

Cézanne's Quarry: A Mystery

By Barbara Corrado Pope

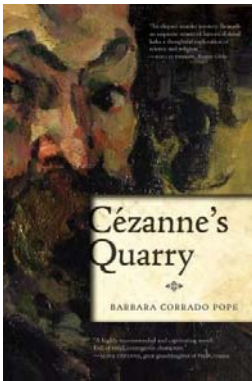
A beautiful young woman is found murdered... and the clues to her death point to her spurned lover, Paul Cézanne

Trade Paperback Edition

“A highly recommended and captivating novel.
Full of vivid courageous characters.”

—*Aline Cezanne, Great Granddaughter of Paul Cezanne*

“[a] highly accomplished and compelling novel. Beneath an exquisite veneer of historical detail lurks a thoughtful exploration of science and religion, of old values and new, and of a woman’s place in the world.”—*Hallie Ephron, The Boston Globe*



In this richly atmospheric novel set in nineteenth-century France, a mysterious and beautiful young woman named Solange Vernet arrives in Aix-en-Provence with her lover, a Darwinian scholar named Charles Westerbury, and several months later is found strangled in a quarry outside the city. The young and inexperienced magistrate, Bernard Martin, finds his investigation caught in the crossfires of a raging cultural debate.

Initially assuming that Solange’s murder was a simple *crime de passion* by either a jealous Cézanne or a betrayed Westerbury, Bernard soon finds himself on a mission to unravel the secrets of Solange and Cézanne’s hidden past—the key to which may be a series of his paintings which depict the strangulation and violation of a woman with golden-red hair.

Could Paul Cézanne be a killer? Do pieces of canvas reveal his guilt? Will the novice Bernard Martin grow into his role as an investigating judge before more lives, including his own, are in jeopardy? Can Cézanne’s best friend, French writer Émile Zola deliver the clue that will solve a murder?

*Exploring the questions of science and religion—and the role of women in these realms—that persist even today, **Cézanne’s Quarry** is a provocative debut mystery about life, death, love, and art.*

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Originally released in hardcover, *Cézanne's Quarry* instantly received critical and popular acclaim, including an enthusiastic endorsement from Aline Cézanne, great grand-daughter of the famous French artist and Post-Impressionist painter, Paul Cézanne. It has recently been named one of five 2009 finalists for the Oregon Book Awards' Ken Kesey Award for Fiction and was chosen The Boston Globes crime-fiction critics Top Three Books of 2008. It was also selected as an Editors' Choice Title by the Historical Novel Society and is translated into 4 languages.

Cézanne's Quarry is the first in the Bernard Martin mystery series, the second, *The Blood of Lorraine*, will be published in both the U.S. and Germany in the spring of 2010.

“Cézanne’s art, love life, and depressed personality. . . .
this story of tortured love and repressed violence resembles
Arturo Pérez-Reverte’s *The Flanders Panel*
(1994) in tone and depth.”—*Jen Baker, Booklist*



Barbara Corrado Pope, PhD., is an historian, woman’s studies scholar and most recently, a novelist. Born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, Barbara resides in Eugene, Oregon, where she is actively pursuing a second career. She has just completed a second Bernard Martin mystery, *The Blood of Lorraine*.

Barbara will be touring throughout the United States promoting the new trade paperback edition of *Cézanne's Quarry*. An up-to-date schedule of events can be found by visiting: <http://www.cezannesquarry.com/events-and-appearances/>

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www.CezannesQuarry.com

Praise for *Cézanne's Quarry*

"A highly accomplished and compelling novel. Beneath an exquisite veneer of historical detail lurks a thoughtful exploration of science and religion, of old values and new, and of a woman's place in the world." —Hallie Ephron, *The Boston Globe*

"A highly recommended and captivating novel. Full of vivid courageous characters."
—Aline Cézanne, Great Granddaughter of Paul Cézanne

"A masterpiece itself, deftly intermingling diverse subjects such as art, politics (of the Third Republic), love, the meaning of friendship, and the relationship between science and religion."
—*Historical Novels Review*, Editors Choice Title

"Cézanne's art, love life, and depressed personality. . . . this story of tortured love and repressed violence resembles Iain Pears at his darkest and Arturo Pérez-Reverte's *The Flanders Panel* (1994) in tone and thematic depth."— Jen Baker, *Booklist*

"Captivating characters and a riveting plot set against the lovely backdrop of 19th-century Provence. Highly recommended for all historical mystery fiction collections." — *Library Journal*, Starred Review

"Intriguing, richly drawn historical mystery. Pope handily blends genuine figures and events into her fictional bouillabaisse of art, science and mystery." —Adam Woog, *The Seattle Times*

"Pope mixes fictional and historic figures with great dexterity, offering a portrait of Cézanne as a tortured soul." —Katie Schneider, *The Oregonian*

"Could Paul Cézanne be a killer? Pope animates her canvas with plenty of vivid period detail. Francophiles and history buffs will find much to savor. A provocative debut." —*Publisher's Weekly*

"...three top mysteries of 2008." — Betty, *The Betz Review*

"An awe-inspiring murder mystery" and "an amazing multifaceted novel." —Hidden Staircase Mystery Books

"A masterful mix of history, French law and custom, religion, and intrigue. Her prose direct and well-crafted. Pope is expert at leaving small hints throughout her work and wrapping them up in a masterful way at the end of the novel." —Jennifer Melville, *Story Circle Book Reviews*

"*Cézanne's Quarry* chosen one of 3 Favorite Books of 2008." —Hallie Ephron, *Critic, The Boston Globe*

"An enthralling novel all the way through, *Cézanne's Quarry* is a must for mystery fans"
—*Midwest Book Review*

"This is an artful historical thriller centering around the father of modern art, Paul Cézanne, and his true-life obsession with a beautiful, unfettered woman. The author's canvas includes the impact of the theory of evolution, religious conservatism, and the search for justice in the Third Republic of France, whose cultural strictures are tight enough to imprison everyone."
—Karleen Koen, author of *Now Face to Face*, *Dark Angels* and *Through a Glass Darkly*

"Marvelous! With careful research and deft storytelling, Barbara Pope has given us a rich portrait of 19th century France. The author has woven a compelling mystery with strands of love, art, science, and religion. The murder of an intellectual and beautiful young woman leads us into the world of the French salon, where the arguments over evolution, religion, and the place of women still resonate today. Pope is particularly gifted at portraying the inner turmoil of an artist seeking his art, as a frustrated Cézanne tries to capture on paper what he sees in his head. *Cézanne's Quarry* is entertaining, absorbing, and difficult to put down. A first-rate debut."
— David Ball author of *The Sword and the Scimitar* and *Empires of Sand*

"In her exciting debut novel, *Cézanne's Quarry*, Barbara Corrado Pope richly evokes the time, ambiance and characters—Paul Cézanne and Émile Zola among others—of late 19th century France. The sights, sounds, even the scents of the period are brought vividly to life. With elegant exposition the intriguing plot moves effortlessly to its surprising conclusion."
— Ellen Jones, author of *The Fatal Crown* and *Beloved Enemy: The Passions of Eleanor of Aquitaine*

"Barbara Corrado Pope has devised an intriguing blend of the police procedural and the historical mystery, set among the rivalries and prejudices of provincial France under the Third Republic. The novel portrays Paul Cézanne, painter of both the sublime and the sinister, as a suspect in the murder of a young woman in a quarry near Aix-en-Provence. *Cézanne's Quarry* has the stamp of all good detective writing, in which the identity of a murderer which would have seemed impossible at the beginning is inevitable by the end. A richly satisfying entertainment with an investigating lawyer-hero whose career seems far from over."
— Donald Thomas, author of *Villains Paradise* and *The Execution of Sherlock Holmes*

About the Author



Barbara Corrado Pope, Ph.D., has an undeniable passion for making history come alive. She is an historian, and founding director of the Women's and Gender Studies at the University of Oregon. She has a PhD in the Social and Intellectual History of Europe from Columbia University and has taught women's studies in places as diverse as Hungary, Tuscany, the University of New Mexico, Harvard Divinity School and Provence.

She fell in love with the art, landscapes and people of Provence while teaching French, women's and religious history to American students in Avignon. Among the many places she led lecture-tours were Aix-en-Provence, where she followed in Cézanne's footsteps, from the hidden depths of the Bibémus Quarry to his sunny studio at Les Lauves on the outskirts of town.

Born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, Barbara resides in Eugene, Oregon, where she is actively pursuing a second career as a novelist. She has just completed *The Blood of Lorraine*, a second Bernard Martin mystery, which will be published in both the U.S. and Germany in the spring of 2010.

A Conversation with the Author

1. Why did you decide to write a mystery about Cézanne?

Years ago a friend discussed the idea of writing or co-authoring a novel about “Cézanne, Provence and geology.” I was hooked. I had taught in Provence, studied French cultural history for decades, loved Cézanne’s art, and always wanted to write a novel. When she went on to other projects, I could not let it drop. Moreover, during my research for *Cézanne’s Quarry*, I discovered two nagging questions in books about the artist:

- Why did he paint lurid, violent pictures in his youth?
- And who was the mysterious woman he fell in love with in the spring of 1885?

After that, the project of giving a fictional answer to these questions became irresistible.

2. How did you moved from the concept “Cézanne, Provence and geology” to a completed novel?

The first step was plotting: Determining the identity of the murderer and why s/he committed the crime. But the most important aspect of moving from concept to novel is creating the characters. Cézanne, his mistress Hortense Fiquet and Zola hewed pretty close to their historical descriptions. The main protagonist, Bernard Martin; the police inspector, Albert Franc; the victim, Solange Vernet; the other suspect, the geologist Charles Westerbury; Martin’s love interest, Clarie Falchetti, and his anarchist friend, Jean-Jacques Merckx all had to be fleshed out. My favorite character to write was the ambiguous Mr. Westerbury. I had a lot of fun putting his pretensions, charms and weaknesses on the page.

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3. You say you love Cézanne’s art, but you do not seem to love Cézanne.

I believe I give a fairly accurate account of what Cézanne would have been like when he was 46. At times he behaved like a man in delayed adolescence. Consider the circumstances: He had not yet been “discovered” as an artist. He had an unrequited obsession for a mystery woman. He also had a mistress with whom he had a 13-year-old son. He did not dare tell his skinflint father about his son, because he was still economically dependent on the old man. And, if that were not enough, he occasionally had to borrow money from his boyhood friend, Emile Zola, who had become France’s most famous writer. The two of them had always planned to “conquer France together” through their art. And they had presumed that Cézanne, the older and stronger, would take the lead. The greatest tragedy of Cézanne’s life would be the ending of this friendship within a year after the time of *Cézanne’s Quarry*. The reasons are hinted at in the book.

4. Do you consider yourself an expert on art?

No, an *amateur* as the French would say: a lover of art, and one who has read a great deal about it and goes to museums as often as I can on my travels.

5. You’ve taught women’s studies and history for many years. Is this reflected in the book?

Yes, I hope through the female characters, who defy the constraints of their sex, and the questions that others in the novel raise about their lives. Solange Vernet is a self-made woman, not only in the economic sense, but also in her intellectual and spiritual life—and in her social aspirations. The other heroine, Clarie Falchetti, is about to be trained by the state to teach in a public girls’ high school. This was revolutionary in 1885, when very few professions were open to women and when husbands were legally “the head of the household,” controlling all property, including their wives’ wages.

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6. Did your training as an historian help or hurt as you turned to fiction?

Helped, definitely. I had an understanding of the legal system, the way that both men and women were brought up to fulfill their “proper” roles, the historical clash between religion and science, and something more indefinable, my characters’ way of expressing themselves. The challenge was weaving this knowledge into a story that should be an entertaining seamless whole, not a history lesson!

7. How does your book compare with other novels which deal with women and art, for example, *The Girl with the Pearl Earring*?

I believe that the first goal of Tracy Chevalier’s book, and certainly mine, is to entertain. Readers of both books will also learn something about art and the lives of artists as well as the lives of women. The major difference is that mine is a murder mystery.

8. One of the cultural conflicts you set up in your book, which may have relevance today, is the conflict between science and religion. But why choose an amateur geologist as the main proponent of the scientific point of view?

Two reasons: Cezanne had a keen interest in geology, and hoped through his art to express the living history of the geological subjects—the quarry, the mountain—that he painted. Second, although we have come to believe that the controversy about evolution started with Darwin, it actually began with geological theories about the age of the earth and the meaning of fossils. Darwin learned from the geologists, like Charles Lyell, who preceded him. Geology challenged literal Biblical interpretations of the earth’s history. It was also very popular, especially in England, where many amateur geologists wandered about with their baskets and hammers.

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9. Did being a professor prepare you for life as a novelist?

No! Sometimes I feel like Dorothy in Oz. Nothing prepared me to become the kind of self-employed entrepreneur that many writers have to be these days. First you must find an agent; then wait, fingers-crossed, for a publisher; and, if you are lucky enough to find one, come up with a “marketing plan.”

As a professor, my first concern was teaching, which is very social. I was also deeply embedded in a large institution. The solitary acts of research and writing were a *part* of what I did. Now I must train myself to sit at my computer in my home all by myself for longer and longer periods as I embark on this second career. Being in a writers’ group does help to mitigate the sense of isolation. So do volunteer work and belonging to three reading groups.

10. What’s next for you Barbara?

Bernard Martin and Clarie Falchetti move to Nancy in northern France. It is several years later and the first Dreyfus trial is taking place. The accusation that Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish army officer, was a spy split the country apart and reverberated throughout the western world. In fact it was the experience of witnessing the explosion of anti-Semitism in France that incited Theodor Herzl, an Austrian Jewish reporter, to found the Zionist movement. He believed that if Jews could not be emancipated in France, the home of liberty, equality and fraternity, they had no home in Europe and must make one in Israel.

Once again concept preceded plot, characterization, even place. Nancy was one of the few cities in France with a large Jewish population. As for the origins of the theme, I assume it came from my other life. I devoted a great deal of time as a teacher of women’s studies to dealing with the issues of sexism and racism. Anti-Semitism was the most virulent and insidious form of ethnic hatred in nineteenth-century Europe.

The Blood of Lorraine will be published by Pegasus Books in the U.S. and Germany in 2010.

Suggested Interview Topics

Barbara Corrado Pope, Ph.D., author of *Cézanne's Quarry*, (Pegasus Books), has traveled and taught history and women's studies all over the world including Provence, where *Cézanne's Quarry* is set. She has a PhD in the Social and Intellectual History of Europe from Columbia University and has taught history and women's studies in places as diverse as Hungary, Tuscany, the University of New Mexico, and Harvard Divinity School. Her longest stint was at the University of Oregon, where she was the founding director of women's studies. She sought early retirement to pursue her career as a novelist.

Pope is a fascinating accomplished historian and diverse conversationalist that can work closely with themes of history, politics, science, women's studies, art and cultural conflicts in consumer media. Here are some possibilities for timely, issue-oriented articles, columns or shows.

Women's Issues: Women and the Glass Ceiling, in France and the U.S.

Despite Hillary Clinton's optimistic estimate of 18 million cracks in the glass ceiling, American women may not be doing so well compared to their French counterparts. French women faced many disadvantages in the 19th century, where the Napoleonic code gave men political, economic and legal dominance over them. Pope's female characters in *Cézanne's Quarry*, defy the constraints of their sex, and through their own personal rebellions begin to raise questions about the nature of women and what they can or should be. Solange Vernet is a self-made woman, not only in the economic sense, but also in her intellectual and spiritual life and in her social aspirations. The other heroine, Clarie Falchetti, is about to be trained by the state to teach in a public girls' high school.

The American women's movements in both the 19th and the 20th century have been larger and more prominent than the French feminist movements--and yet, what have we gained compared to our European counterparts? Barbara can discuss how far women have come in France and the U.S. and the issues they still face.

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Paul Cézanne: His Life, His Loves, His Rocks, His Potatoes

Although his work has great renown, many people are unaware of some of the most intimate details surrounding the private life Paul Cézanne. Historian Barbara Corrado Pope offers 10 little known facts and interesting pieces of history about the private life of Paul Cézanne. His violent paintings, evidence of his turbulent familial and romantic relationships, the willful destruction of his own paintings, his rocks, his potatoes and the little known historical evidence that portrays a dark and frustrated artist.

Think France, Got Sexy?

During Barbara's travels and teaching in France, including a stint in Provence, where Cézanne and his family lived, she not only researched the history of French culture and social life, but also experienced it firsthand. Are the French more romantic and sexy than we are? Barbara can offer some historical and current perspectives on this question.

European Cultural Conflicts in Science and Religion: The Evolution Controversy Didn't Begin with Darwin?

Barbara chose to embed *Cézanne's Quarry* in the conflict between science and religion for two reasons. First, because this conflict was so much a part of people's experience. Historians refer to it as the "Two Frances," a battle between the forces of secularization and the Catholic Church. Women were a centerpiece in this struggle. Republican husbands often feared their wives were ruled by the Church, instead of them, yet they enjoyed the obedience and chastity inculcated by religion. The same men were also not prepared to accept women who defied these expectations (like Solange Vernet and Clarie Falchetti in *Cézanne's Quarry*).

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The second reason was Cézanne's keen interest in geology. He hoped to express in his art the living history of the geological subjects—the quarry, the mountain—that he painted. Geology was also central to any discussion of science vs. religion.

Although we have come to believe that the controversy about evolution started with Darwin, it actually began with geological theories about the age of the earth and the meaning of fossils. Darwin learned from the geologists who preceded him, like Charles Lyell (Westerbury's hero in *Cézanne's Quarry*). Geology challenged literal Biblical interpretations of the earth's history. It was also very popular, especially in England, where many amateur geologists wandered around with their baskets and hammers.

Barbara provides interesting information, timelines and talks about world events that shape our religious and scientific beliefs in the past and today.

Ten Things You Might Not Know About Paul Cézanne

1. Paul Cézanne had a mysterious love affair with a woman in the spring of 1885.

According to John Rewald, Cézanne's most influential biographer, this was a "violent love affair." An unaddressed letter expressing his devotion was found among the artist's papers. In *Cézanne's Quarry*, the alluring mysterious lover is Solange Vernet, whom investigating magistrate Bernard Martin finds strangled in Bibémus Quarry.

2. He was a draft-dodger.

In 1870 when his name was called to serve in the Franco-Prussian war, Cézanne took off with his mistress, Hortense Ficquet, and moved from Aix to the nearby town of Estaque. The citizens of Aix did not hold this against him or his family.

3. Cézanne was an amateur geologist.

In his twenties, Cézanne painted and hunted for fossils with his boyhood friend, Antoine-Fortuné Marion. During these explorations, Marion, who studied and eventually taught geology at Marseilles, explained the ancient formation of the landscapes around Aix to his companion. In *Cézanne's Quarry*, the painter applies this knowledge and love of his native Provence to his work. And he contemptuously refers to his rival in love, the English geologist Charles Westerbury, as a charlatan and an intruder.

4. Émile Zola was Paul Cézanne's best friend.

They were inseparable during their boyhood in Aix. Together they were going to "conquer France" through their art. Zola appears in *Cézanne's Quarry* at the height of his fame as the country's greatest writer, while the painter is still struggling for recognition. Their friendship ended in 1886 when Cézanne assumed he was the subject of Zola's unflattering portrait of an artist in the novel *L'Oeuvre*.

5. Cézanne painted violent and erotic pictures in his youth.

The Strangled Woman (1866) and *The Murder* (1867) become important clues in *Cézanne's Quarry* because the woman depicted has the same golden red hair as Solange Vernet. Bernard Martin is also struck by the lewdness of the *Eternal Feminine* (1877), in which a naked red-haired woman sits, legs spread, high above adoring men from all walks of life, one of whom is easily identifiable as the artist.

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6. Paul Cézanne kept the existence of his beloved son a secret from his father for 14 years.

Cézanne's rich skinflint father insisted that a man should not marry until he could support a family. By the time of *Cézanne's Quarry* (1885), the artist's mistress, Hortense Fiquet, is eager to legitimate their relationship and does everything she can to prevent Cézanne's being tried for murder.

7. He obsessively painted Mont Sainte-Victoire.

There are 44 oils and 43 watercolors of the mountain still extant. One of these paintings, *Mont Sainte-Victoire seen from Bibémus Quarry*, (at the Baltimore Museum of Art) forms the last scene of *Cézanne's Quarry*.

8. Paul Cézanne once claimed his favorite food was “potatoes in oil.”

This was probably tongue-in-cheek. But Cézanne did love the simple foods of Provence: olive oil, fish, olives, tomatoes, as well as potatoes, according to Jean-Bernard Naudin's *Cézanne—A Taste of Provence* (1995). He also loved to eat them in a simple way, as Mary Cassatt's memory of his scraping his soup bowl with his spoon attests.

9. The famous painter tore up his paintings with a pen knife when he was frustrated with the results.

One of these fragments is found near the murder scene in *Cézanne's Quarry*. He would not return to paint in the quarry until the 1890's.

10. Cézanne did not eat out often, but you can still dine at one of his favorite cafés.

Les Deux Garçons, 53 cours Mirabeau, in Aix has been around since 1792. For more details on other Cézanne sightings, see [The World of Cézanne's Quarry, Yesterday and Today](#).

Suggested Interview Questions for Barbara Corrado Pope

1. Why did you write a mystery novel about Paul Cézanne?
2. What were some of the most challenging aspects of mixing historical facts and fictional characters?
3. What can you tell us about Paul Cézanne that might surprise us?
4. What is the historical significance of *Solange Vernet*, the woman that is portrayed as Paul Cézanne mistress in your novel?
5. Why did you make her such strong and spirited character?
6. Talk about living working and teaching in Provence, France.
7. What did you learn about the social and cultural differences while living in France?
8. How do you tie together themes of art, history, science, religion and the roles of women in your book?
9. What was the most difficult part of going from professor to novelist?
10. You say you love Paul Cézanne's art but it appears in your book you don't love Paul Cézanne, tell us why.
11. Talk about women's roles in France that persist today. How do they differ from the roles of American women today?
12. How did France become known as the most romantic place in the world?
13. What are some common misconceptions about the history of France?
14. Does French history play a significant role in world politics and religion today?
15. What is next for you?

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