

# Reader Views

Book reviews, for readers, by readers.

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## *Interview with Donna MacQuigg Author of *The Price of Pride**

**Reader Views would like to welcome noted author Donna MacQuigg. Her third novel, “The Price of Pride” is a western adventure that takes place in enchanting New Mexico during the late 1800’s. Thank you for taking the time to share your thoughts with us today.**

**Juanita:** This is your third novel. What inspired you to write “The Price of Pride?”

**Donna:** A few years ago, I borrowed my daughter’s school-book on women’s literature and read about the women’s suffrage movement which began in the very late 1800’s and lasted into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Having an over-active imagination, I pictured how it would be if a free-spirited young woman from the east traveled to the wild-west with equality issues at a time when it still very much a man’s world. Also, I’ve always loved western books and movies. Roy Rogers and John Wayne were my childhood heroes, and when I was 4, my parents put me on a friend’s horse and that was probably their worse mistake. After that, all this city-kid ever wanted was to own a horse and be a cowgirl. They finally relented and bought me a horse when I graduated from high school.

**Juanita:** With a love of the old-west reaching back into your childhood, it must have been completely natural for you to write “The Price of Pride.” What kind of research did you do in preparation for writing a western set in the late 1800’s?

**Donna:** Unlike many authors I love research. I consider myself a history-buff, and own quite a collection of books on various subjects including guns, and a series from *Time* specifically about the old west. They’ve inspired me to write another western romance entitled *The Doctor’s Daughter* about a colonel in the Army who fought in the Indian Wars and is haunted by his memories of the terrible things done to both sides. I also enjoy reading about women’s roles in society at the turn of the century, and how they finally won the right to vote. Did you know that many medical professionals in the late 1800’s thought it medically harmful for a woman to learn to read or obtain a higher education?

**Juanita:** Give us an idea of the storyline in “The Price of Pride.”

**Donna:** It opens with the death of the hero’s brother and the heroine’s cousin in Santa Fe, New Mexico in what’s alleged as an “accidental fire.” Ira Farrell, our hero left his family’s ranch north of Santa Fe, ten years before to get away from an abusive father. He became a bounty hunter-turned gunfighter-turned United States Marshal. Sarah Brighton, our heroine, is one of the first female journalists in an age when the women’s suffrage movement wasn’t exactly popular. They both come to town, Ira from Arizona, Sarah from Maryland, to learn more about the fire. They meet, are attracted to each and suspicious about the fire, and realize, after some sparks fly, that they’ll have to work together to solve the mystery of their loved one’s death.

**Juanita:** Have you based any of the characters on anyone you know?

**Donna:** Yes ... and no. I’ve been married to a police officer since I was 22 years old, and I think most law enforcement officers are very special people who perform a difficult job with little understanding from the public. It’s easy to become cynical after years of serving the public in this capacity. I think Ira is a lot like my husband. Sort of the strong, silent type. A man’s man, who’s willing to do whatever’s necessary for his family and his job, regardless of popular opinion.

**Juanita:** Sarah Brighton is quite an unconventional woman for the late 1800’s. Tell us more about your motivation in having such a strong female lead and, I’m sure your readers would like to know, is there any of you in Sarah Brighton?

**Donna:** Oh, sure. I think most authors put a little of themselves in their characters. Mine are always smarter and better looking. lol. And, mine are always strong, independent free-thinkers. I worked in management for many years, and prided myself on being a strong leader without bowling over my fellow employees. I’m a problem solver, and in order to be that kind of person, I believe one must have a good deal of determination. Sarah is a very determined young woman, often acting without thinking of the end result. But she never gives up. Gosh, that really applies to being a writer these days. Never give up even if you’re first attempts are rejected.

**Juanita:** That is really good advice – and timeless too. We need more determined, strong women acting on what they believe in. Now, if it doesn’t give too much away, what is the meaning of the title “The Price of Pride?” How does it apply to the story?

**Donna:** The title first came to me when I was in Ira’s POV. His character is very proud and it was partly his pride that made him leave the ranch and stay away. Then his youngest brother is killed, and Ira feels guilty—thinking that had he been there for his brother, his death might have been prevented. In Ira’s mind his brother paid the price for Ira’s pride. In the reader’s mind, I hope they see that Ira’s also paying the price.

**Juanita:** Who would enjoy this book?

**Donna:** I’m pleased to tell you that I think both men and women will enjoy my book. Yes, it’s a romance, but Five Star did such a great job with the cover, I don’t think a man would feel self-conscious standing in a line to pay for it. Also the University of New Mexico’s English Department soon-to-be-professor, Virgil Mathes graciously agreed to do a critique. He stated he thought my book was “western enough to appeal to many

male readers as well as the more typically female romance market.” I’ve had some great reviews, but that’s the one I’m most proud of.

**Juanita:** “The Price of Pride” is considered a western romance. What does “The Price of Pride” have to teach us about love?

**Donna:** That two strong, stubborn individuals can reach a compromise and experience a great and enduring love while remaining individuals.

**Juanita:** I understand that “The Price of Pride” has a very action-packed ending, is this true?

**Donna:** Absolutely. What’s a good western without a good shootout? Remember, my hero is an ex-gunfighter, and he’s got two grown brothers, all good with guns. And even though most of the town council is bad, as a lawman, it’s Ira’s duty to bring them in. As a result, there’s a heck of a gunfight, a fire that burns down the jail, and finally a man-to-man draw-down between Ira and the worse of the bad guys in the middle of the street.

**Juanita:** What do you hope readers take away after reading your book?

**Donna:** Wishing it hadn’t ended ... that they could’ve stayed a little longer sharing in the lives of Ira and Sarah.

**Juanita:** Donna, you are a native New Mexican. Tell us a little of your love of New Mexico and your decision to use this as the setting for “The Price of Pride.”

**Donna:** I love New Mexico. It’s unique, full of different cultures and packed with history. Many people think it’s nothing but cactus and tumble weeds when in reality some of the most beautiful mountains of the Rocky Mountain chain cut through the center of our state. My husband and I have ridden many miles on horseback exploring trails through the majestic Sangre de Cristo Mountains near Santa Fe. I have pictures of these rides on my website and a link for visitors to explore New Mexico for themselves.

**Juanita:** Besides writing novels, what do you do to keep inspired and your creativity flowing?

**Donna:** Lots and lots of day dreaming. I think today it’s called “adult attention deficit.” lol. I’m a true romantic at heart, so I’m appreciative of a beautiful view, and old cowboy’s weathered features as he puts a match to a stogie—things like that. I think I see things in my surroundings that other people don’t notice. I think about how the people that settled this country lived, and I believe this helps me visualize scenes which eventually come together in my books.

**Juanita:** Imagination truly is one of our greatest gifts. Who have been your influences in your writing career and what authors are your favorites?

**Donna:** Two people, both now passed. Dr. Rodger MacQuigg, my father-in-law, and Elizabeth Schick, my mother. My mother was wonderful, supported all my crazy ideas with a clam nod and a soft smile. She was a great listener, and gave me wonderful names for castles and did all my proof reading. I once nearly submitted a book where the heroine had *bear* feet when I really meant to say *bare* feet. We laughed about that for

quite awhile. Rodger was a bit of a writer himself, but what he left me when he died was one of the best things ever. He left me his library full of history books. He also bought me books on style and how to get published. Both of these people died before it happened, but I think they know and are happy for me.

My favorite author is Judith McNaught. However, I'm selective. I only buy her historical romances. And, I was recently introduced to a paranormal romance book that I just loved by Kathryne Kennedy entitled *Beneath The Thirteen Moons*, and now I'm hooked on Kathryne's writing and her magical romances. Who knows, maybe next year I'll try Si-fi romance!

**Juanita:** This is your third novel to date. What are your other books and would readers who enjoy "The Price of Pride" relate to them?

**Donna:** My other books are medieval historical romances. However, in many ways the characters are the same type—strong women attracted to stronger men even though in reality women back then were expected to be meek and mild. My mother was English, so I've always been especially interested in British history, and just opening a book on the Hundred Years War conjures up dozens of ideas. I just published my first ebook entitled *Trust and Treason* which was inspired by the battle at Halidon Hill between the Scottish and the English in the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

**Juanita:** I know fans of "The Price of Pride" will easily enjoy your other writings. How can your fans find out more about you and your endeavors?

**Donna:** You'll get to know what's in my head by reading my books, and you can take a look at what inspires me by checking out the photo section on my website. It's a freebee, and I built it myself with a lot of determination and the gracious help of a dear author friend, Kathryne Kennedy of Magical Romance. Have a look at our creation at [www.geocities.com/donnamacquigg.com](http://www.geocities.com/donnamacquigg.com)

**Juanita:** Well Donna, thank you for talking with us today. We wish you continued success with your books and writing career. Do you have any last thoughts for your readers?

**Donna:** I'd like to thank them all for their support. It's readers that ultimately make authors successful, and I've had some wonderful, inspiring encouragements from some of mine. Also, thank you Juanita and Reader Views for allowing me to participate in such a fun and exciting interview.