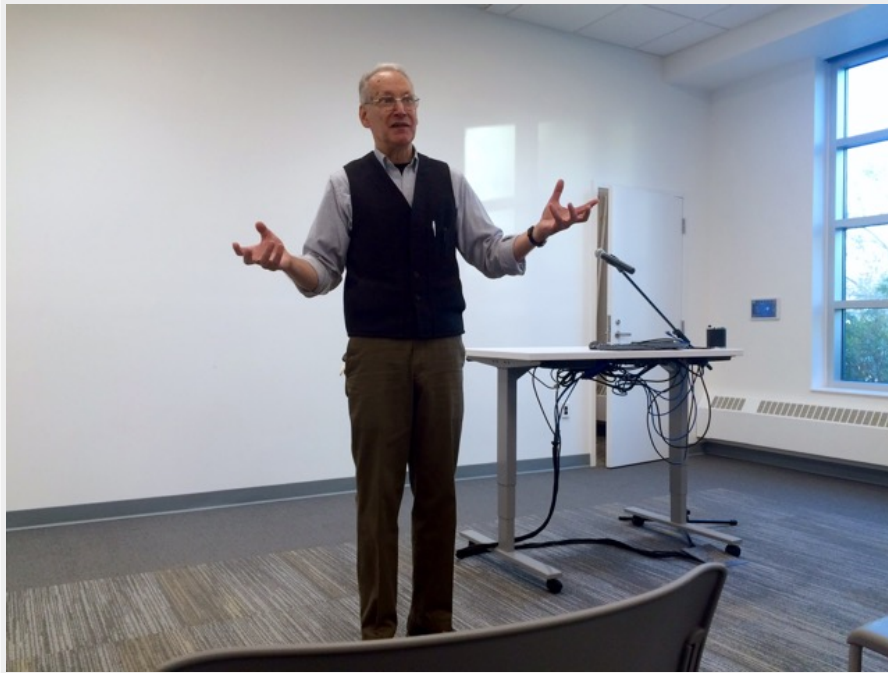


Archer Mayor: Talking in the Library Series

DECEMBER 2, 2016 4:59 PM

by Alexis den Boggende, Connections Intern

On November 2, crime novelist Archer Mayor visited Roger Williams University. In his talk, Mayor discussed his writing process, how he became a successful novelist, and what it means to be a writer, as well as how we answer the question: what is writing all about?



Mayor is the author of the acclaimed Joe Gunther detective series, a police procedural series set in Vermont. *Tag Man*, the 22nd book in the Gunther series earned a spot on the New York Times bestseller list in 2011. Mayor, an enthusiastic and lighthearted man, began his talk describing how he began writing murder mysteries and detective novels. He started out as a professional historian, and explained that if anybody wants to create, to pursue a career in art, such as writing, they must work hard for it, even if it means taking on multiple jobs. Mayor explained that the reason he began to write is that he was interested in asking the question, "Why do we do what we do?" and in the sociological and anthropological aspects of humanity. He delved into why we as humans enjoy reading about murder, about mysteries, about darker material. "There's no explanation on why we love them," Mayor says. "It's everywhere—newspapers, on TV. It's all around us. It's our reality. It reflects our instinctual impulse from birth to be aggressive to one another." In addition, Mayor explained that because of the law, we suppress these desires and are forced into good behavior. He is fascinated by the instinctual inclination for humans to be aggressive, and further investigates these aspects of humanity through writing crime novels.

Mayor then began explaining his writing process, beginning with the question every writer has asked themselves: What is writing all about? "Writing," Mayor says, "is practice, practice, practice. It's a flat, rocky road of incompetence. Writing your first book is like your first bike ride. You have to keep practicing in order to master it. Writing is a learning curve." Mayor spoke about how being an overnight success is not always a good thing. "You can damn yourself that way," he says. "Being a one-hit wonder...you restrain your one, true inner voice." He explained that failure can be rewarding—but a writer must keep at it if they fail.



Mayor discussed the process of researching for his crime novels, including being able to create a good, solid relationship with local police departments. He stressed that it is necessary for him to be embraced by the law enforcement community, and to build a strong trust between himself and the law.

To close out his talk, Mayor spoke of his views on fiction, and how creating good fiction allows the reader to lose themselves in the pages. Writing eloquently enough that you and your reader disappear into the story is Mayor's advice for aspiring fiction writers. "Don't write for the money," Mayor says. "Bring us back to us with your story. Be engaged in storytelling. Let your reader lose themselves in a fictional daydream—that's good storytelling." He also addressed how writers must understand their sense of place while they write—and how he finds his. Mayor explained how he moved around a lot as a child, having lived all over, never staying in one place more than four years. Because of this, he found that

his nomadic upbringing allowed him to be sensitive to people and places. "When you write, write with cadence. Write with sound, with eloquence. It will enhance the character and the culture that you're filling your reader's head with."



A Day in Washington D.C. – Advocating for Hamid Babaei

DECEMBER 2, 2016 4:42 PM

By Adrienne Wooster '19



The day before the presidential election, Professor Adam Braver, Grace Napoli, and I traveled to Washington D.C. to advocate for Hamid Babaei on behalf of the RWU Scholars at Risk Advocacy Seminar. Babaei, a former Ph.D. student at the University of Liege in Belgium, was arrested in 2013 by the Iranian Ministry of Intelligence for his refusal to spy on fellow students. Since his initial incarceration at Iran's notorious Evin Prison and his transfer to Rajai Shahr Prison, Babaei's mental and physical health have been in serious decline. Furthermore, the charges against him of "communicating with a hostile government" and "acts against national security" are alarmingly ambiguous to all of those in the human rights community. Despite the politically charged atmosphere in our nation's capital, our concerns were humanitarian, not political. We met with both Democrat and Republican Representatives to raise awareness of Babaei's case. The purpose of our trip was to gather a sufficient amount of information to further our advocacy efforts.

Our first meeting of the day was with Congressman Lee Zeldin. As we walked to the Longworth building, the quintessential autumn day seemed oddly desolate. The colossal hallways leading to Zeldin's office were deserted other than the occasional intern briskly passing by. An ominous sense of foreboding was undeniable. This aside, our meeting with Zeldin was relatively successful. With genuine concern, he suggested that we research whether there are any prisoners of conscience with U.S. citizenship at Rajai Shahr prison. He speculated that presenting Congress with Babaei's case along with the cases of incarcerated U.S. citizens might motivate action. This advice was echoed by April Wells, an aide to New York Senator Gillibrand's office. Additionally, Wells advised that we find Iranian groups in either New York City or California with detailed knowledge of Iran's legal process who might be willing to help Babaei.

Around noon, the silence of the city was broken by the bustling of the lunchtime rush hour. As we walked through the Metro, it seemed as if every fragment of passing conversation was about the upcoming election. Street vendors displayed apparel, reading "I'm With Her" and "Make America Great Again." Newspapers displayed big pictures of the two candidates, under passionate and bolded titles. The nervous barrage of political festivities made me realize the profound value of humanitarian work. While the polarity between parties seemed to be pulling people apart, we continued on our way, trying to better the life of an individual – politics aside.



Our meetings with the Lantos Commission and Scott Busby of the U.S. State Department were most inspiring. At the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, we met with Senior Democrat Fellow, Kimberley Stanton. Stanton advised that we work with Scholars at Risk to assemble an application regarding Hamid Babaei for the Defending Freedom Project, which aims to protect the intellectual and religious freedom of individuals across the globe by pairing them with a member of Congress. At the State Department, Busby, the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, recommended that because of Babaei's health concerns, we pursue a medical furlough.

There is much humanitarian work to be done during this socially and politically tumultuous time. It was heartening to see concern expressed during our meetings about Hamid Babaei by both Republicans and Democrats. In a world where fear and ignorance are abundant, it is crucial that empathy and common ground be found over issues of basic human rights. Despite what the future may hold, the RWU Scholars at Risk Advocacy Seminar students will continue our humanitarian efforts, defending intellectual freedom and expression.



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A dark blue horizontal banner featuring the text "Roger Williams University" in a white serif font. In the background, a faint, circular seal of the university is visible, showing a figure and the words "ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY".

Roger Williams University