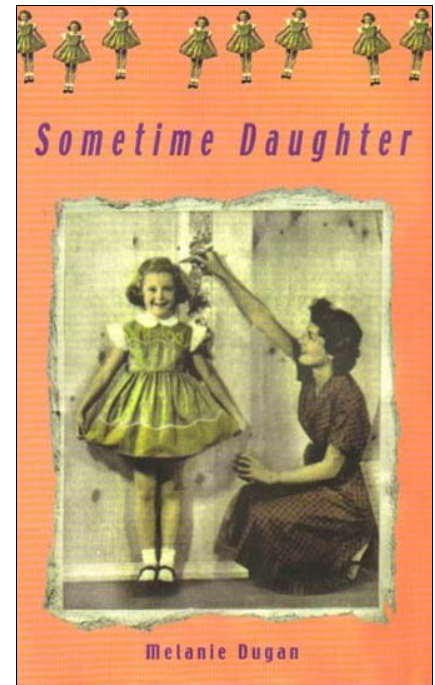
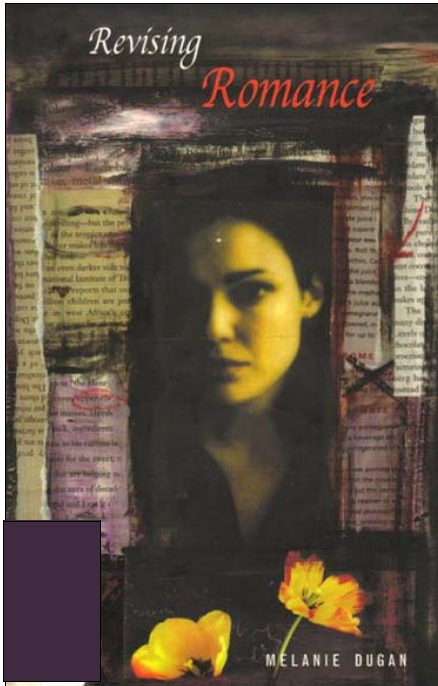




Kingston Literacy Presents

Words and Wisdom in the Wilson

A fund raising series of readings in the Wilson Room,
accompanied by amazing desserts



Melanie Dugan

(Accompanied by Starbucks desserts)

Tuesday, February 21st at 7 p.m.

Media Kit Index

Index	Page 2
About Melanie Dugan	Page 3
Author Q & A with Ms. Dugan	Page 4
Information on Ms. Dugan's novels	Page 6
Event Acknowledgements	Page 8
Information about Kingston Literacy	Page 9



About . . .

Melanie Dugan

Melanie Dugan was born in San Francisco, California. Her mother, father and she moved to Boston a year later because her father was getting his Ph.D. at Harvard. She lived in and near Boston until they moved (now with 3 additional sisters and a brother) to Toronto in 1967.



Many years later, after a year at University of Waterloo, Melanie studied Design Arts at Georgian College in Barrie. The latter gave her the background in art that made it possible for her to write the visual arts columns for both Kingston This Week and the Kingston Whig-Standard. Melanie has also taken several writing workshops, including sessions with well-known authors Leon Rooke and Keath Fraser at the University of Toronto. She has attended the Humber School for Writers, with writer Kim Moritsugu as her instructor there.

Melanie is a proud dual Canadian-American citizen. She and her husband, artist Don Maynard, moved to Kingston in 1989. Their son Dugan was three, housing prices were insane and they were finding Toronto not very child-friendly. They have never regretted their decision.

Over the years, Melanie has held many positions, from working in a nursing home, to working on an archaeological dig in England; from being Margaret Atwood's personal assistant to working as Associate Publisher at Quarry Press. She has worked in libraries for a total of 10 years, full and part-time (she is a library assistant, not a librarian).

Melanie Dugan's short stories have been published in both Canada and the United States. In 1999 her short story "A Map of the Human Heart" made the final round of judging for the Canadian Literary Award for short fiction.

Melanie's first novel, *Sometime Daughter*, was published in November 2002 by Second Story Press. *Revising Romance*, her second novel, was published by Sumach Press in May 2004.

Author Q&A...

Melanie Dugan



Photo by Chris Miner

Q – *Can you describe how some of the non-writing positions you have held over the years impacted on your writing?*

Life shapes how we think and what we value; specific jobs gave me the scenery against which those elements play themselves out in my writing. What I mean is, I think a lot of my writing deals with issues around families. The narratives of the novels need to develop in the real world (in my kind of writing, anyway), and that's where the specifics of the jobs/life come in. I tap on those experiences to make the world of my novels real and to make the challenges the characters face real. Specific jobs: Quarry Press certainly gave me background for *Revising Romance*; the nursing home experience informs *Sometime Daughter*.

Q – *As a parent, how do you find time to write?*

As a working parent, I write whenever I get the time. When the kids were wee, I would write after they were in bed, so from 9/9:30 at night till 10:30/11. I'm not sure if that shows up in the writing (are there lots of scenes at night?). Now that the boys are older (and one's at university), and I work part-time, I write during the days I have off from the library. I write every day. I throw out every day. Then I write some more.

Q - *How much of your work is autobiographical? Because elements of your life do seem to connect to your work, do any of your former co-workers or friends ever ask if they are characters in your books?*

The autobiographical/fiction question is a complex one. I do draw on experiences, but the books are not at all autobiographical. I don't put people I know into my work; I don't think one can ever know another person completely, understand their motives entirely, so I, at any rate, can't take another person and drop them into my work. All characters are composites. Sure, I may draw an element — either of temperament or appearance — from someone, but then the character develops on their own. In my experience, characters don't stick to a pre-set plot. That turns them into puppets.

When I start writing I may have an idea about where I'm headed, but I rarely end up there because as I get to know the characters, they determine how things go. I have had people ask me who this character or that character is — usually the person asking has someone in mind — but then I go into my long and boring explanation and their eyes glaze over and they usually remember they have something else to do.

Q – What are you working on now?

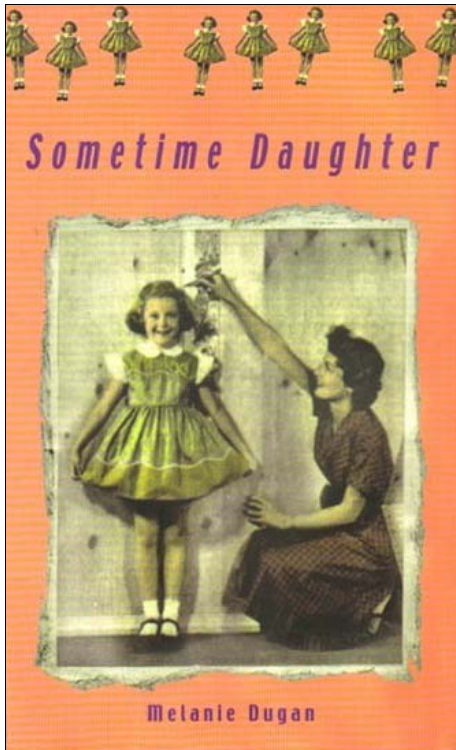
I have finished a third novel, currently being considered by a publisher, and am working on a fourth one, which I will read from on February 21st.

Q – Who are your favourite authors, and what are you reading right now?

I read just about everything. Jane Austen, Faulkner, Hemingway blew me away last fall, Margaret Laurence, Margaret Drabble, Gide. Recently I have liked *Behind the Scenes at the Museum* by Kate Atkinson, *Garbo Laughs* by Elizabeth Hay (she's Canadian), *The Corrections* by Franzen, *Afterlands* (Steve Heighton, I'm not finished yet), Joan Didion. For the last two years I have been working my way through Proust, and I would say he's currently my main favourite.

Q – What is the most exciting thing that has happened to you as an author?

The most exciting thing that has occurred as an author was when my first novel was published. It was such a rush to hold the final book in my hands.



SOMETIME DAUGHTER

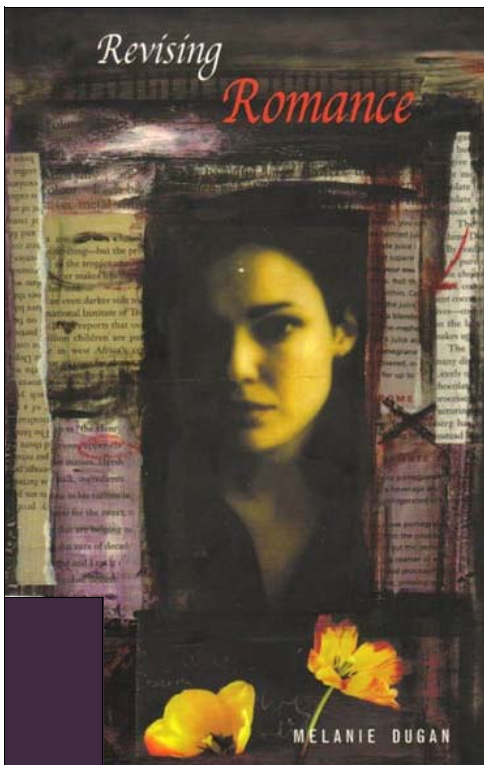
Publisher's Plot Blurb:

When she is confined to a nursing home after a series of debilitating strokes, Ruth Tyler begins to face the issues in her life she could once avoid--particularly her estrangement from her daughter, Annie. *Sometime Daughter* explores one woman's struggle to free herself and her daughter from a legacy of pain and anger.

REVISING ROMANCE

Publisher's Plot Blurb:

An editor in the deadline-driven world of book publishing, thirty-something Elaine Salter faces more than her share of challenges. She has just inherited the job of editing best-selling author Spencer Stone's long-awaited novel. When she discovers that the book is a disaster, it's up to Elaine to salvage it. *Revising Romance*, a contemporary comedy of manners, offers a wry take on the double-bind of working women's lives in the twenty-first century. Elaine, a single mom, is in withdrawal from emotional attachments. However, while fact-checking Stone's novel, she meets Nathan Marks, a local antiquarian bookseller. Elaine finds herself drawn to Nathan, but has trouble interpreting his signals. As she assesses her expectations - emotional, financial and romantic - Elaine learns that romance isn't dead. It's alive and well and full of surprises.



Reviews for Revising Romance

Library Bookwatch." Midwest Book Review

January, 2005 page 10

Freelance journalist Melanie Dugan presents *Revising Romance*, an original novel about an editor confronted with a terrible dreck of a book from a widely-renowned, best-selling author. Saddled with the job of making the manuscript publishable before the deadline, she works frantically while striving to distance herself from the author's unwelcome advances. While fact-checking the novel, she meets a local antiquarian bookseller and learns that romance truly isn't dead. A heartwarming, amusing, and sometimes downright sexy story of the surprising elements that permeate the bond between two people.

"Publish and Pucker" The Globe and Mail

September 11, 2004

Review by Elsbeth Lindner (excerpt)

Novels in [the genre of *Revising Romance*] are not complete without an upbeat life lesson. What [protagonist] Elaine learns is that "relationships, like... novel[s], are works in progress, always under revision." What the reader learns is that there's something irresistible about those good old story paradigms... Whether Elaine's tale is a version of *Cinderella* or *Rumpelstiltskin*, its happy ending does deliver a helping... of the warm glow that accompanies the fulfillment of the reader's expectations.

Event Acknowledgements

Melanie Dugan has been very generous with her time and energy.



Kingston Whig-Standard is supporting our reading series.



Indigo Books and Music are helping us to promote the series, selling tickets for us and providing on-site book sales.



Starbucks are generously providing amazing desserts for our audience.



Thank you to all the wonderful people and businesses who have helped with this series.





Located with Chapters at
2376 Princess Street
Kingston, ON K7M 3G4
(613) 542-9229

Expertly prepared by hand, made with the world's best coffee and wonderful premium ingredients. Your favourite Starbucks® beverage is waiting for you.

At Starbucks we source the finest and freshest ingredients and use them to bring you delicious foods that complement our range of coffee. We pride ourselves on quality and always strive to source our ingredients locally.

In our stores, you will find enticing, exciting and tasty offering to enjoy as you snuggle up with your cup of coffee. From pure indulgence to healthy indulgence, for breakfast, lunch, snacks & treats, come into your local Starbucks and enjoy the experience.





The Who, What, When, Where, Why and How of **Kingston Literacy**

What is Kingston Literacy?

- Kingston Literacy is a non profit, community based organization that:
 1. Provides FREE group adult upgrading programs and one-to-one tutoring services in reading, writing, math and computers.
 2. Offers Family Literacy services and workshops to help break the cycle of low literacy skills in our community.
 3. Conducts industry-leading research and development in family and adult literacy programming, literacy assessments, training and materials.

Who is Kingston Literacy?

- Kingston Literacy is composed of students participating in a variety of upgrading programs, a volunteer board of directors, 18 paid staff and 160 active volunteers.
- Our funders: Provincial Government (74%), Federal Government (10%), Municipal Governments (4%), the community through fundraising and other sources (12%).

When was Kingston Literacy started?

- Kingston Literacy first started providing adult literacy services in 1977 to the greater Kingston community, and began offering family literacy services in 1989.

Why does Kingston Literacy exist?

- National and local statistics indicate a need for literacy services: 44,300 people have difficulty reading in Kingston alone (Greater Kingston, 1994).
- To help individuals and families develop the basic reading, writing and math skills needed for general daily use at home, work and in the community.
- Ensures quality of life (reading medicine labels) and allows individuals to participate fully in their community (use the telephone book).

Where is Kingston Literacy?

Kingston Literacy has five convenient locations servicing the Greater Kingston community:

- ♦ **Community Learning Centre Kingston:** 88 Wright Crescent, Kingston (613) 547-2012
- ♦ **Family Learning Centre:** 1755 Bath Road, Kingston (613) 389-0218
- ♦ **Family Literacy Centre Kingston:** 77 MacCauley Street, Kingston (613) 546-2580
- ♦ **Community Learning Centre Napanee:** 55 Dundas Street, Kingston (613) 354-0226
- ♦ **Community Learning Centre South Frontenac:** Highway 38, Hartington (613) 372-2111

How do I become involved?

- To become a student, tutor or volunteer, or to lend your financial support call us at: (613) 547-2012 or visit our web site at www.kingstonliteracy.com



*2002 Winner of the Canada Post Literacy Award
for Community Leadership in Ontario*

