

Barbara Delinsky, Author

Brief Biographical Sketch

Barbara Delinsky was born and raised in suburban Boston. "My mother's death, when I was eight, was the defining event of a childhood that was otherwise ordinary. I took piano lessons and flute lessons. I took ballroom dancing lessons. I went to summer camp through my fifteenth year, then spent my sixteenth summer learning to drive." After graduating from Newton High School, she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology at Tufts University and a Master of Arts degree in Sociology at Boston College. "I wish I could say that I had a career in mind, but women were barely thinking about careers back then. The motivation behind my M.A. was to get a better job with better pay. My husband was just starting law school. We needed the money."

She never dreamed of having a writing career. "I had a vivid imagination, but it was a private one. As a child, for example, I concocted many a complex scenario to explain my mother's death and imminent resurrection. But I came from a family of lawyers, teachers, and homemakers. Although I knew that I could write well, it never occurred to me to use that skill professionally."

Following graduate school, she worked as a researcher with the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, and as a photographer and reporter for the Belmont Herald. "I did the newspaper work after my first son was born. Since I was heavily into taking pictures of him, I worked for the paper to support that habit. Initially, I wrote only in a secondary capacity, to provide copy for the pictures I took. In time, I realized that I was better at writing than photography." She used both skills doing volunteer work for hospital groups, and has served on the Board of Directors of the Friends of the Massachusetts General Hospital Cancer Center and on the Massachusetts General Hospital's Women's Cancer Advisory Board.

Ms. Delinsky became a writer by fluke. Her twins were four when, by chance, she happened on a newspaper article profiling three female writers. Intrigued, she spent three months researching, plotting, and writing her own book - and it sold.

That was in 1980. Since then, she has written and published over seventy novels. After starting in the field of romance, she moved into mainstream fiction with such titles as *FOR MY DAUGHTERS*, *TOGETHER ALONE*, and *A WOMAN'S PLACE*. "It was a natural evolution for a woman whose interest in people pushed her toward psychology and sociology. People fascinate me; social dynamics fascinate me. Year by year, book by book, my stories became more complex until they had simply outgrown that initial format."

A master of emotional intensity, she touches the minds and hearts of her readers with intricately woven stories of domestic drama and relationships. "Readers identify with my characters. They know them. They are them. I am an everyday woman writing about everyday people facing not-so-everyday challenges." Her books are highly emotional, character-driven studies of marriage, parenthood, sibling rivalry, and friendship. They regularly appear on the New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, Publishers Weekly, and USA Today Bestseller Lists. Her newest hardcover, *LOOKING FOR PEYTON PLACE*, is a June, 2005 Scribner release.

Her first foray into non-fiction occurred in October 2001 with the publication of UPLIFT:SECRETS FROM THE SISTERHOOD OF BREAST CANCER SURVIVORS. This is a handbook of practical tips and upbeat anecdotes that she compiled with the help of 350 breast cancer survivors from across the country, their families and friends. "The contributors to UPLIFT just blew me away! This is the book that I wish I'd had way back when. There is no medical information here, nothing frightening. It is filled simply with practical, everyday advice from friends who've had breast cancer for those who are newly diagnosed."

UPLIFT was published in paperback in May 2003, containing a whole new chapter. In donating the entirety of author proceeds from both editions of UPLIFT, Barbara has been able to fund the first two years of a fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital that will train a surgical oncologist in research.

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