

‘Celebrant Sleuth’ for Book Groups:

Some book groups appreciate questions and a little background to start their discussion.



1. What is ‘Celebrant Sleuth: I do...or die’ about?

Quinn, a celebrant with style and a few obsessions but a good heart, solves quirky problems, mysteries and the occasional murder at weddings, funerals and naming ceremonies in her country town.

An ex-actor with a great voice who writes eulogies to die for! Not forgetting a few quotable ‘Quinn’s Laws of Relativity’. A romantic, but asexual, Quinn lives with her long term partner Art who runs community Channel Zero.

The workstyle of a celebrant is never routine. Fake I.D. Fraud. Fights, even to the death, over wills and inheritance ... Mislaid rings. Lost bride. Food poisoning. Clients of varied ages and cultures are well looked after. Even vintage millionairess Flora with the much younger lover who might be a con-artist.

Quinn solves most problems but not always in the expected way.

Author: Hazel Edwards

Publisher BookPOD

2. Useful Resources:

‘Celebrant Sleuth’ book page updated regularly with interviews, background articles, review links and availability

<https://hazeledwards.com/authpreneurship.html>

BookPOD Publisher website:

<http://www.bookstore.bookpod.com.au/p/9289747/celebrant-sleuth-i-do-or-die.html>

3. Cover Discussion:

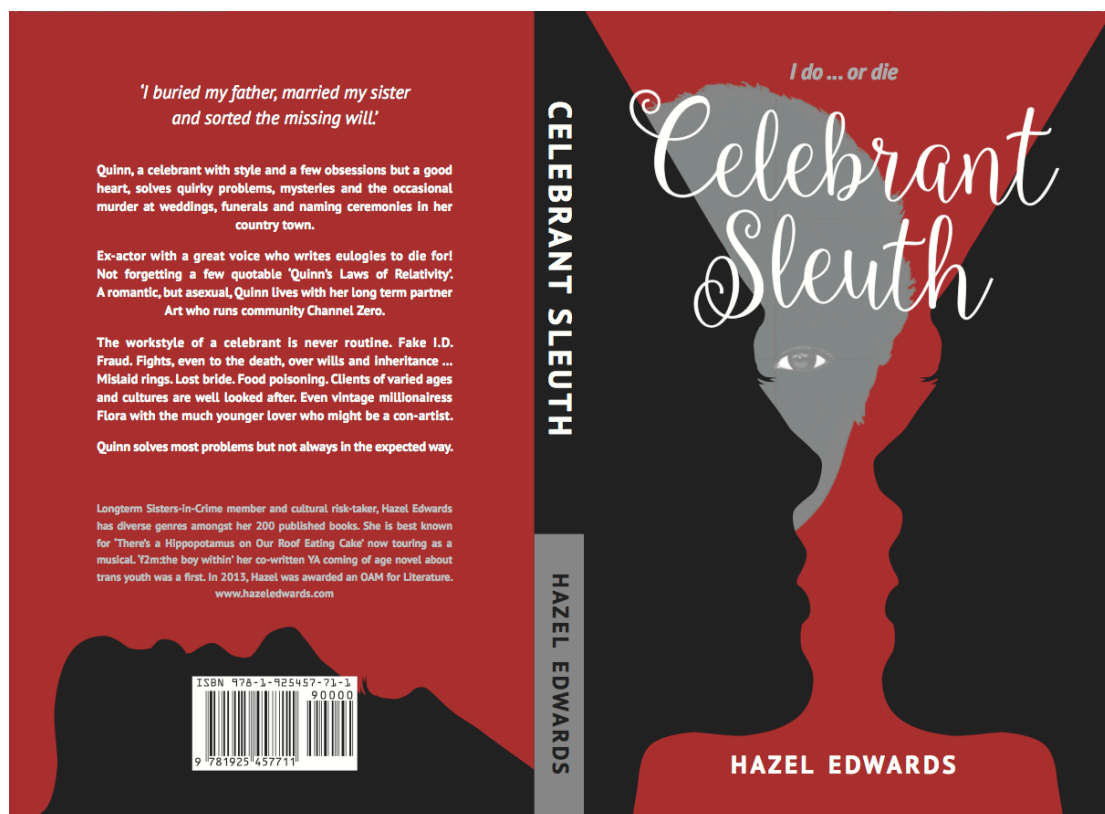
Designed by [Lee Burgemeestre](http://www.leeburgemeestre.com) who is a graphic designer and a celebrant.

<http://www.leeburgemeestre.com>

The art brief was to have a silhouette of two ambiguous figures at an event with a celebrant.

It provides multiple viewpoints and perspectives.

Discuss how many you can see.



4. Sleuth as Narrator:

Read the opening ‘Quinn; Introducing Myself’

To what extent is it effective in having a sleuth as narrator?

To what extent does Quinn involve you?

To what extent is she indirectly characterised by what and how she chooses to report events and analyse motives?

5. Topicality & Fiction Prediction.

Although research started 18 months earlier, the galley- proofs of ‘Celebrant Sleuth’ were being checked on the day the Australian parliament announced Same-Sex Marriage laws. Legal changes meant certain clues had to be ‘tweaked’.

Not opportunistic. Simply fiction prediction where an idea interests a writer who says ‘What if?’ and then it later occurs. Choosing a celebrant as a sleuth enabled a range of settings and different kinds of problems to be solved.

- *'Timely too, with Marriage Equality...'* [Susanne Gervay: Good Reads 5 stars.](#)
 - *'An excellent summer read for those who prefer their sleuths to be more Miss Marple than Nordic Noir.'* Goldie Alexander
 - *'...written in a pacy, modern way...'* Cel Jel Good Reads.
 - *'...just love the whole voice of this book...read the first paragraph and was hooked.'* Jen Mc Veity
 - *'...witty, funny, absorbing, fascinating... and only a few pages into it ...'* Meredith Fuller, psychologist.
- '...Particularly relevant ...was the inclusive and natural way in which gender diversity was explored and presented.'* Pam Russell

6. Genres & Tags

Publishers list key words or meta-data tags and these were the descriptors for ‘Celebrant Sleuth’

Clean crime, asexual LGBTQI, woman crime solver, amateur crime solver, female protagonist, small town murder, mystery thriller

Does a book need to be classified into a genre?

Genre is the group of types of books, like mystery , biography or romance. It is just a shorthand way of finding the kinds of books the reader prefers. Sometimes a book crosses genres like an eco-thriller or doesn’t fit the known genres.

How would you describe the genre of ‘Celebrant Sleuth’? Mystery? Or another category?

7. Gender Diversity

Some cultures believe it is inappropriate to write about their circumstances unless you were born into that culture. To what extent would you agree?

Some writers believe that with respective research, or co-writing with a person from that culture, this is a way of mainstream readers gaining insight.

(Gender = what sex you are biologically or you identify as, sexuality = what gender/s (if any) you’re attracted to).

Since Quinn (49) is asexual with a longterm partner Art living in a regional country town. LGTBIA+ community may be interested in the portrayal of an asexual sleuth, which was based on a suggestion from a community member.

One explanation of asexuality is: not being attracted sexually to any gender. But still possible to have emotional attachments.

Gender diversity is interpreted in various ways and means different things to different people. To what extent was the asexual gender of Quinn relevant to the story and were the gender facts informative or intrusive?

Even the vocabulary of LGBTQIA+ has to be written respectfully as various groups use different terms.

8. Research

Over 25 celebrants were interviewed to collect anecdotes and perspectives on their role. A most personable and articulate group. Several were also 'expert' readers checking facts.

Also checked gender diversity facts, retirement village practices, methods of poisoning, legal procedures and florist facts with 'experts'.

9. Characters

Who is your favourite character?

What did you like most/least about the book?

www.hazeledwards.com

10. Laws of Relativity

From your experience at weddings and funerals, would you like to add your own satirical law to Quinn's Laws of Relativity? (Check last chapter).



About the Author:

Longterm Sisters-in-Crime member and cultural risk-taker, Hazel Edwards has diverse genres amongst her 200 published books. She is best known for ‘There’s a Hippopotamus on Our Roof Eating Cake’ now touring as a musical.

‘f2m:the boy within’ her co-written YA coming of age novel about trans youth was a first. In 2013, Hazel was awarded an OAM for Literature.

11. Book Details:

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US Amazon Kindle

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0788PL1BN>

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<https://www.amazon.co.uk/dp/B0788PL1BN>

AUS Amazon Kindle

<https://www.amazon.com.au/dp/B0788PL1BN>

BOOKTOPIA:

<https://www.booktopia.com.au/celebrant-sleuth-hazel-edwards/prod9781925457711.html>

BOOKPOD

<http://www.bookstore.bookpod.com.au/p/9289747/celebrant-sleuth-i-do-or-die.html>

Generic Book Club Questions for ANY Book

1. What is the significance of the title?
2. A theme is an idea thread within a story. Several threads, but which dominates for you?
3. Any memorable characters? Why?
4. Conflict? Within? Between? With society or physical world?
5. Setting: Realistic? Which scenes remain with you? Why?
6. Tone is the writer's attitude towards their subject.
Style is the way the story is told. Tragedy and humour can be close.
7. Plot is 'the what happens next? '.
- 8 A significant work?
 - Credible characters with strengths and weaknesses.
 - Reader is taken into another world for the length of that story and beyond.
 - Compassion and humour juxtaposed with tragedy
 - Well chosen words to evoke emotions, situations or characters.
 - Unusual viewpoint, setting or style.
 - Operates at several layers.
 - ❖ as a story.
 - ❖ parallels a real historical event
 - ❖ explores universal issues like good V evil.
9. Would you recommend this book? Why?