

READING WITH . . . DEBORAH O'TOOLE

Deborah O'Toole is the author of more than eighty books in multiple genres, including fiction, mystery, suspense, fantasy fiction, juvenile fiction, poetry, culinary arts, and a collection of historical essays. Her fiction novels include *Celtic Remnants*, *The Crypt Artist*, *Glinhaven*, *In the Shadow of the King* and *Mind Sweeper*. Writing under the literary pseudonym Deidre Dalton, Deborah is also author of the ten-part *Collective Obsessions Saga* and the *Bloodline Trilogy*.

*Questionnaire based on Shelf Awareness author spotlight: <https://www.shelf-awareness.com>.



❖ *Describe to readers your books in 30 words or less:*

Irish female terrorist on the run, mystery and mayhem at a fog-shrouded monastery, artistic ghosts, revenge on an abuser, family drama at a seaside gothic mansion, and life-altering supernatural powers.

❖ *On your nightstand now:*

The Old Curiosity Shop and *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens, and the *London Séance Society* by Sarah Penner. I vacillate between the easy and difficult, rarely anything in between.

❖ *Favorite book when you were a child:*

The Hobbit by J.R.R. Tolkien. I also loved Nancy Drew mysteries and the thirty-two novels in the Dark Shadows collection by Marilyn Ross, not to mention anything remotely related to the Tudor period of history.

❖ *Your top five authors:*

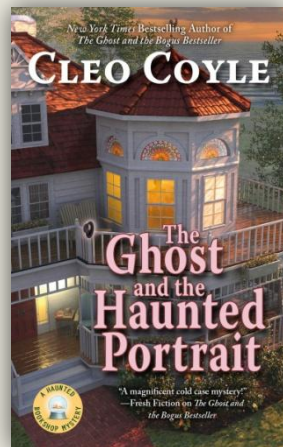
Stephen King, Edward Rutherfurd, Leon Uris, Alison Weir and Oscar Wilde.

❖ *Book you're an evangelist for:*

If I had to pick one title that outshines all the rest it would be *Mary, Queen of Scots: Immortal Queen* by Elizabeth Byrd. Released in 1952, this out-of-print novel about the ill-fated Scots Queen is expertly dramatized and rich in character study. Ms. Byrd's writing skills are unmatched in my mind, and I can only wish to be as brilliant as she.

❖ *Book you've bought for the cover:*

The Ghost and the Haunted Portrait by Cleo Coyle. I love the Coffeehouse and Haunted Bookshop Mysteries by this author, so it didn't take much to lure me in with the gorgeous cover. The story was as good as the artwork, by the way.



Another cover that grabbed my attention was *Wrong Side of the Claw* by indie author Leighann Dobbs. I'd like to know who makes her covers!

❖ *Book you hid from your parents:*

Helter Skelter by Vincent Bugliosi and Curt Gentry. I was all of sixteen years old when I first read the book, when my parents were out of town and I was alone in the house. I thought Charles Manson would escape prison and come for me that weekend. [Laughs]. I had quite the imagination when I was a teenager.

❖ *Book that changed your life:*

Trinity by Leon Uris. It opened my eyes to the Irish predicament, from which I'm descended. Even though the work is fictionalized, it is still the great novel about Ireland. If you had no passionate feelings about the Irish culture and their struggles before, you certainly will after reading this book. There are some parts of the book - taken straight from a page in history - that will outrage a person of Irish descent (the "Penal Laws," for example). Leon Uris brings to life this terrible struggle among the Irish people, not only for independence from the British but from their own inner battles about right and wrong, and their own morality.

❖ *Favorite line from a book:*

"Look at me, man, look at me and tell me I don't know what I'm about. I'm Conor Larkin. I'm an Irishman and I've had enough." - Leon Uris, *Trinity*.

❖ *Five books you'll never part with:*

The aforementioned *Mary, Queen of Scots: Immortal Queen* by Elizabeth Byrd, along with *Bledding Sorrow* by Marilyn Harris, *A Woman of Substance* by Barbara Taylor Bradford, *Trinity* by Leon Uris and *Mrs. Mike* by Benedict & Nancy Freedman.

❖ *Book you most want to read again for the first time:*

Most definitely *Shogun* by James Clavell.