

Literary Inspiration:

Lisa A. Alzo

Where is your favorite place to write? My favorite place to write is at home, typing on my laptop.

Has Ithaca influenced your writing in any way? I've lived in Ithaca for many years, but I am still struck by the surroundings, which are quite conducive to the writing process. I enjoy the peace and quiet of sitting in the family room and watching birds, deer and other animals in the backyard while I write. Having Cornell University nearby is also a plus for doing research.

When do you get most of your writing done? Early mornings.

Name two books that have inspired your writing. Thomas Bell's 1941 novel, "Out of This Furnace" — his book inspired me to write "Three Slovak Women." And Truman Capote's "In Cold Blood" — it was required reading in my M.F.A. writing program and one of the pioneer works of "creative nonfiction."

Who are your favorite authors? D.H. Lawrence, Joan Didion and Michael Chabon.

What's your favorite font to type in? Times New Roman

What do you want readers to take away from your book(s)? I'm always pleased when a reader contacts me to say how much one of my books has inspired an interest in his/her own genealogy, ethnic heritage or social history.

What do you love most about being an author? The sense of accomplishment I feel once I've completed an article or book after weeks, months or years of research.

What are you currently working on? I'm currently working on



ALZO



ASK THE AUTHOR

If you are a local or visiting author and would like to participate in Literary Inspiration, e-mail Life Editor Richetta Coelho at life@ithacajournal.com.

two nonfiction books. One is about my father's experiences playing amateur and semi-professional basketball in the 1940s/'50s. The second is the story of a multiple murder spree in a blue collar town during the 1930s.

If you could have dinner with any three fictional characters, which would you choose?

Nancy Drew — I loved those books as a child, and she was so clever piecing together clues for her detective work. Family History research is often compared to solving a mystery — you follow each clue until you get your answers.

The Peanuts Gang — What a fun Thanksgiving meal they had!

Mary Dobrejcek (from Thomas Bell's "Out of This Furnace") — She's a strong Slovak woman!

Lisa A. Alzo is the author of six books including: "Three Slovak Women," as well as numerous magazine articles. More information is available on her Web site www.lisaalzo.com.