

## Old Geezer Turns Stereotypes On Their Heads In More Ways Than One by Mel Fabrikant

O'Leary has a few well-hidden secrets. Like those never-to-be-talked-about hit-and-run sexual escapades or that fatal bludgeoning of the wounded guy. And don't forget how O'Leary coerced the old woman in the interrogation chamber, or the \$100,000 gift for helping the corporate power struggle come out right. Oddly enough, O'Leary is a woman. Navy Lt. Barbara O'Leary to be exact.

Surprised? Then author Bob Pursell has accomplished his first objective, which was to turn the stereotypical female heroine on her head.

"Damn straight, I'm dissatisfied with novels that treat women as airheads, psychological wrecks, or unbelievable superheroes," says Pursell. "That's why I decided to create an alternative: A story about a heroine of strength and competence who must overcome her personal demons forged from a cloudy, frightening background."

The O'Leary Enigma spans 20 years of Barbara O'Leary's life, from her uncertain birth and parentage to her decision to risk her life to save 11 aid workers kidnapped by rebels in Chad, which leads to a live or die adventure in the middle of a bloody civil war.

Bob Pursell is an old guy who is doing his part to bankrupt the nation (Social Security, Medicare, the usual). Once upon a time, he had a productive day job as an engineer and manager with a firm that professed, "respect for the individual." I know, a rather quaint, and bizarre, concept in today's world. How does he dispose of his disposable income? Wife—loving, supportive, frugal; pets—loving, expensive; travel—fun, expensive; go-kart/sailboat racing—inexpensive (post-stroke).

### Bob Pursell's THE O'LEARY ENIGMA Offers a Strong Female Protagonist

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Heroine Barbara O'Leary boldly faces challenges with an unyielding sense of adventure and determination in Bob Pursell's **new action packed novel**, "**The O'Leary Enigma**" (published by iUniverse).

"The O'Leary Enigma" recounts the forces and events that shape adoptee Barbara O'Leary's life, from childhood until her first significant success as a naval officer. O'Leary is attractive, adventurous and opportunistic, despite many flaws and shortcomings.

Secrets pervade O'Leary's life. Who is her biological father? What caused her beautiful and troubled birth mother's death? How did O'Leary help her mentor outmaneuver a corporate rival? Why did she accept the assignment to **Chad** and that dangerous journey through a civil war?

Pursell's objective in writing was to turn the stereotypical female heroine on her head.

"I'm dissatisfied with novels that treat women as airheads, psychological wrecks, or unbelievable superheroes," says Pursell. "That's why I decided to create an alternative: A story about a heroine of strength and competence who must overcome her personal demons forged from a cloudy, frightening background."

"The O'Leary Enigma" also addresses current political topics, such as terrorism threats, military activity and interrogation methods; it has an exciting read that will empower women of all ages while addressing important political issues.

*5.0 out of 5 stars* Action-packed thriller with depth

By B.E.Barkeron Published on Amazon.com, Verified Purchase

I don't usually read too many military-themed thrillers, but the cover of the book pulled me right in. Sure glad it did, because this book transcends the genre. I couldn't put it down. The main reason is the protagonist, Barbara O'Leary. In Barbara, Bob Purssell has created a fascinating, multi-faceted character, who is both accomplished and vulnerable. I couldn't help rooting for Barbara as she wrestled both her inner demons and actual villains. The author also seems to have an excellent grasp of the workings of the military. I recommend this book to anyone who is looking of an exciting read with a unique twist.

*5.0 out of 5 stars* Can't wait for Mr. Purssell to write a sequel!!!

By Rico Battson Published on Amazon.com, Verified Purchase

The previous two reviews are very well stated. Mr. Purssell's style used to develop Barbara O'leary's character over time was interesting and intriguing. The unexpected history of her young years before joining the Navy made me fall in love and wanted her life to have a happy ending. I was engaged by the time travel element of the story. I couldn't put the book down, and was particularly in suspense as to what would be the outcome during Barbara's dangerous mission in Chad. I did not want it to end and wanted to know more. As I reached the end of the book, I knew I would love a sequel.

*5.0 out of 5 stars* The O'Leary Enigma

By Marla S. Published on Amazon.com, Verified Purchase

It was refreshing to discover such a strong female protagonist within the setting of a military thriller. Barbara O'Leary is a carefully-crafted heroine. The author, Mr. Purssell, has taken the time to help the reader understand the psychological motivations behind LT. O'Leary's actions. Nothing is expected, nor cut and dried about her choices. She is brave, ruthless and exciting. All in all, a fine debut novel.

*5.0 out of 5 stars* A female James Bond

By BDNyCon

This book is an exciting thriller and the protagonist, Barbara O'Leary has all the compelling characteristics of a female James Bond. She is attractive and quirky, brave and witty, resourceful and ultimately human. She is a joy to read about. And the author clearly knows his stuff. The military chapters come alive and are real page-turners, especially the Chad chapter which was my favorite. I look forward to the next sequel in the series. The author has created a lot of exciting plot lines and the next chapters in the journey should be equally thrilling.

Jenn (Bookessed)

This book left me a little befuddled. The genre is listed as a thriller, but I didn't really get a thriller vibe from it until I got near the end. The rest of the novel felt like a dystopian biography of sorts. I did like this title, but had I gone on genre alone I would have probably missed this title.

It was very unique. The setting is near the year 3000 and looks back on Barbara O'Leary's life through a series of documents dating back to the 1990's. Doesn't that sound trippy? I was engaged in the novel pretty early on.

There were some time/setting jumps that did throw me though. The part of the book I liked the most was the moments Barbara had with her adopted family. I liked them because they struck me as a little odd. Her parents were extremely strict, but their manners of speaking to one another as a

family seemed overtly formal. Those were great scenes, but they kind of seemed out of place at the same time.

I loved the ending of the novel. The last few chapters were where the novel really felt like a thriller to me. I would not have expected all the twists and turns. I was very satisfied with how the novel ended.

I am usually quite picky when it comes to reading thrillers, but I'm glad that I chose to read this one. It was easily to read in a few sessions and was pretty straight forward rather than overwhelming me with lots of information or an outlandish plot with too many characters to remember. I probably read more like this title.

Lainy (Goodreads)

Well I thought this was going to be about O'Leary's career in later life and all the war side of it, however it was totally different. The story starts with papers handed over with a legal side to it that to be honest I got quite lost in. However as the story went on we are introduced to Barbara's life and start at a very young and innocent age to adulthood. The family dynamics, teenage years, sexuality, spirituality and eventually her adult working life.

I think the book is aptly titled "enigma" as it totally is. One minute we are following a young girl who is having problems dealing with how she looks and her sexual maturity and needs, to a strong minded woman in the prime of her career caught up in politics and a war.

I enjoyed the relationship side of the book with her parents and trying to come to terms with her biological background and the secret(s) that surrounded it but personally felt we could have had much more detail and exploration there. There is a lot of underlying issues in this book I felt with the emotional struggling through teenage years (which YA readers may identify with) and on a deeper level how her relationship with her mother changes as she does.

The latter part of the story deals with her career and some of it is quite graphic but by then I was more interested in her personal development and couldn't quite get on with this side of the story however I am sure some people will be delighted with the change in pace of the story. Overall 3/5 for me