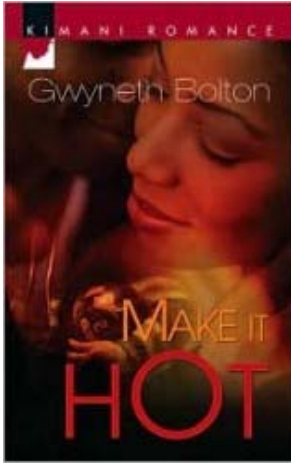


INTERVIEW WITH GWYNETH BOLTON

Dara Girard

Gwyneth Bolton lives two lives. By day she is a mild-mannered college professor, but by night she is a weaver of romantic tales that have her readers reaching for a cold glass of water and a fan. I hope you enjoy her interview and don't forget to pick up her September release below, Book 2 of her [Hightower Honors](#) series.

1. How do people in academia react to the fact that you're a romance author?



So far the reception has been really good. People seem genuinely interested. I think they see it as me having this super-cool other life. I decided early on that I was going to be open about this part of myself. Because I don't want to be this closet romance writer and hide it. I've told anyone who will listen about. If anyone has a problem with it, they haven't expressed it to me yet. Most of my colleagues think it's wonderful that I'm exploring my creative side.

2. You have two series: The Hip Hop Debutante Trilogy and the Hightower Honors series. Why do you like to create series? Do you see yourself developing more in the future?

I have so-oo many reasons for why I love to create series. First, as a reader, series are my favorite. I think it has something to do with me being naturally inquisitive, in other words, nosy. I always want to know more. In a series, there is always a chance that I will get to peep in on favorite characters from other books or get a hint about a future book. Series are excellent resources for naturally inquisitive (err... nosy) people. There is also this sort of sickness I have where I never stop thinking about the characters I love. This is the case for the characters I create and the characters I read about. I'm always continuing their stories in my head if I really love them. So when I write a series, I can actually use some of that constant imagining. Finally, I love to create series because it allows me to create a bigger world and really put it to use for more than one story. I do see myself developing more series in the future because I know romance readers like me love to read them.



3. As a professor how hard or critical are you of your own writing? How do you overcome being overly critical or becoming a perfectionist?

As a trained rhetorician and composition scholar, I have embraced the idea of revision and the fact that there is no such thing as a finished, perfect text. I think being a writing professor works for me and against me in this way. On the one hand, since I teach my students to revise and re-work and re-think and re-write and really

push writing as a process, I know that everything can be improved. I also have pretty realistic ideas about writing as a process that should keep me from being overly critical... ideally... However, there are times when it is hard to turn off my internal critic. Or I think that folks will read my stuff knowing I teach rhetoric and composition and think, she's a writing teacher and she wrote this crap. So, I try to keep it sane and positive, but sometimes I have to really work on it.

4. What nonfiction book(s) have helped you most as a writer?

Telling the Tale: The African American Fiction Writer's Guide by Angela Benson
Free Within Ourselves: Fiction Lessons for Black Authors by Jewell Parker Rhodes
Writing Fiction: The Practical Guide from New York's Acclaimed Creative Writing School by Gotham Writers' Workshop
The Art of Writing Romance by Valerie Parv
Complete Idiot's Guide to Getting Your Romance Published by Julie Beard
The Complete Writer's Guide to Heroes and Heroines by Tami Cowden, Caro LaFever and Sue Vidars

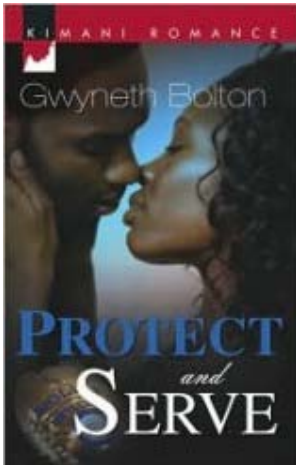
5. How do you balance the work of writing and promoting your novels?

I'm horrible at it. Honestly, by the time I reach the point where I feel like I no longer have to promote a novel, I'm usually so burnt out it's ridiculous. Promotion can seriously be another full time job if you let it be and I sometimes find it difficult to balance the hardcore promotion that usually goes with a new release and writing. I need to get better at it or sell enough books to hire someone to do it for me. LOL.

6. You've already written different types of books from nonfiction to urban/ hip hop romance, erotica and futuristic. Are there other genres you'd eventually like to write in?

Maybe one day, I'll write a mainstream novel or even a literary novel so that I can really flex my dialogue muscles.

7. What is one question you wish aspiring authors would ask you and how would you reply?



The question would probably have something to do with the business aspect of writing. I'm not sure how they would phrase it, but something along the lines of, what should I know about the business aspect of the writing business. And the first thing I would tell them is that they should really understand the business aspects of it. As creative people, we often don't take things like this into consideration. We're happy that someone is interested in publishing our book and offering us a multi-book contract. But we might let that happiness lull us into not finding out if this publisher has a good history of paying its authors their

advances and royalties on time. This is one industry where creativity and business savvy must go hand-in-hand.

Visit [Gwyneth's website](#) to find out more about her and her upcoming releases.

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