

Left Coast Crime 9

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DEAD MAN'S CURVE

CAUTION
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We propose a toast...

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SALUTES



Left Coast Crime IX
Toastmistress

DEBORAH CROMBIE

Award-winning author of
Dreaming of the Bones

and the forthcoming
Kissed a Sad Goodbye



Murder was never so marvelous.

Maybe Left Coast Crime 9 isn't the last crime of the millennium — there have certainly been plenty of people who've argued the point over the last year — but I think that when the new year rolls over and we have to start writing all those zeros on our checks it will feel like we've turned a corner of some sort. That alone makes this convention an excellent opportunity to look both back on the contributions our genre has made to literature and forward to the impact changing technology will have on the way we will take our daily dose of murder and mayhem. That "crime of the millennium" business is more than just a slogan, though. It defines both a perspective and a threshold.

We billed the theme of this convention as the literary mystery, and that is where the perspective comes in. While we will offer a tribute to some of the great writers of our genre, Dorothy Hughes among them, we will focus on the mystery itself and its relation to what the professors call literature. Hemingway, Faulkner, Joyce, Melville . . . that crowd, and the stuff they write. Is the mystery just a poor relation, or has it made a contribution? Is it inherently limited in the themes it can address, as John Dunning claims? If so, why, and if

not, how and when can it transcend its natural focus on the question of good and evil, crime and punishment?

Welcome to Left Coast Crime 9— The Last Crime of the Millennium!

I spoke not only of perspective, but also of a threshold. We meet here at a time when not only the content, but also the form and medium of the mystery are changing. The

traditional publishing industry is becoming monolithic, books are selected on the basis of their potential to become blockbusters, and classics are reprinted as often because dead authors demand lower royalties than living as because of their intrinsic merit. Nevertheless, great books do see print, small presses abound, new distribution channels are appearing, writers can create for film, television, books on tape, electronic publication, and even computer games. The word has been king for thousands of years, but how safe is its crown when a work can have a sound track or even pictures? When hypertext makes the reader co-creator of the story?

The desert is a good place to think about questions like this, and we'll talk about them, just a little, here in Albuquerque. We won't get too weird on you, though. After all, we're here to have fun, too. Meet authors, listen to them talk about their work and lives, buy books by the hundred-weight (I think we've got the biggest collection of book dealers ever at a Left Coast) and collect autographs. You'll find a lot of terrific authors here, best sellers as well as first timers, so enjoy.

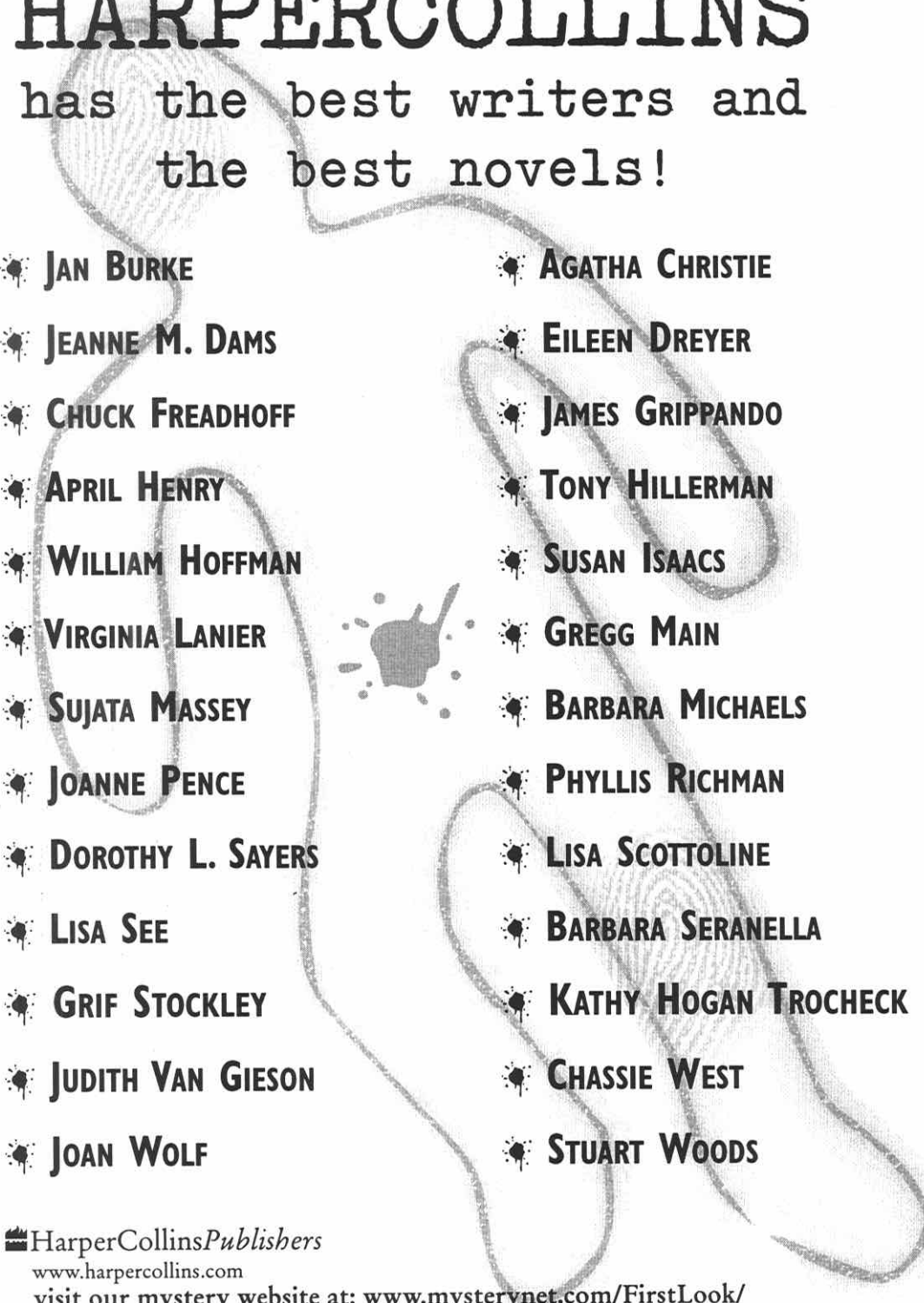
A thousand years has ended and another thousand is beginning. It is time to look to the giants of the past, appreciate what they've given us, wave a reluctant farewell, and then turn around. Welcome the future, friends. Welcome to Left Coast Crime 9. We hope you will remember it as the Crime of the Millennium.

— *Harlen Campbell*

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Tom and Enid Schantz are the owners of the Rue
Morgue Bookstore in Boulder, Colorado.

Barbara Peters is the founder and owner of The Poi-
soned Pen Bookstore and the Poisoned Pen Press
in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Cynthia Gruver is a free lance writer who lives in
Albuquerque.

Frank Zoretich lives in Albuquerque and is the au-
thor of *Cheap Thrills*.

Carolyn Wheat is a mystery writer and editor of
Murder on Route 66.

Betty Parker is an antiquarian bookseller at Page
One, Too in Albuquerque.

Margaret Coel is a mystery writer from Boulder,
Colorado.

Ernie Bulow publishes and sells books in Gallup,
New Mexico.

Steve Brewer is a mystery writer and journalist from
Albuquerque.

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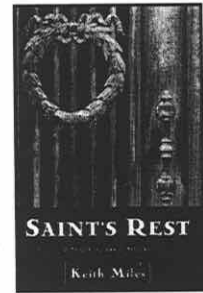
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Addictive.**



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Portrait of the Bookman: A Look at John Dunning

by Tom & Enid Schantz

John Dunning has always done it his way. It's a way that frustrates his editor, perplexes his publisher, and disappoints readers across the country who can't wait for his next mystery. That book is just about ready—maybe—but John knows it isn't the one his fans want. Instead of a third novel featuring Denver cop-turned-antiquarian-bookseller Cliff Janeway, John is finishing up a mystery set in 1942 in the world of radio broadcasting, his other great passion.

He's writing the book on spec and won't sign a contract because he doesn't think good novels can be written to deadlines. John likes to imagine how legendary Scribner editor Maxwell Perkins, whose writ-



Photo by Kathie Dunning

ers included Hemingway, Wolfe, Fitzgerald and Van Dine, might have greeted Patricia Cornwell's *Postmortem*. "A very nice start, young lady," he imagines Perkins telling her. "Please bring it back when you figure out how to finish it."

John isn't the fastest writer in the world, partly because he likes to rework every sentence and partly because he refuses to use a word processor. He still hammers out every word on a 1964 Hermes manual typewriter and edits with a jar of white-out. He works in the mornings and starts each day by retyping the last page he did the day before. He wrapped up the first draft of the radio mystery a year ago, but decided it needed some work. "How much polishing do you have to do?" asked his editor, Susanne Kirk. "I'm starting on page one," John replied. With luck the book could be done by the time he arrives in Albuquerque to be honored at Left Coast Crime 9. But don't bet on it. John wouldn't.

That's the way John's been about things his whole life. Born in Brooklyn in 1942, he moved with his parents to Charleston, South Carolina, when he was three. He dropped out of high school and joined the army partly because his teachers thought he ought to spend less time in class writing his stories and more time listening to their lessons. A broken eardrum cut short his military career after two weeks and John returned to Charleston to spend the next five years working in a glass factory.

In 1964, a couple of friends decided to head out for Denver and John decided it was time he too left home. In Denver he took a job at the Harding Glass Factory, where one of his supervisors turned out to have a passion for shooting a .22 at birds flying about in the cavernous building, more often than not missing his targets and shooting holes through the ceiling to let the cold and snow in.

Clearly, it was time for a career change. John's next job was as a "hot walker" at the Centennial Race Track. Then he went out to California and Idaho for a spell and worked as a groom. After a year, he returned to Centennial, but on the way he

dropped off an application at the *Denver Post* where, in 1966, he was hired to work in the paper's library, having first been told that no one ever made it out of the library and into the newsroom. At about the same time he went back to Charleston and earned his GED certificate, which stated that he had achieved the educational level of the average white 12th grader. About this time he also met his wife Helen, who now is his partner in cataloguing and selling books over the Internet and at the Denver Book Mall. They married in 1969 and have two children: Jim, 24, and Katie, 21.

After writing scores of book reviews and submitting other articles, John was promoted to investigative reporter, a job he kept until 1970 when, frustrated with how the publisher at the *Post* would kill stories to protect the advertising revenue, John quit to see if he could make a living as a full-time fiction writer. It didn't go well and he went back to the *Post* in 1974, quitting exactly one year later, as irate as ever with the newspaper's policies.

In 1975, he published his first novel, a mystery thriller called *The Holland Suggestions*. Although it was picked up by a book club, it didn't exactly make him a household name. (But try finding a copy of it today. If you do, it'll cost you a pretty penny.) A year later he published his massive compendium of old-time radio, *Tune In Yesterday*, the culmination of his lifelong love affair with network radio programs—his own collection numbers more than 35,000 tapes, many of which he played on his long-running Denver radio show (1972-1997). His encyclopedic knowledge of the subject got him a consultant's job and a screen credit on a Robert Altman film. A second edition of the radio book, now called *On the Air*, came out in 1998. Work on that massive project temporarily derailed his mystery writing career, to the disappointment of fans of the Cliff Janeway series.

But we're getting ahead of ourselves. John got back at the *Post* in his 1980 mainstream novel, *Denver*, a fictional treatment of Colorado's fling with the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s and the newspaper's failure to comment on this sorry episode in the state's

Dunning.....Continued from Page 7

history. That same year he also published another mystery, *Looking for Ginger North*, following it a year later with *Deadline*, a mystery in which he picked up the *Denver Post* and fictionally transported it to New Jersey while leaving it otherwise true to life. Both books received Edgar nominations for best paperback original. We hosted signings for both books at our store, among the first such events we held during our early years as an open shop; this was at a time when we could count the number of mystery writers in Colorado on the fingers of one hand—a far cry from today.

In 1984 John embarked on yet another career, one that would have a profound effect on his own writing. He opened The Old Algonquin Bookstore on Denver's seedy East Colfax, launching the book row that he would later make famous in *Booked To Die*. Although we'd chatted with John at our signings, mostly we remember running into him at book sales in Denver and elsewhere, where he would prowl the tables intently, in his ever-present stocking cap, looking for bargains. It seemed to us that no matter where we went hunting for books, John had just been there the day or the week before and gotten all the good stuff. It was always the thrill of the chase that attracted John to the antiquarian book business, not the daily grind of operating a retail establishment, and he closed the shop ten years later, selling most of his inventory (excluding the mysteries) to another Denver dealer. Today part of his inventory is displayed at the Denver Book Mall, but most of it is sold over the Internet.

By then, *Booked To Die*, published in 1992, had changed his life. It also had an untold impact on the world of book collecting, emphasizing as it did that a book needn't be old to be collectible and turning many a casual mystery reader into an avid book collector (or in too many cases a greedy book speculator). Originally John had toyed with the idea of writing a nonfiction work on book collecting, but Warwick Downing, another Denver mystery writer with whom he shared an office, convinced him to

use the material in a novel instead. Scribner's printed 6,500 copies and within days of publication *Booked To Die* had sold through its first printing. It would be several weeks before the second printing was released. The book instantly became a hypermodern first, the very kind of thing John had debunked in his novel. "Don't get me wrong," John says. "I think it's a good book and I hope it's still read fifty years from now." Still, he'd advise collectors to hang on to copies of *The Grapes of Wrath* or *The Catcher in the Rye* instead of his own book.

Booked To Die caused quite a storm in Denver book circles, since many of its principal characters were very thinly disguised members of the city's book community, from starving book scouts to snooty first editions dealers. Some of his bookseller colleagues still joke about "gunning for Dunning," claiming he revealed all the best places in town to scout for books. *The Bookman's Wake*, the second Cliff Janeway, came out in 1995 and sold very well in hardcover. A year later, the paperback edition cracked the New York Times bestseller list, the holy grail of the publishing industry.

John still goes out scouting for books a couple of times a week and admits that some weeks he sells more books on the Internet than he used to sell at The Old Algonquin. But lately he realized that he had to decide whether he is primarily a bookseller or a writer.

He finally decided he is a writer, first and foremost. But maybe it's the bookseller in him that drives him to make his books as good as he possibly can, even if it means sacrificing the extra income he could realize if he conformed to the book-a-year schedule publishers are happiest with.

After all, antiquarian booksellers who wade through thousands of discarded books to find one or two desirable or important volumes can tell you that very few books can stand the test of time. And they'll also tell you that the chances are that John's books will be in that number.

Deborah Crombie: The Consummate Writing Professional

By Barbara Peters

A conference that has adopted a literary mystery theme could ask for no better Toastmaster than Deborah Crombie. Her editor Kate Miciak at Bantam describes

her as “the consummate writing professional, with a passion for both mystery and British history.” So rich is her output, it feels as though she’s been with us for years, but checking back, I see my first glimpse of her came in a letter of February, 1993, from Susanne Kirk, Execu-



tive Editor of what was then Charles Scribner’s Sons.

“Frosty February is usually when I begin to get tired of the cold weather, so it’s the perfect time to curl up by the fire with a couple of good books (and if you’re in Phoenix the *only* time to curl up by the fire). Accordingly, I’m pleased to introduce Deborah (Debs) Crombie, a talented American who has lived in Britain and brings freshness and vitality to the classic British form in *A Share in Death* . . . (It) introduces two appealing new characters, Scotland Yard Detective Duncan Kincaid and his sidekick Sergeant and modern heroine Gemma James.” And, Susanne notes, “introduces her own interesting twists” to the tradition.

Susanne is a wizard editor, so with this directive I followed instructions and was not surprised to read an

intelligent, elegantly written novel in the tradition mode, worked with expert control on a tight canvas. Hard to believe it was a first time work, and by an American author. 1993 was a good year for crime, but Debs was one of the select nominated for an Agatha Best First Novel Award. Thus we met in Bethesda, and she did her first signing here that June. It was completely memorable in that Kate Ross appeared with her, complete in heavy wool, full Regency costume with hat and gloves. But Debs of the easy wit and infectious laugh was not a bit upstaged, and they became friends.

All Shall Be Well, the 1994 book, was a daring effort in that Debs — once married to a Scot with whom she lived in Edinburgh and Chester, now living in Dallas remarried to policeman Rick — sets up a mortally ill woman to die and then asks, was she murdered? It’s unlikely. The field of suspects is so small only a consummate craftsman could craft a gem like this novel within it. Kincaid’s friendship for the dead Jasmine lends his investigation poignancy.

As for *Leave the Grave Green*, I can never think of it without cracking up over a letter. “Dear Barbara, I opened my January newsletter with great anticipation, only to find the new Kincaid/James novel listed as ‘Leave the Grass Green.’ Oops . . . I have affectionately referred to it since as ‘the fertilizer mystery.’” To this day, my tongue tangles over this title.

Since it’s her habit to select a new spot for each book, Debs did Yorkshire, London, the Chiltern Hills and moved south to Surrey for a family-centered drama about a murdered Police Commander with a clever plot

Crombie.....Continued from Page 9

twist and well-drawn characters that also allows her two detectives to realize their own relationship. Keeping them believable and moving forward is one of the series' strengths. In a 1997 review, critic Marilyn Stasio wrote: "The trouble with romantic mysteries is that the romance usually smothers the mystery. More praise, then, to Deborah Crombie for making the tangled love relationships in *Dreaming of the Bones* the very heart of her mystery by linking them with questions about our responsibilities to the ones we love, on occasion love to death."

And so we come to the multilayered *Dreaming of the Bones*, the book for me where all the author's talents burst into full bloom for a rich and satisfying, indeed, a truly stunning novel. It finds its focus in "the life and death of Lydia Brooke, a Cambridge poet whose verses reflect her obsession with her namesake, the romantic Edwardian poet Rupert Brooke, while scattering literary clues to the intimate affairs of her own lusty social set" (NYTBR). By making Lydia's biographer, and the murderer's victim, Kincaid's former wife, Debs sets him to pick his way among the fatal passions of the living and the dead, the hunters and the hunted.

It's hard to believe such a resonant read can be equalled or surpassed, so I've deliberately postponed reading my galley of *Kissed a Sad Goodbye*, the April 1999 publication, until after Left Coast Crime 9. I'd either drool with delight, or gibber. Bets go for the drool.

It was easy to recognize that *Dreaming of the Bones* would take its author to a new level. And it did, complete with nominations for the major mystery awards. I add that we overlooked announcing the Gibson Award presented by The Poisoned Pen (actually, by My Mother, no critic to mess with) for 1997 books. So I rectify this omission here by announcing it goes to Deborah Crombie. It was also her last book for Scribner.

We've had a lot of fun together over the years, but maybe the apogee was reached in London, 1996.

Buckingham Palace was open for public visiting and four of us including author Kate Charles, had tickets. Such an occasion demanded the extra touch, so we booked at the Ritz for tea. As we sat and sipped, and it must be confessed munched, I couldn't but reflect what a perfect setting this was for an author who liked to interweave past and present, to move into the new while affectionately respecting the past.

And respecting other authors. I asked her for a review of Reg Hill's superb *On Beulah Height* last spring after she swiped my British galley. When she sent it, she added: "I loved the book, just wish life had allowed me to read it in one sitting. When I reached the end I smacked myself in the forehead and said, 'I should have seen it in the very first chapter!' I love it when that happens. One of the drawbacks to plotting books is that other people's plots become more transparent so it's always nice not to be led round the mulberry bush." Indeed it is, and she does it excellently well.

Having quoted a comment from Debs' Scribner editor Susanne, I end with one she just sent in the mail. "Debs is a tremendous talent. I particularly admire the way she has grown as a writer. Each new book brings increased subtlety and depth."



Tasha Mackler: Fan Extraordinaire

by Cynthia Gruver

Most Albuquerque readers know Tasha Mackler as the purveyor of fine mysteries, both new and used. Until she retired last year to have more time to travel and write, her store, Murder Unlimited, had been a mecca for mystery fans and authors for 20 years.

Tucked into a small strip mall near San Mateo and Menaul, the shop catered to those who wanted to read a good mystery, or had a few to trade in. Lined and aisled with shelves Tasha made herself (she's a thrifty Yankee born and bred), the neatly alphabetized books crowded into every bit of space. It was easy to get lost in thought as you prowled up one aisle and down another looking for murder and mayhem, feeling alone in your search...until you turned a corner and discovered another browser in solitary pursuit of the perfect crime.

Although a life long reader, bookselling was a second career for Tasha. She was a psychiatric nurse when she arrived in Albuquerque in 1964. As she tells it, she and her late husband, Abe, were just passing through on their way to California, after having crisscrossed the country north-to-south and east-to-west. She took one look at New Mexico and refused to get back into the car.

Murder Unlimited began as a used bookstore, but Tasha saw a need and she chose to fill it by specializing in the mysteries she loved to read. What made Murder Unlimited unique was Tasha's phenomenal knowledge and knowing what her clients liked. Often a regular customer would walk into the store and Tasha would hand them a book and say, "Thought you'd like this one." There you'd be, a book in one hand and money in the

other. She was always right.

Murder Unlimited was also a place to find your favorite author, in print and in person. It was a place to catch up on the local gossip: who was writing what, who was on a signing tour, who was changing publish-



ers or agents, etc. And the book signings. The tapas. The wine. The conversation.

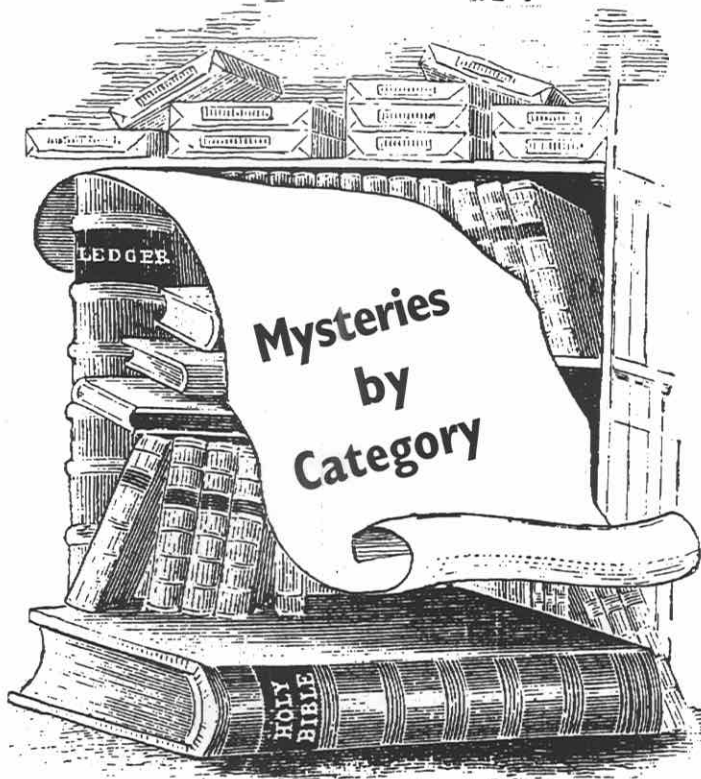
Her clientele came from all walks of life, from those who read about crime to those who wrote about it and those who dealt with it: cops, P.I.s, medical investigators, you name it. She even had a perp visit the place once, giving her one of her more exiting tales: Robbed at gunpoint, the punk grabbed her cash and ran. Tasha decided no one was going to steal her hard earned money and get away with it so she ran after him. He swung

Continued on Page 12

Mackler....Continued from Page 11

around, hitting her on the head with the butt of his gun. She went down, but a couple of gallant passersby detained the thief until police arrived. Tasha got a nasty headache. The perp got an all expense paid trip to the Pen.

Of course had Charmer been on the job, things might have been different. Charmer, a mixed breed from the pound, was always there to greet customers. She was usually good about staying behind the counter, but would come out to greet regulars — especially those who routinely brought her treats. While Tasha is enjoying retirement, she says Charmer misses the attention.



Tasha also indulged in extracurricular activities during her tenure as bookseller. Every Thursday night for a handful of years in the late 80s, a secret door, hidden behind the popular fiction section of the store would swing open on silent hinges to reveal yet another book-lined room. Here, a small group of writers met to read and critique their works-in-progress. These weekly critique sessions provided the first glimpses at the novel Tasha was writing.

There were also monthly dinners with a hint of

crime. Guest speakers shared their expertise in the world of crime and punishment. Attendees learned how to defuse bombs and why some bail bondsmen won't touch certain types of criminals and what it was like to be a pretty female cop on the wrong side of the tracks.

In 1991, Tasha's first book was published. Not a mystery, as one might expect, but a compendium called *Mysteries by Category*. If you wanted to find a crime committed on Valentine's Day and solved by a cat, she'd have a category for it. She is now finishing up a second volume which categorizes mysteries written between 1991 and 1998. When asked how she chooses the mysteries she includes, she says "I just pick up stuff. If I started selecting, the book would be slanted, so I go to the Page One, Too (a used bookstore) and see what hardbacks are available and start reading." And reading. She reads, on average, the first 50 pages and the last 50 pages of each book she categorizes. That's a lot of pages. When she's finished with her current book, she says she'll settle down to write a mystery of her own.

Now, that Tasha, purveyor of fine mysteries has retired, and the second volume of *Mysteries by Category* is nearly complete, we look forward to meeting Tasha the mystery writer. Finish that mystery, Tasha!



Collector's Corner

The following dealers have graciously consented to help us satisfy our addictions during the event. Need a fix of your favorite author? One of these guys will feed your habit!



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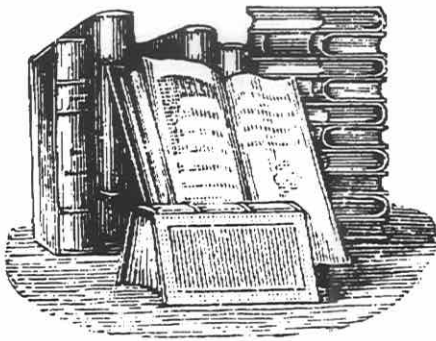
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Where Would We Be Without the Independent Bookseller?

By Deborah Crombie

For the average lover of mysteries, the choice between shopping at the chain bookstore or at the local independent booksellers may be determined by convenience, or perhaps by the fact that your local mystery bookstore offers better service -- maybe they even call



you when the newest P.D. James or James Elroy hits the stands. But what the reader may not realize is that the independent bookseller can be crucial to an author's career.

Take your average first time author (me, for instance, a few years ago). If you're extremely fortunate, as I was, you sell your first novel to a reputable publisher for just about enough money to pay off your Christmas Visa bill. The publisher prints a grand total of three to five thousand copies (if they're feeling daring) and ships them out in the wide world. Period.

No tour, no publicity, no advertising. When you make a squeak of protest, you learn that it's not the publishers' policy to spend money promoting such a small acquisition, as they are great believers in the theory of natural selection (i.e., the strong will somehow survive,



the weak will fall by the wayside). So you cross your fingers, pray for good reviews, start reading every book you can find on self-promotion,

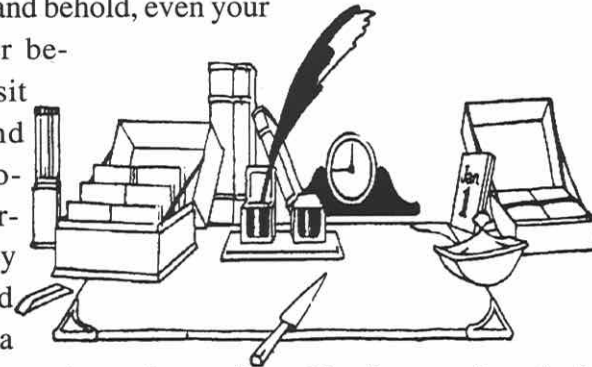
brazen or otherwise — but you know that your book's

chance of making a lasting market impression are less than the passenger pigeon's.

But don't despair. Here's where the independent bookseller comes into our story. The independent bookseller actually READS your book. And he likes it. He writes about it in the newsletters he sends to his customers. He hand sells it to readers he knows enjoy similar books. He recommends it to other booksellers, and he hauls boxes of it to conferences so that the readers who happen to see your panel can buy it.

Multiply that by even a few dozen and your first meager print run has made a rapid disappearance.

Lo and behold, even your publisher begins to sit up and take notice. Perhaps they should print a



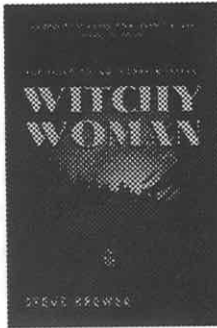
few more copies and organize a bit of promotion. And perhaps (after much deliberation on their part) your second book might even deserve an advance big enough to pay your entire year's Visa bill.

It seems you are on your way, due in large part to the folks who make selling books more than a day job. Chances are that without the dedication and diligence of the mystery bookstores, your first novel would have spent a week on the chain store shelf, then disappeared without a trace.

And it's not just the writer who owes the independent booksellers a debt but the reader as well. The mystery bookseller knows that books are more than commodities, and they help make it possible for us all to discover new and promising talent.



Intrigue Press salutes our Left Coast Crime authors



Steve Brewer

Witchy Woman—first time in paperback!

Third episode in Brewer's hilarious Bubba Mabry P.I. series, set in Albuquerque.

"A wonderful new entry in the Private Eye field."

—Tony Hillerman

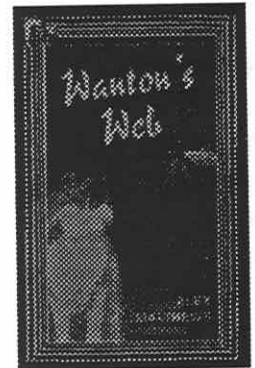
"[Brewer] has a touch that can squeeze the humor out of a story without choking the suspense." —*Albuquerque Tribune*

Alex Matthews

Brand New! *Wanton's Web*

***Vendetta's Victim*—first time in paperback!**

Therapist Cassidy McCabe finds her world turned upside down when her fiance's ex-girlfriend is murdered and the police come looking for him.

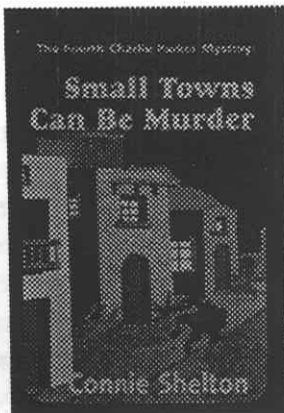


"A good exciting read; in fact, a real nail biter ending."

—*Mysterious Women*

"In McCabe [Matthews] depicts a spunky woman, divorced, unsure of romance, vulnerable yet self-sufficient. A frisky brew, to be sure."

—*Chicago Sun-Times*



Connie Shelton

The fourth in the Albuquerque mystery series featuring amateur sleuth Charlie Parker. This time Charlie travels to a small northern New Mexico town where she uncovers a series of heinous crimes.

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—*Booklist*

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Pushing the envelope: A Dialogue with John Dunning

by Harlen Campbell

The choice of John Dunning for Guest of Honor at a convention devoted to the literary mystery wasn't exactly a no-brainer, but once my friend and co-conspirator, Judith Van Gieson, suggested his name, I felt like slapping my forehead and saying, "Well, duh!" The fit was that good.

Not only is he a talented and accomplished writer, but he is a man who has thought deeply about literature and the mystery. Unfortunately, he is also a confessed slow writer, and I say that with the frustration, not of a fan, but of a man who tried to coerce an article out of him with less than a year's notice. He did, however, graciously consent to making his contribution in the form of a sort of electronic email dialogue. We turned our attention to a question that's been on both our minds recently.

Harlen Campbell— With a few exceptions, mystery writers have generally been looked down on by academics teaching "serious" literature. Why do you think this is, and is it justified?

John Dunning— I think there are several reasons for this. One is jealousy. Many academics who teach at the college level or edit "important" literary magazines have themselves been trying to write for years without success. Now comes a MYSTERY writer, for God's sake, who sells 50,000 hardbacks, gets on bestseller lists, and is still in print in paper years later.

Another reason is that academia is infested with ivory-tower nonsense. Academics refuse to believe in any story involving crime, or murder under mysterious circumstances, despite the fact that our newspapers show such things happening all the time. A third reason is more difficult to dismiss. As our best mystery writers find commercial success, many of them take the money and run, and what follows is a long string of lesser books, pale imitations of the first. I hate to say this because it will annoy some people, but you know it is true — they have a success with that first book and then break their arms signing those seven-figure advances publishers throw at them. They may not even have a good second book in mind, but the lure of big money is just too great for most of us to ignore.

Having said all that, here's what I think is the real reason. By its very definition, the mystery (or "crime novel," as some like to call the current trend toward murder without mystery) is never going to be accepted as "literature" because it is plot-driven rather than character-based or rooted in theme. There are some great characters in mysteries, to be sure, but when you cut to the heart of it, the story is one-dimensional—who did it, or why was it done? There's no room for a character like Sophie from "Sophie's Choice" without expanding it beyond its natural limit and making it something else. This doesn't mean that the mystery CAN'T be literature, but I think it is restricted to its one eternal theme, good vs. evil, whereas the mainstream writer is free to go wherever his heart



John Dunning

tells him.

HC— Good versus Evil sounds like another way of treating violation of the natural order and the protagonist-detective's struggle to restore the natural order—essentially the subject of one of the greatest crime scripts ever written, Bill Shakespeare's *MacBeth*. Most academics would admit that as literature, right? But do you mean that "literature" necessarily begins with theme or character? Surely plot is important there, too?

JD— I wouldn't call *MacBeth* crime fiction: I'm not even sure *Crime and Punishment* fits our standard. On the one hand you've got editors and publicists touting every author as a ground breaker; on the other you find critics (such as the editor of the *Drood Review*) who insist that we stick so strictly to the crime that our hero can't even have a political viewpoint. In fact, I don't see any Shakespeares or Dostoyevskys around today, do you ... in our field or in the mainstream?

Shakespeare had such towering genius that he'd have defied category even if one had existed then. Obviously plot is important in literature as well as in mystery or crime fiction, but just because a story has a murder, that doesn't make it crime fiction as we know it today. Mainstream writers deal in the good-and-evil theme, too, and in the end I guess it depends on how it's written, on what the writer's attitude toward his material is.

No, I don't mean that character or theme is an essential starting place in mainstream — that's my point in literature there are no rules. In mysteries, the rules are tight and confining. Break them at your own peril. That's why the mystery offers the greatest challenge in the writing game. As Chandler said, it's the one literary form that's never been beaten by anyone. The perfect mystery has yet to be written.

HC— No, I see no Shakespeares or Dostoyevskys. If they were around today, Shakespeare might find a publisher if he modernized his language, got rid of the rhymes, and added a little nudity, but I suspect Dostoyevsky would have to find a good day job. Times change, tastes change. Rules change, too. That *Drood Review* editor might be satisfied with writers like Hammet and Chandler, but today's readers are buying series characters with political and environmental viewpoints, ex-wives, drinking problems, and so on. Many of today's mysteries focus so strongly on the life of the detective/protagonist that the crime is almost lost, and that Good vs. Evil theme drowns in a sea of banalities. Other themes creep in: social responsibility, understanding, the value of moderation, and so forth. I guess one question is, do you agree that the themes we're allowed to treat within the con-



Harlan Campbell

vention have broadened? If you do, is this an expansion of the genre, or just slop-over from the mainstream? And how is it likely to affect those 'tight and confining' rules?

JD— There does seem to be a blurring of the lines, but even with all this appearance of freedom we are still strapped like a chastity belt to that murder. We can give our characters flaws, alcoholism or whatever, but these are not themes, they are just touches of character. Alcoholism was the theme of *The Lost Weekend* and *The Days of Wine and Roses*.

Can you have two themes in a single book without one becoming superfluous? I don't know, but I do know it would be very difficult. I would like to do that—I'm trying to do it now, as a matter of fact, and it's a big scary project because you never know how it will finally turn out. The only way I can see it being done is if the second theme becomes a vital part of the first, if the solving of the crime depends on the hero undergoing some vast personal change. That's one rule of general fiction—characters must change or there is no story. In detective fiction, the opposite is usually true—the character is much the same at the end as he was at the start. His circumstances may be altered but he himself has not been changed in the profound way of a John Fowles character. I would love to do that, write a novel with a big canvas without losing the puzzle.

There's the rub, the puzzle. In recent years we have seen a shift away from pure mystery because its rules are so restrictive. Nowadays there's even a disparagement of the puzzle in favor of realism. And some of these books are very good. I think *Silence of the Lambs* is incredibly good.

Dunning.....Continued from Page 17

I read it twice and was captivated both times, even when I knew what was coming. Both times I thought, "Man, I wish I'd written that." But it is not a mystery, and when a writer removes the puzzle from his story he lifts a world of difficulty from his own shoulders. No longer does he have to make everything mesh perfectly with his puzzle, he just doesn't have that added level of flawless logic to reach. I'm not saying that Thomas Harris took the easy road—writing a book that good about anything is never easy—but if he had added the mystery element he'd have made his task ten times more difficult and maybe impossible. Almost certainly his book would not have been as good as it is.

"So why bother?—that becomes the obvious question. Why bother with the puzzle if it's just a drag on the "real" story? Suddenly we have people saying things like, "Hey, now that we're out of the puzzle-solving business we can get on with the real business of writing." Thus we have "crime fiction" instead of mysteries, but to disparage the puzzle is to put down the genre that started us all. It's us putting us down, and it annoys me every time I hear it. It reminds me of the great poet (I want to say Robert Frost) who reacted to the trend of writing verse without rhyme. It's like playing tennis without the net.

HC— That's a good point about character evolution. Essentially, it means that a mystery series can no more approach great literature than a television series could approach great drama—if the story doesn't change the characters, it is necessarily trivial. The problem, of course, lies in the word "series." Recycled characters are static.

You say your current project involves marrying mystery's eternal theme—Good vs. Evil—with another in one book. I wish you well, of course, but I wonder how you're going to accomplish it without violating the central unity of theme. I also wonder what that second theme is. Care to tease us with a hint or two? Does this mean your next book will be a standalone?

Another question comes to mind here. If the mystery, or at least the mystery series, can never approach "literature," what goal should the ambitious author strive for? Are we restricted to fabricating better and better "entertainments," as Graham Greene put it? What drives you when you sit down to your word processor?

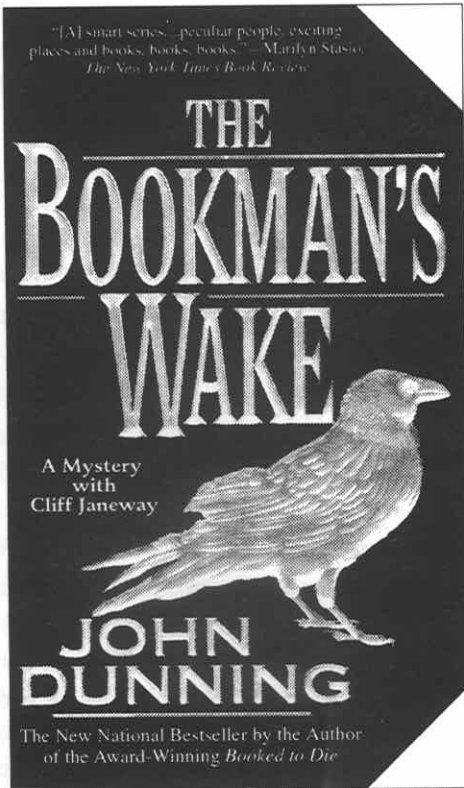
JD— I never sit down to a word processor. Now you've opened a topic we could discuss for many pages. Maybe I should leave this to some of the verbal Q-&-A if anyone wants to pursue it. Let's say I agree with Jimmy Breslin—potatoes should be processed, not words. I write on a manual typewriter and I constantly rework my material. I believe the

word processor is a terrible influence on writing. I'm not just being an old crank here. I've got what I believe is a solid reason for this. But no one wants to hear it. People would rather move words around on a screen and call it a rewrite. I read a definition of a word processor not long ago—I wish I could remember the book. Anyway, the guy called it a typewriter with a condom on it. I like that.

Going back to the top of your three points, I guess I would say that it is very difficult for a series to approach greatness, and the longer the series goes on the more static it becomes. You can see after a while that they're just doing it for the money. Chandler had it right—about five books is all you can do before boredom sets in. I myself cannot imagine writing, say, 20 Janeway books. Five or six would be plenty. In the first place, I am not all that predictable; I can't guarantee that I'll have a manuscript every January 23 on the dot. I get into something and it always undergoes some metamorphosis, so that the book I end up with often bears little resemblance to the one I started to write. Again, it depends on the vision and stamina of the writer how long he can go on before he starts getting stale, and whether he recognizes it when it comes. It's a long shot at best that any series, in books or on TV, can be more than routine, but it does happen even on TV. There's a TV series now called *Homicide—Life on the Streets*, that is just sensational. It's been on more than five years now, going through two or three complete changes of cast, and it plays at such a high level from week to week that I am constantly amazed. It may be the best I have ever seen on television.

The less I say about my current writing project the better. I hesitated even saying as much as I did, but the points I was making seemed to fly in the face of what I'm writing, so I might as well admit it. I am very close to the end now and I still don't know quite how it's going to work, or even IF it's going to work. I was at this point a year ago and went back for a full rewrite. It's much better now, but in writing and horse races there is no sure thing. It would certainly be a standalone, not much possibility of a sequel.

Your third set of questions goes to the heart of us all. Why do we write? I think the mystery IS literature of its own kind, and maybe all these comparisons are really a waste of time. The goal of any writer should be to do his best book every time he sits down at his typewriter or word processor or whatever he writes on. What drives me is so simple that it will sound grand and I'm afraid a little arrogant. I want to move the world. My favorite fan letter is the one that starts, "Your book changed my life." What more can you ask?



Guest of Honor
John Dunning,
author of
The Bookman's Wake

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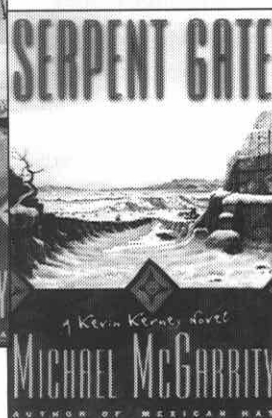
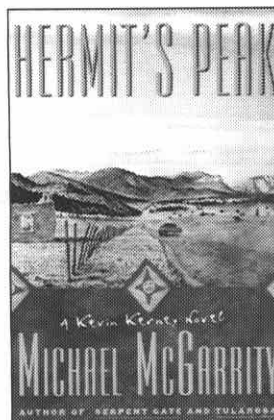
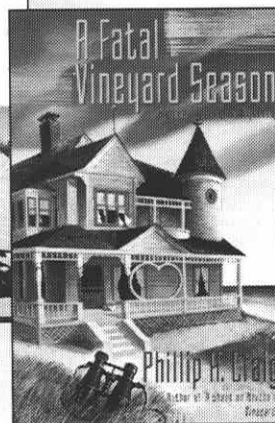
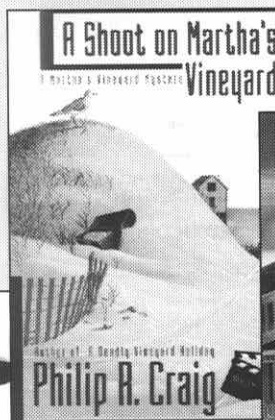
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Sight Seeing in New Mexico

by Frank Zoretich

When I first moved to Albuquerque, in 1987, friends in other places tried to be encouraging. “Well,” they said, “at least you’ll be near Santa Fe.”

Snobs! Since then, I’ve discovered many other intriguing places near Albuquerque — and some places actually in Albuquerque — that I’d like to take those friends to see, if they’d condescend to visit.

For three years, as founding President and Chief Executive Officer of the Cheap Thrills Adventure Club, I wrote about these places I was discovering in a weekly day-trip column for the Albuquerque Journal.

All cost \$10 or less (not counting trip-related food and gas expenses) and all are within a three-hour drive of Albuquerque.

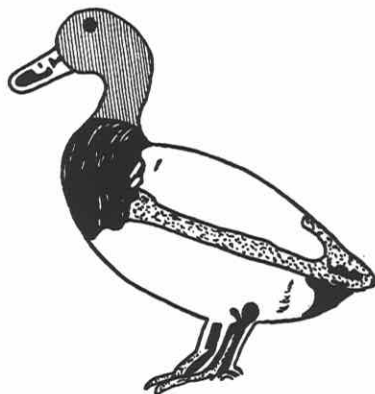
After nearly 150 such expeditions, I might be described Left Coast-ishly as an “expert witness” in local site-seeing expeditions.



If you’re looking to get away from this convention for an hour, or a day, but don’t have a clue on where to go, here are thirteen suggestions.

- The **Rattlesnake Museum**, housed in a former gift shop in Albuquerque’s Old Town,

might be a good place to start if a book you’re reading or writing happens to have venomous aspects. A couple of dozen kinds of rattlesnakes — from throughout the Americas — reside in glass cages within easy striking distance. Just walking through the place earns you the museum’s official “certificate of bravery.” The last time I was there, some extremely cute baby rattlers were comfortably coiled



on a bed of soft sand.

- To eavesdrop on wiretapped mob talk, visit the **Rio Grande Nature Center**. There’s a window-walled room there — I think of it as the Quack Room — where you can sit and watch mobs of different sorts of ducks on a pond and birds at feeders, and listen to all the sounds they make thanks to a live piped-in audio hookup. Lot of squabbling! You’ll also learn a lot about the river and the bosque (that’s Spanish for “forest”) and the animal and plant life they contain.

- To revisit the desperate times of World War II and the long tension of the Cold War, stop in at the **National Atomic Museum**, located out at Kirtland Air Force Base. You’ll have to enter through the gate at the south end of Wyoming Boulevard.

- Check out the Mark 17, “the first droppable thermonuclear bomb,” as well as a nuclear torpedo, a nuclear depth charge, and a tiny (70-pound) nuclear projectile named Davey Crocket.

- For further immersion in the nation’s nuclear history, and New Mexico’s role, visit the former “Secret City” of Los Alamos, where the weapons of Armageddon were developed. Replicas of the casing for the first and only two A-bombs dropped in war “Little Boy” (thirteen kilotons of explosives for Hiroshima) and “Fat Man” (23 kilotons for Nagasaki) are displayed at the Los Alamos National Laboratory’s **Norris E. Bradbury Science Museum**.

- The **New Mexico Mining Museum** in Grants tells the story of uranium mining in New Mexico, and you can take an elevator down to explore a subterranean replica of a working mine.

- The first nuclear explosion was detonated in the desert at Trinity Site, near Socorro, in what is now the **White Sands Missile Range**. Unfortunately, Trinity Site — the place where the world changed — is open only twice a year, on the first Saturday of April and the first Saturday of October. I think it’s worth a trip back to New Mexico at one of those times

New Mexico’s Mining Museum tells about uranium

just to see it.

• Another fascinating high-tech stop: **The Very Large Array** of 27 huge radiotelescopes used to probe the mysteries of the universe. It's also near Socorro.

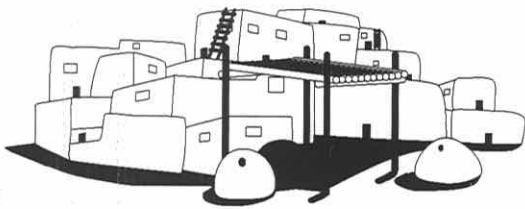
• In Santa Fe, the **Palace of the Governors**, right on the plaza, has a nice display of flintlock rifles and other weaponry that helped "win the West." The **Museum of International Folk Art**, out on the edge of town, has the Girard Room, filled with toys collected from around the world. You can't actually play with any of the dolls, or toy boats, or miniature panorama arrangements, but just seeing them is an aid to creative imagination.



• Why not do a little shopping? **The Old Sheepherder Trading Post Company** alongside State Route 68 near Velarde, is a good place to buy cow skulls, and other skeletal items of decor. You can wander among the heaps of animal bones and pick out exactly what you want.

• In **Lincoln**— the whole town is a National Historic Landmark — you can walk in the footsteps of Billy the Kid, the West's most celebrated bad boy.

• Whenever out-of-state friends do come to town, I almost always take them to **Acoma Pueblo's Sky City**, about an hour west of Albuquerque. I never get tired of visiting this ancient and still-living collection of about 500 apartment-style homes perched on a steep-sided mesa that rises 375 feet above the valley floor.

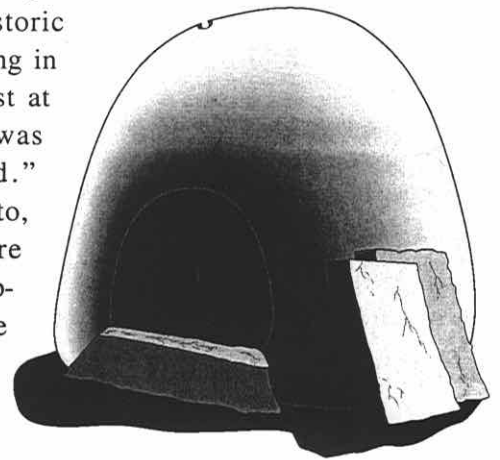


Coronado thought it was one of the Seven Cities of Gold that he so futilely sought. You have to stop at the visitors' center and ride a bus up, but you can walk back down on a

stairway chiseled into the cliffs.

• The cliffs of **El Morro National Monument**, southwest of Grants, have been scrawled on for centuries by passing travelers, who stopped there because of a sweet little spring. Follow the trail to the top of the cliffs, and you'll discover the ruins of a pueblo called Atsinna down in the heart of the rock. (The cliff trail, which loops around a rim of bald rock, may be closed because of ice and snow if the weather's been especially wintery.)

• **Chaco Canyon**, once the center of the Anasazi civilizations, is 152 miles from Albuquerque and requires a full day's round-trip travel — but it's a must-see if you can make the time. Among the "great houses" of Chaco, abandoned in A.D. 1250, is Pueblo Bonito, described by the park's visitors' brochure as "probably the largest single prehistoric Indian building in the Southwest at the time it was constructed." Pueblo Bonito, the brochure continues, "represents the highest development of Anasazi architecture."



That's it for recommendations in this article. I can tell you about lots more. But you may have noticed I'm not including specific directions to anywhere. That's because — unless something untoward happens — I'll be at the Left Coast registration/information desk, ready to help you in person, and also to flog my "Cheap Thrills Adventure Club: New Mexico" day-trip books.

Late this Friday and Saturday evening I'm most likely to be discovered at my favorite nightspot in Albuquerque, O'Niell's Pub, at 3211 Central Ave. N.E., in the relatively urbane Nob Hill District where I'm known jocularly as "the old guy at the end of the bar."



Murder on Route 66

by Carolyn Wheat

Get your kicks on Route 66. When the first national highway opened in 1928, it was a wonderful thing to think you could drive your tin Lizzie all the way from Chicago to Los Angeles, California, on a single continuous stretch of federally maintained road.

'Maintained' might have been a stretch. Nobody said the road was going to be paved all the way. And you had to carry your gasoline, your water, your tire-patching equipment because service stations were few and far between. You stopped for the night at motor courts with tiny cabins that somebody a few years later decided to call 'motels.'

The old road officially closed down in 1978, a new superslab taking its place on the map but not in the hearts of travel-loving Americans. Route 66 remains a road of dreams and dust bowl refugees, of tourists and soldiers, of bootleggers and runaways - and murderers.

If there are eight million stories in the naked city, I figured there had to be at least a baker's dozen on the mother road, as John Steinbeck called it.

So I asked mystery writers who lived in cities bisected by the route, or who wrote books set in places where the road rambled past tumbleweed towns, to come up with short stories that took place somewhere, sometime, along Route 66.

The result was *Murder on Route 66*, which will be available as a printed book in July 1999 from Berkeley Publishing Group and is now on the market in an audiotape version. Like the road itself, the stories begin in Chicago and wend their way to the Santa Monica pier. They include



appearances by such favorite series detectives as Marti MacAlister and Neil Hamel, but they also showcase new and different aspects of writers you thought you knew. Both Earlene Fowler and Lillian Roberts surprised themselves with how dark their road stories turned out to be.

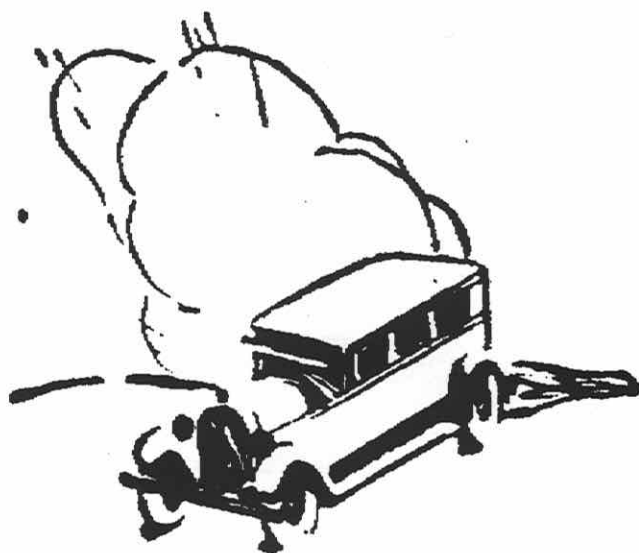
Old friends like Gary Phillips's Ivan Monk turn up along the road, as does Michael Allen Dymmoch's prizewinning team of John Thinnes and Jack Caleb, while Carolyn Hart introduces a new character, Gretchen - a precocious German-American girl living in Oklahoma during World War II. In Los Angeles, the lyrics of Bobby Troup's famous Route 66 song help Serendipity Dahlquist and Leo Bloodworth solve a murder, while J.A. Jance delivers a powerful punch with her poetic short-short story set in Arizona. John Lutz juxtaposes a childhood memory of Route 66 with the American presence in Vietnam; his writing partner David August tells the story of a boy who witnesses a murder in a snowstorm.

The Depression is the focus of D.R. Meredith's poignant account of an incident in Amarillo; the Vietnam war appears again in Charles Knief's hard-edged story; and Barbara D'Amato's chilling tale contrasts the road at three

very different points in time. Les Roberts takes us to present-day St. Louis, while my story, which traces the history of a black beaded dress, spans time as well as geography.

I was driving from Edmond to Tulsa during my time in Oklahoma. Route 66 is well-preserved there, and I'd decided to take the old road instead of Route 40, lowering my speed as I passed through towns the superhighway passed by. Towns with fading painted signs advertising long-ago tourist businesses. Towns with cotton gins turned antique stores and restaurants just barely hanging on and abandoned motels. I said to myself that there must be a million stories this road could tell - and I proceeded to ask my friends to help me tell them.

When I left Oklahoma, I drove from Edmond to San Bernadino, making my way across the sun-scorched plains, stopping at Shamrock,



Texas, and welcoming the sight of Tucumcari Tonight. When my car needed work in Tucumcari, I visited every pawnshop along Second Street and raced the Rock Island Line on my way out of town. I took the unpaved section to Oatman, marveling at how ancient cars managed the steep inclines (I later discovered how they did it: backwards.) I spent the night in Seligman, Arizona, and had lunch in Needles, California, where I worried that the Mojave sun would melt my aging car.

Albuquerque's Central Avenue is where Route 66 meets Main Street in New Mexico. It's a good cross-section of where Route 66 has been and where it is today. Aging motels vie for travelers, while the rebuilt Route 66 Diner lures patrons with its retro style. Bookstores, new and used, line the street and cappucino machines outnumber gas pumps.

So if you actually manage to leave the hotel during your stay at Left Coast, "travel my way, take the highway that's the best." Have yourself a Route 66 beer, buy a Route 66 T-shirt and a bumper sticker, and listen to a story or two from *Murder on Route 66* on your car tape player.

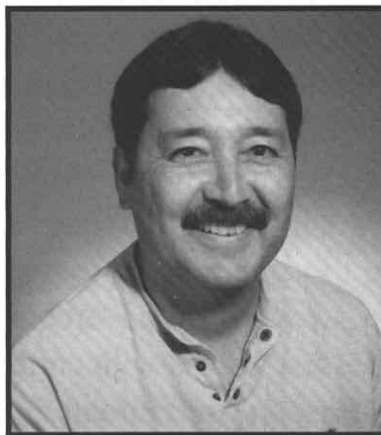


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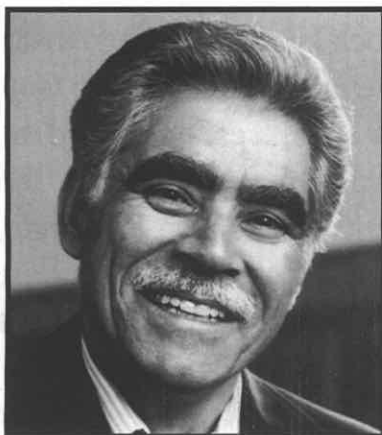
SUSAN AND BILL ALBERT have been writing as a team since 1986. They are the authors of over 60 young adult novels, a popular contemporary mystery series, a series of late-Victorian mysteries, and two nonfiction books. Susan writes the China Bayles herbal mysteries, the latest of which is *Chile Death*.

Bill Albert, with Susan, coauthors a series of Victorian mysteries under the name Robin Paige. Currently the series includes *Death at Bishop's Keep*, *Death at Gallows Green*, *Death at Daisy's Folly*, *Death at Devil's Bridge*, and *Death at Whitechapel*. Bill's interests include photography, historical research, and antique tool collecting and restoration. A graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, he was a computer systems analyst before turning to writing. The Alberts live near Bertram, TX.



CLYDE JAMES ARAGON is the author of *The PC Affair*, a comic mystery of murder, mayhem and data processing, as well as *Tales of Delight and Shame*. Aragon's prose humor has appeared in such diverse publications as *Omni*, *Writer's Digest*, *Chile Pepper Magazine*, *Business Journal of Central New York* and *Air Destinations*.

TERRY BAKER is the proprietor of the Mystery Annex of Small World Books in Venice, California.



RUDOLFO ANAYA is a professor emeritus of English at the University of New Mexico. He was one of the first winners of the Premio Quinto Sol national Chicano Literary award. Winner of the PEN Center West Award for Fiction for his novel *Albuquerque* he is best loved for his classic best-seller *Bless Me, Ultima*. He has also written *Tortuga*, *Heat of Aztlán* and *Zia Summer* as well as numerous short stories, essays, and children's books.

as well as numerous short stories, essays, and children's books.



SHERRIL BOARD is the author of *Boat Cosmetics Made Simple* and *Ambrosia and the Coral Sun*. She has written for *Sea, Hot Boat*, and *Heartland Boating* magazines. Board is a member of the National Writers Association, Sisters in Crime, and Mystery Writers of America.

Angels of Anguish is Sherril's first mystery. Board spent three years researching this police procedural: obtaining technical advice.

Sherril writes full-time from her home in Irvine, California where she is working on the next book in her mystery series, *Beaches of Blind Belief*.



DONNA ANDERS is the author of eight adult novels including her recent *The Flower Man*, a psychological suspense thriller, which was a lead title from Pocket Books and optioned by Hearst Entertainment for a television movie.

Another Life, her next psychological thriller, will be released in December as a lead title from Pocket Books and is also a Literary Guild selection. Donna has sold nearly

400 manuscripts to national publications, including short stories, serials, novelettes, articles and poems.



RHYS BOWEN was born in England. She spent time as a child in Wales where her mother came from. After completing her degree she worked with BBC in London. Her first published work was *Dandelion Hours* which was followed by several other radio and TV plays.

While working in Australian broadcasting, she met her husband, a fellow Englishman, on his way to San Francisco, where they settled in 1966 and have lived ever since. She writes mysteries set in Wales with such engaging characters as battling ministers, the postman who reads the mail, and the overwhelming landlady.

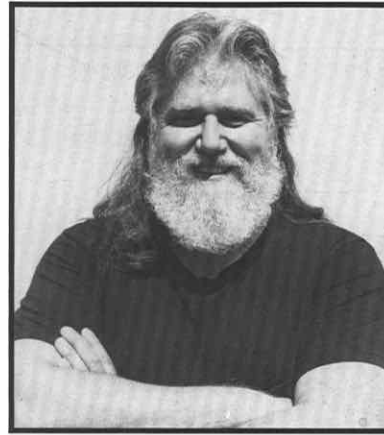
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STEVE BREWER is the creator of the Bubba Mabry private eye series. The fifth book in the series, *Dirty Pool*, is being published to coincide with Left Coast Crime 9 by St. Martin's Press. Intrigue Press also has just brought out an earlier Bubba book, *Witchy Woman*, in paperback.

Steve grew up in Arkansas, but has called New Mexico home for about 15

years. He spent 22 years in the newspaper business before turning to fiction full-time, and he still writes a weekly humor column for the *Albuquerque Tribune*.



ERNIE BULOW is a recovering academic who has written hundreds of articles for magazines and newspapers, mostly about art and popular culture. His first "Interview" book for the University of New Mexico, *Talking Mysteries*, was nominated for both the Edgar and Anthony awards and won the Macavity. The next book in the series is about the late Dorothy

Hughes. He and Navajo artist Ernest Franklin just finished a children's book together. A longtime resident of Gallup, NM, Ernie publishes and sells books as well as writing them.



ELLEN BRODSKY is a forensic document examiner and freelance writer who has combined professions in her first mystery novel, *Family Skeletons*. Set in the artist colony of Taos, New Mexico, the book features Cassandra Huggins, estranged daughter of the famous painter, Leon Huggins, who has been found murdered in the Rio Grande gorge. Cassandra and her sister stand to inherit Leon's artworks, a multimillion dollar

collection, but only if they can prove his will is genuine. Dead-set on stopping them is their disinherited stepmother, the frighteningly new-agey Anita. With the help of a handsome lawyer and some colorful local characters, Cassandra unravels the truth behind the will, her father's murder and her own difficult relationship with him



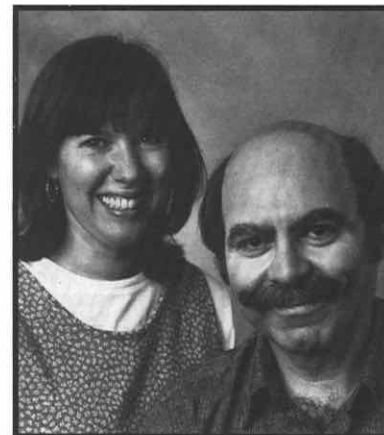
HARLEN CAMPBELL was born in a naval hospital in South Carolina and then lived with his family in twenty-one places before the age of seventeen when he left for college at New Mexico State University in Las Cruces. His college education was interrupted by a three year stint in the U.S. Army, stationed first in West Germany and then as a journalist in Vietnam. He now

lives in Albuquerque with his wife, Donna. He is the author of *Monkey on a Chain*.



SINCLAIR BROWNING spent her childhood on her belly in dry arroyos hunting sand rubies, converting her propane tank into a stage-coach and exploring the Sonoran desert on her horse. Summers were spent on the family ranch in southern Arizona. Today, she lives outside Tucson and still breaks her own horses and rounds up cattle. Author of two historical novels (*Enju*, *America's Best*) and coauthor

of *Lyons on Horses*, Browning makes her mystery debut this month with *The Last Song Dogs*. Set in southern Arizona, the series features Trade Ellis - part Apache, part rancher and all private eye against the backdrop of the modern Southwest.



CATHIE AND JOHN CELESTRI draw upon their strange experiences and memories of eccentric characters encountered over the years to enliven their Journals of Kate Cavanaugh mystery series.

After gallivanting around the world, Cathie worked in advertising and marketing research in Toronto. She met John on a flight from New York to Toronto, married him and moved to Los Angeles and later to Providence, RI. John, a native of Brooklyn, has acted (as a cartoonist) in over fifty feature-length films, half-hour TV specials and direct-to-home videos.

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SALLY CHAPMAN's mystery series featuring computer fraud investigator Julie Blake has been published in six languages. Sally, like her character, is a veteran of Silicon Valley. Her most recent Julie Blake title, *Hardwired*, came out in paperback in October, 1998.

Chapman writes a second series under the pseudonym Annie Griffin. This features Hannah and Kiki, two widows

in their sixties. The first book, *A Very Eligible Corpse*, published by Berkeley Press, was released in September, 1998. The second, *Date With The Perfect Dead Man*, is scheduled September, 1999. Chapman currently lives in Northern California with her husband, Jim.



MARGARET COEL'S mystery novels take you into the hidden world of the Arapahos in the vast expanses of Wyoming's Wind River Reservation. They explore the conflict between an ancient way of life and the get-rich temptations offered by today's casinos, drug trafficking, oil and gas deals, nuclear waste facilities. At the heart of the stories are two compelling sleuths -- Father John O'Malley and Arapaho lawyer Vicky Holden.

With more than 300,000 copies in print, the series has attracted attention from critics across the nation. The Dallas Morning News called Coel "a vivid voice for the West, its struggles to retain its past and at the same time enjoy the fruits of the future."



MARGARET (MEG) CHITTENDEN lives in Washington State and is originally from England. Meg has been writing since 1970 and has published short stories and articles, children's books, and novels that include suspense, mystery, romance and mainstream. Some books deal with reincarnation, magic, or ghosts. Her novels have been widely reprinted abroad and appeared on Waldenbooks and B. Dalton's Best-seller lists.

A member of the Pacific Northwest Writers Conference Literary Council, she is a recipient of their Achievement Award. This year she is a nominee for the Romance Writers of America's Lifetime Achievement Award.



LUCIA CORPI was born in Jáltipan, Veracruz, Mexico. At age nineteen she came to Berkeley as a student wife. Her poetry, written in Spanish, has been translated into English, Italian, German and French and has been published in two bilingual collections. She is the author of three novels, *Delia's Song*, *Eulogy for a Brown Angel* and *Cactus Blood*. Her fourth novel, *Black Widow's Wardrobe*, will be out in

1999. Since 1973, she has been an adult education teacher in the Oakland Public schools.



JOYCE CHRISTMAS is the author of 13 mysteries published by Fawcett Gold Medal, nine featuring expatriate Brit in Manhattan, Lady Margaret Priam, who solves crimes in a society setting. The most recent title is *Going Out in Style*. Her second series stars retired office manager and senior sleuth, Betty Trenka. The fourth in the series, *Mood to Murder*, will be published in June 1999.



ELIZABETH M. COSIN was born in Ossining, New York in the shadow of Sing Sing Prison. She now lives in Los Angeles with her cat and can frequently be found belly-up to the bar at the real Father's Office in Santa Monica enjoying a microbrew. She is a former investigative reporter, sports-writer and now writes for television. *Zen and the Art of Murder* is her first novel.

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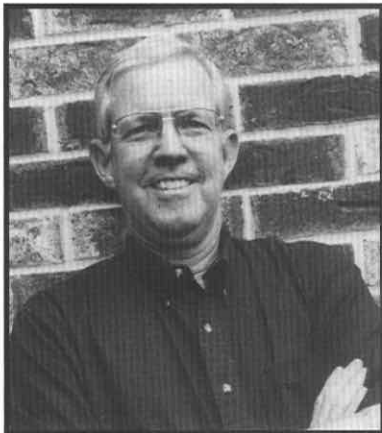


PHILIP CRAIG was born in Santa Monica, CA, and raised on a small cattle ranch in southwest Colorado. The family had no electricity or running water until he was nine or ten and was poor, but the house was full of books and he remembers the times as happy.

In 1962 Craig received an MFA in prose fiction from the University of Iowa Writer's Workshop and published his first novel in 1969 and his second in 1989. Since then, Scribner has published nine

of his Martha's Vineyard mysteries.

Craig lives in Hamilton, MA, during the winter and teaches literature at Wheelock College in Boston. He and his wife, Shirley, summer in Edgarton, on Martha's Vineyard. They have two children and two grandchildren.



BILL CRIDER lives and works in Alvin, Texas, (aka "America's Glitz Capital"). By day a mild-mannered English teacher, at night he concocts maniacal fictions about a Texas sheriff named Dan Rhodes (*Death by Accident*), a retired weatherman (*Murder under Blue Skies* and *Murder in the Mist*) and even other college English teachers (the forthcoming *Murder is an Art*).

His wife, Judy, when not engaged in her strenuous exercise program, patiently

reads Bill's manuscripts and corrects his often flagrant grammatical errors. Their collaborative story "At the Hop" appears in the anthology *Til Death Do Us Part* edited by Jill Morgan.



JANET DAWSON is the author of the series of novels featuring Oakland private investigator Jeri Howard. Her first novel, *Kindred Crimes*, won the St. Martin's Press/Private Eye Writers of America contest.

Dawson's second novel, *Till the Old Men Die*, was followed by *Take a Number*, *Don't Turn Your Back on the Ocean*, *Nobody's Child*, *A Credible Threat*, *Witness to Evil*, and *The Bodies Are*

Buried.

Dawson lives in Alameda, California. She is a member of Mystery Writers of America, Sisters in Crime, Private Eye Writers of America, the Authors Guild, and Mystery Readers International.



JO DERESKE is originally from rural western Michigan and now lives with her husband in northwestern Washington state. She is the author of the Miss Zukas series from Avon which includes *Miss Zukas and the Library Murders*, *Out of Circulation*, *Final Notice* and *Overdue Death* which is due in September. She also writes the Ruby Crane series — *Savage Cut*, *Cut and Dry* and *Short Cut*.



DEBORAH CROMBIE received international accolades for her first mystery, *A Share in Death*. Long an Anglophile, she grew up in a town north of Dallas. After graduation from college she worked at a small newspaper and for an advertising agency before taking Rice University's Publishing Program. She later lived in Edinburgh and Chester, England, and

still travels to Britain each year to research her books. She now lives in north Texas.

JAMES D. DOSS lives in Los Alamos, NM and does most of his writing in a small log cabin in the Sangre de Cristo mountains. His mysteries - set on Colorado's Southern Ute Reservation - feature tribal policeman Charlie Moon, his close friend Scott Parris, Moon's elderly aunt Daisy Perika, and her 'power-spirit' - the mythic dwarf known by the Utes as 'pitukupf'. Titles in the series include *The Shaman Sings* (1994), *The Shaman Laughs* (1995), *The Shaman's Bones* (1997), *The Shaman's Game* (1998), and *The Night Visitor* (Sept. 1999). Doss is currently working on the sixth title: *Grandmother Spider* (Sept. 2000?).

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JOHN DUNNING has turned more corners in his life than most of us have seen — glass cutter, racetracker, horse trainer, investigative reporter, radio historian, writer and publicist, journalism teacher, book dealer. Fortunately (for us), one of those corners led him to the mystery novel. *Booked to Die* earned him the Nero Wolfe Award and its sequel, *The Bookman's Wake*, was a

finalist for both the Edgar and England's Gold Dagger awards.



D. CHARLES EVANO is a novelist, poet and environmentalist who is a native of Chicago where he attended Truman City College. He studied astronomy and cosmology at the Adler Planetarium and is a member of the Planetary Society. The author of *Spirit Messenger*, a millennium mystery based upon a Native American theme, he now resides in Albuquerque where he is working on his next novel, *Left Hand of the Dumb Ox*.



MICHAEL ALLEN DYMMOCH has earned degrees in chemistry and law enforcement and now lives and works in Chicago's northern suburbs.

The Man Who Understood Cats, the first novel featuring Chicago police detective John Thinnes and psychiatrist Jack Caleb, won the St. Martin's Press Malice Domestic Award for Best First Traditional Mystery and received enthusiastic reviews. *Incendiary Designs*, Dymmoach's third book, has been favorably reviewed by *Booklist*, *Publisher's Weekly*, *Kirkus Reviews*, and *The Chicago Magazine*.

and received enthusiastic reviews. *Incendiary Designs*, Dymmoach's third book, has been favorably reviewed by *Booklist*, *Publisher's Weekly*, *Kirkus Reviews*, and *The Chicago Magazine*.



LORI FAIRWEATHER, a.k.a. Lori Schryer, is a former newspaper reporter and attorney with degrees in journalism and law from the University of Utah and Yale Law School. Her first mystery, *Blood & Water*, is set on the bleak, foggy North Coast of California. It chronicles a young woman's desperate, deadly crusade to prove herself innocent of her twin sister's murder--and

to avoid falling prey to a similar fate.

Lori lives in San Francisco with her husband and their twin daughters (who were born after *Blood & Water* was written and whose lives hopefully will be nothing like those of the fictional twins in Mom's novel).



AARON ELKINS has been writing mysteries since 1982, winning an Edgar in 1988, an Agatha (with his wife Charlotte) in 1992 and a Nero Wolfe Award in 1993. His two continuing series feature anthropologist-detective Gideon Oliver and art curator-sleuth Chris Norgon. In addition, he and Charlotte coauthor a mystery series about struggling female golfer Lee Ofstead. His latest book is *Loot*, a non-series thriller on the wholesale Nazi looting of art masterpieces. The Elkins live on California's Monterey Peninsula.

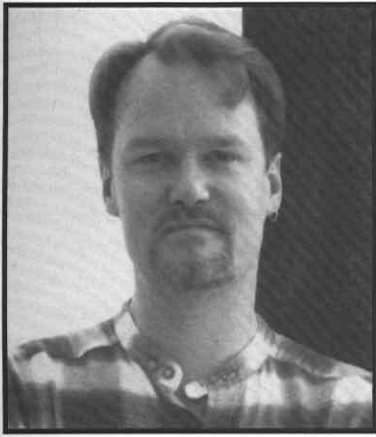
thriller on the wholesale Nazi looting of art masterpieces. The Elkins live on California's Monterey Peninsula.



JERRILYN FARMER has been writing in Hollywood for too long, working as staff writer for Jeopardy. Jerrilyn recently wrote a wild sketch comedy special starring Dana Carvey. And in 1998, she wrote a Las Vegas show for Jon Lovitz, and Saturday Night Live's Cheri Oteri and Tim Meadows.

Jerrilyn launched her new amateur sleuth series, and instantly found inner peace. Her comic mystery, *Sympathy for the Devil*, debuted in 1998 from Avon. These days, Jerrilyn Farmer lives with her husband, Chris, and two little boys in Los Angeles, and is looking forward to the end of third grade and the April, 1999 publication of her second mystery *Immaculate Reception*.

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BILL FITZHUGH began writing professionally in high school in Jackson, Mississippi. During the 1980s he wrote radio programs and television scripts. By August, 1991, he and Matt Hansen had finished writing a screenplay called *Pest Control*. For three years, they tried to sell it to Hollywood. When that failed, Fitzhugh turned it into a novel. Literary agent Jimmy Vines sold

the film rights for one million dollars and then the publishing rights. Fitzhugh is currently fulfilling a four-book deal with Avon.

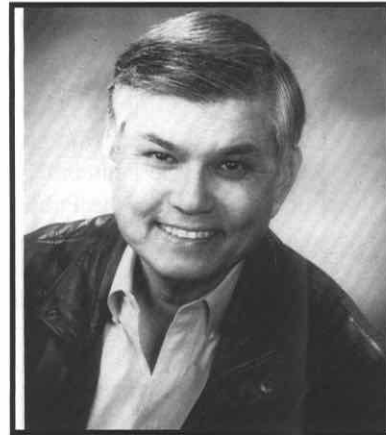


PAT FRIEDER is a lawyer and former teacher. Like her protagonist, Matty Donahue, in the Matty Donahue mystery series, Pat grew up and practiced both civil and criminal law in Santa Fe. For two years, she served as Assistant Attorney General for the State of New Mexico specializing in criminal appeal.

Pat's first mystery novel, *Signature Murder*, winner of the Southwest Writers Workshop first prize for mystery novels, was published by Bantam Books in May of 1998. *Privileged Communication* is scheduled for release by Bantam in 1999.



G. M. FORD lives and writes in beautiful downtown Seattle, Washington, where he makes frequent forays into the sordid underbelly of the city in search of the type of gritty realism his legions of devoted readers have come to expect.



DALE FURUTANI is the first Asian American to win a mystery award. His first novel, *Death in Little Tokyo* (St. Martin's Press), won an Anthony Award and a Macavity, and was nominated for an Agatha. His second Ken Tanaka book is *The Toyotomi Blades*. *Death at the Crossroads* is the first book in his new series. It's the first book of a mystery trilogy set in 1603 Japan featuring a masterless samurai (ronin) as the detective. Dale was

born in Hilo, Hawaii. He has a degree in Creative Writing and an MBA. He has written three nonfiction books and over 250 articles. His web site is <http://members.aol.com/Dfurutani>.



EARLENE FOWLER was raised in La Puente, California, by a Southern mother and a Western Father. Her first novel, *Fool's Puzzle*, and two sequels sold in 1992 to Putnam-Berkeley Publishing Group. *Irish Chain*, *Kansas Troubles*, *Goose in the Pond*, and *Dove in the Window* followed. Her quilt-titled series is set on the Central Coast of California in a town remarkably similar to San Luis Obispo and features Benni Harper, ex-rancher and cur-

rent folk art museum curator. Fowler is an avid lover of quilts, folk art, dogs, chicken-fried steak, cowboy boots and country/western music. She lives in Southern California with her husband, Allen.



What is **LESLIE GLASS** doing behind a Detective's desk in a gritty New York City Police precinct? Research!

All the bestselling "Time" novels are set in New York City, and the unique protagonist is NYPD Detective Sergeant April Woo, the first Asian American law enforcement officer in American crime fiction. In addition to her passion for criminal justice, Glass is also fascinated by psychology. This interest has translated into another main character in her "Time" series: psychiatrist Dr. Jason Frank. Before embarking on a life in crime, Glass wrote in many formats including magazines and p^lay writing.

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PATRICIA GUIVER was born in England, but now lives in southern California, the setting of her "Delilah Doolittle and the . . ." pet detective series, of which . . . *Careless Coyote* is the most recent release. She is currently working on . . . *Missing Macaw*. When not creating new capers for Delilah and her ex-pat Brit chums, Patricia writes short stories and magazine fea-

tures, and volunteers for the local SPCA.



ELIZABETH GUNN grew up in southeast Minnesota, the setting of the Jake Himes mysteries. After graduating from the University of Minnesota, she yielded to an impulse to drift: she and her husband have lived all over the U.S., as well as in Spain and Mexico, and traveled extensively on both coasts by sailboat and trawler.

A pilot (she's flown in Montana and Alaska), certified SCUBA diver (she's dived in Florida and the Bahamas), and a freelance travel writer, she currently lives in Tucson, Arizona.



PJ GRADY, AKA PJ Liebson, is a Santa Fe, New Mexico, paralegal who has worked for the Penitentiary of New Mexico, the Public Defender's department, and State District Court. *Maximum Insecurity* is her first book



LAURA HANEY, (aka Betty Winkelman), author of *The Right Hand of Amon* and *A Face turned Backward*, worked for some years as a technical editor in California's aerospace and construction industries. She now lives in New Mexico.

Her ancient Egyptian mystery series featuring Lieutenant Bak combines her enjoyment of the mystery genre with her passion for ancient Egypt.

ESMOND HARMSWORTH is an agent with the Zachery Shuster Agency, 45 Newberry Street, Boston MA 02116.



JAN GRAPE's Anthony Award winner for Best Short Story, "A Front Row Seat" in *Vengeance is Hers*, edited by Max Allan Collins and Mickey Spillane was also nominated for the Shamus. She has nineteen short stories in anthologies including *Lethal Ladies II* to the recently released *Midnight Louie's Pet Detectives* and *Cat Crimes Through Time*.

Jan Grape and Dean James are coeditors of the Macav-

ity winning and Edgar nominated *Deadly Women: the Female Mystery Writer*. A regular columnist for *Mystery Scene Magazine*, she is active in several mystery-related organizations. She and her husband, Elmer, own Mysteries and More bookstore in Austin, Texas.



CHARLAINE HARRIS writes two series. The five Aurora Teagarden books feature a thirtyish librarian whose adventures combine humor and mayhem. The sixth Teagarden, *A Fool and His Honey*, will appear in 1999. Harris' second series debuted with *Shakespeare's Landlord*, introducing the enigmatic house cleaner with a vengeance, Lily Bard. *Shakespeare's Christmas*, the third in the series is available now. Harris chauffeurs her

children, maintains an ever-changing menagerie, takes Karate and lifts weights, and has a challenging schedule.

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GINI HARTZMARK attended the University of Chicago law and business schools. She tried her hand at several "respectable" careers, including as a business and economics writer and penning articles for national magazines, before she succumbed to her childhood dream of writing mysteries. She is the author of five mysteries featuring Chicago attorney Kate Millholland.

The first, *Principal Defense*, was nominated for an Edgar Award, and *Bitter Business*, the third installment, was featured in *People Magazine*. Her books have been translated into more than a dozen languages. Gini lives in Phoenix, Arizona, against her will.



APRIL HENRY grew up in Medford, Oregon. A graduate of Oregon State University, she also studied at the University of Stuttgart. She put herself through school using a patchwork of scholarships and odd jobs, including cook, maid, German translator, life drawing model, data entry person, and a brief stint as the girl who jumps out of a cake.

For the past 12 years she has worked as a health care communicator, most recently for Kaiser Permanente, the nation's oldest and largest HMO. She lives in Portland, Oregon, with her husband and daughter. *Circles of Confusion* is her first novel.



PETE HAUTMAN divides his time between Tucson, Arizona, and the minuscule but ever-so-charming town of Stockholm, Wisconsin. He lives with mystery writer and poet Mary Logue.

His novels, *Drawing Dead* and *The Mortal Nuts* were selected as New York Times Book Review Notable Books (1993 and 1996). *Mr. Was*, a novel for young adults, was listed as an ALA Best Book (1996), named Young Adult

Book of the Year by the Michigan Library Association, and nominated for an Edgar Award by the Mystery Writers of America. His most recent novel, *Mrs. Million*, is about a lottery winner who uses her winnings to put out a reward on her runaway husband.



TONY HILLERMAN is past president of the Mystery Writers of America and has received their Edgar and Grand Master Awards. Among his other honors are the Center for the American Indians Ambassador Award, the Silver Spur Award for best novel set in the West, and the Navajo Tribe's Special Friend Award. His many bestselling novels include *The Fallen Man*, *Finding*

Moon, *Sacred Clowns*, and the recent *The First Eagle*. He and his wife, Marie, live in Albuquerque.



L. C. HAYDEN is a high school English teacher who lives with her husband and two sons in El Paso, Texas. She holds a Master's degree in Creative Writing from the University of Texas, El Paso. Besides writing, she enjoys drawing, reading, travel, and scuba diving. Her next novel, *When Colette Died*, is expected to be released next year.



JON A. JACKSON writes about Detroit, but lives in Montana. He is the author of the Fang Mulheisen series, published by Grove/Atlantic — the most recent (1998), *Man With An Axe*. He has most recently published an historical novel with a mystery element set in Butte, Montana, in 1917, *Go by Go*, published by Dennis McMillan.

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JONNIE JACOBS is the author of two mystery series - the first featuring amateur sleuth Kate Austen, and the second, attorney Kali O'Brien. Set in a well-to-do suburb of San Francisco, the Kate Austen novels are noted for their wry take on murder, malice and motherhood.

Jacobs' second series began with *Shadow of Doubt* in 1996. *Evidence of Guilt*, and *Motion to Dismiss* in 1999.

Jonnie Jacobs was born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area. She has a

bachelor's degree from the University of California at Berkeley and a law degree from UC's Boalt Hall School of Law. A former practicing attorney, she lives near San Francisco with her husband and two sons, and now writes full time.



J.A. JANCE first introduced the character of J.P. Beaumont in her novel, *Until Proven Guilty*, which Avon Books published in 1985. Since then, Seattle-based Detective Beaumont and Seattle-based novelist J.A. Jance have been touching the lives of city's causes. In January, 1999, the fourteenth J.P. Beaumont mystery, *Breach of Duty*, was published.

Jance's newest character, Sheriff Joanna Brady, is an insurance saleswoman turned

sheriff faced with the complexities of that job and the responsibility of single parenthood. The next Joanna Brady novel, *Outlaw Mountain*, goes on sale in July, 1999.



CHRISTINE T.

JORGENSEN writes a series featuring Stella the Stargazer who writes an astrological column for the love-lorn in the *Denver Daily Orion*. *Death of a Dustbunny* is the fourth in the series, and *Dead on Her Feet* is forthcoming in 1999.

Originally from Monmouth, Illinois, Christine T. Jorgensen grew up in a funeral home next door to the local doctor's office, viewed

by some as Cradle-to-Grave Row. She maintains that childhood in a funeral home gives a person a very special outlook on life, death and the variety of human experience, as well as the occasional absurdity of it all.

DELORES JOHNSON is the author of *A Dress to Die For*. She lives in Aurora, Colorado.



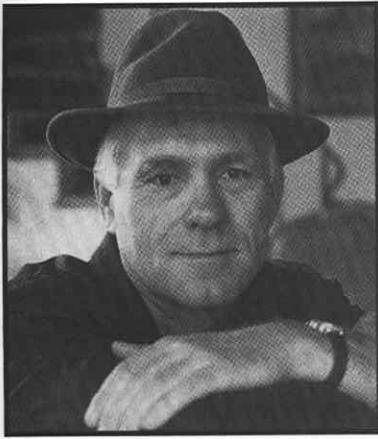
CAROL MCGINNIS KAY is currently Professor of English at the University of South Carolina. She has focused her teaching and research on American detective fiction. Kay regularly presents papers on American detective fiction, and has articles on Judith Van Gieson, Sue Grafton, and Nevada Barr in scholarly journals and books. Her most significant recent project was a book on the novels of Sue

Grafton, *"G" is for Grafton: The World of Kinsey Millhone*, which won an Edgar. In its second printing at Henry Holt, "G" has been sold to Books on Tape for unabridged audio production later this year. She and her co-author, Natalie Hevener Kaufman, Professor of Political Science at the University of South Carolina, are currently working on a second book on the connection between the world of the fine arts and detection.

JERRY KENNEALY: born in San Francisco, married, two sons, 20 years as a licensed P.I., past vice president of Private Eye Writers of America.

SUSANNE KIRK is an editor at Scribner's who has edited Deborah Combie and John Dunining among others.

Left Coast Crime 9 Guests



KEN KUHLEN'S first novel, *Midheaven*, was honored as finalist for PEN's Ernest Hemingway Award for best first published fiction book of the year. His second novel, *The Loud Adios*, the first of a mystery series set in the 1940's, won the St. Martin's/Private Eye Writers of America best first novel award. *The Venus Deal* and *The Angel Gang* continued that series. His shorter fiction has appeared in *Esquire* and a dozen literary magazines, and gathered awards including a National Endowment of the Arts Literature Fellowship.

quire and a dozen literary magazines, and gathered awards including a National Endowment of the Arts Literature Fellowship.

MARVIN LACHMAN has been a mystery reader for more than 50 years and has been writing articles and reviews for mystery journals since *The Armchair Detective* was founded in 1967. He is co-author and co-editor of *Detectionary* (1971) and *Encyclopedia of Mystery and Detection* (1976). The latter won him an MWA Edgar. He is also author of *A Reader's Guide to American Novels of Detection* (1993), which was nominated for the Edgar, Anthony and Agatha awards. He was Fan Guest of Honor at the 1984 Bouchercon. In 1997 MWA presented him with its Raven award for his mystery-related activity.



CYNTHIA LAWRENCE made her debut as a mystery writer with the 1993 publication of *Take-Out City*. A sequel, *Chill Before Serving*, is in the works. Her short stories have appeared in *Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine* and in the current issue of *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*. She is the author of six children's books, published in the 1960's.

A member of Sisters in Crime and Mystery Writers of America, Lawrence is a UCLA graduate. She has taught advertising at UCLA Extension and lectured on creative writing at Learn Tree U. She is one of the editors of the 1999 mystery anthology from the Los Angeles Chapter of Sisters in Crime.



MARTHA C. LAWRENCE is the author of the award-nominated astrological mystery series featuring Dr. Elizabeth Chase, a Stanford-trained parapsychologist turned private eye who uses her psychic ability in her investigations. The first novel in the series, *Murder in Scorpio*, was short-listed for the 1996 Edgar, Agatha and Anthony awards for Best First Mystery. The third Elizabeth Chase mystery, *Aquarius Descending*, was published in January, 1999.

Inspired by her own real-life psychic experiences, Martha's novels have been published worldwide. Martha lives in Escondido, California.

WENDILEE writes about East Boston private eye Angela Matelli. Her third in the series, *Deadbeat* (St. Martin's), will be released in March 1999. *Missing Eden* was released in paperback by World-wide in February 1999.

Lee has written a number of mystery, horror and western short stories for anthologies and *Murderous Intent*. She also has an American historical, *The Overland Trail* (Tor), out in paperback. Lee is currently at work on the fourth in the Angela Matelli series.

She lives in Iowa with her cartoonist husband, Terry Beatty, her 12-year-old daughter Beth, and three bossy cats.



ROBERT S. LEVINSON will embark on a fifth career with publication of *The Elvis and Marilyn Affair*, scheduled by Forge for summer 1999. He has been a newspaperman, a public relations executive, and a writer-producer of more than three dozen specials for television.

Levinson created the Writers Guild's School Literacy Program. His freelance writing includes the *Los Angeles Times Magazine*, *Rolling Stone*, *Westways*, *Los Angeles Free Press*, *Written By Magazine*, and *Los Angeles Magazine*. Levinson, presently writing a follow-up novel to *The Elvis and Marilyn Affair*, resides with his wife, Sandra, in Los Angeles.

Left Coast Crime 9 Guests



JACKIE LEWIN's first mystery, *Murder Flies Left Seat*, introduced the Beckman family. Her second book in the series has been released by Avalon Books.

Other writing credits include a coauthored book, *Denver: An Insider's View*, and many magazine articles. She has also produced radio and television talk shows, founded Denver Media Services and been active in professional and community organizations.

She lives in Denver with her physician husband who loves to fly small planes.

MARGARET AND PETER LEWIS both write fiction from their Northumberland, England, home. Many of their crime-related publications are scholarly, critical or biographies. They have taught crime courses at universities. The Lewises also run a small publishing company, mainly poetry, but some crime fiction. They have attended many conferences in the United States include Malice Domestic, Bouchercons, MWA weeks in New York and Poisoned Pen conferences. Their Northumberland home is on an old Roman road very near Hadrian's wall with the ghosts of Roman centurions for company.



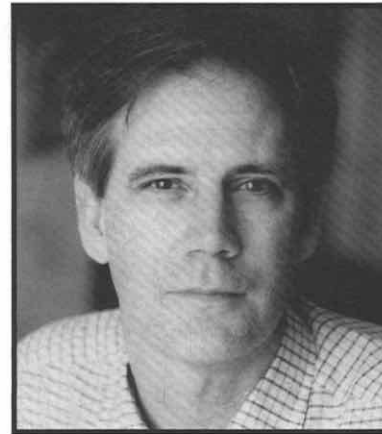
MARY LOGUE was born and raised in Minnesota. She has published two mysteries — *Red Lake of the Heart* and *Still Explosion* — several children's books and two books of poetry, *Discriminating Evidence* and *Settling*. Currently, she's working as an editor of the Creative Company, a children's publishing company. She lives half the year in Stockholm, Wisconsin,

and the other half in Tucson, Arizona, with writer Pete Hautman. She has two books forthcoming: *Dancing with an Alien*, a young adult book from Harper Collins, and *Blood Country*, a mystery from Walker.



SARAH LOVETT is the author of *Dangerous Attachments*, *Acquired Motives* and *A Desperate Silence* (available in paperback from Ivy Books), as well as 23 nonfiction travel and science books written primarily for children. Lovett had worked as: a legal researcher for the New Mexico Attorney General, executive director of a nonprofit theatre, an actress, a playwright, a jazz dancer, a gas station attendant, an upholstery assistant, and a bartender. Her

experience working in the New Mexico State Penitentiary led her to create Dr. Sylvia Strange. Lovett lives in Santa Fe where she just completed her fourth novel to be published by Simon and Schuster.



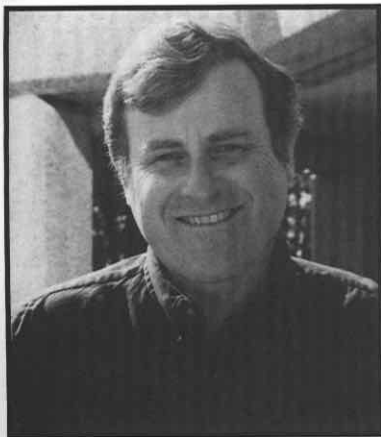
GREGG MAIN was born and raised in Southern California in the 1960's, when there were orange groves in Burbank and suburbs filled with swimming pools. He surfed. He worked at Disneyland. He attended college at the University of California, Irvine, and California State University, Chico, where he started writing short fiction.

After he received his MFA, he returned to Los Angeles to pursue a career in screenwriting. Married with young children, he took a nine-to-five job. That job disappeared when the company owner pleaded guilty to bank fraud and conspiracy. Main spent three years writing *Every Trace*. He is now working on his second novel, *Dry Wind*, set in the seamy underside of the music industry in Southern California.

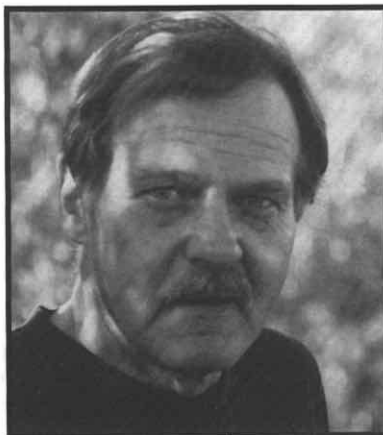


VALERIE S. MALMONT is the author of the *Tori Miracle Series* in which *Tori* is a feline-loving amateur sleuth. Set in Amish country, the first novel, *Death Pays the Rose Rent*, was published in hardback in 1995 and became available in paperback in 1998. *Death, Lies and Apple Pies* adds food to the list of enticing ingredients in her cozy mysteries. A recipe is included in the book.

Left Coast Crime 9 Guests



WILLIAM L. MANCHEE began writing in his spare time in 1995. In Spring, 1997, his first novel, *Twice Tempted*, was published and quickly followed by *Undaunted* which came out in the summer of the same year. *Brash Endeavor* was released in 1998. He is a practicing attorney in the Dallas area where he and his wife live. He grew up in Ventura, California, and served in the U.S. Marine Corp.



MICHAEL MCGARRITY worked as a psychotherapist before entering law enforcement. In criminal justice he worked as a mental health specialist and investigator in corrections, health, police officer training, public defender services, and the Santa Fe County Sheriff's Office.

As a deputy sheriff, McGarrity established an award-winning sex crimes unit. He was named the NM 1980 Social Worker of the Year, Santa Fe 1987 Police Officer of the Year, and his first novel, *Tularosa*, was a finalist for two national awards. *Mexican Hat* and *Serpent Gate* followed. *Hermit's Peak* is due out in June.

MARIE TERESA MARQUEZ is a professor at the University of New Mexico Zimmerman Library where she is in the Government Information Department and is also a bibliographer for Chicana/Chicano and Southwest Studies. She specializes in historical government documents such as Indian Land Claims and Indian Water Rights. Another specialization is the Chicana/Chicano mystery novel. Teresa has reviewed works by Manuel Ramos and Max Martinez, Chicano mystery writers. Additionally, she has presented research papers on the novels by Ramos and Chicano mystery genre.



LORETTA SCOTT MILLER is a California native who grew up in the South San Francisco Bay Area, now known as Silicon Valley. *A Ride On The Trojan Horse* is the first of two novels featuring 'old-school' Private Investigator TJ Billings and his daughter Elizabeth, a computer security expert in Santa Cruz.

Loretta retired from a major aerospace firm where she worked on mainframe computers in the 1970s and ended her career designing and building websites. She and husband Todd Miller live in Los Gatos, California. They divide their time between home and their 38-foot sea-going trawler (featured in her second novel, *Cypher*, available in late spring 1999).



ALEX MATTHEW'S recent *Vendetta's Victim* is the third in her series featuring Cassidy McCabe, a psychotherapist-sleuth who sees clients and solves mysteries out of her Oak Park, Illinois, home. Matthews created a character many women identify with: one who struggles to develop healthy relationships, succeed in her career, retain independence, and get her mother's voice out of her head.

Matthews, a psychotherapist in private practice, writes mysteries that reflect her interest in feminism, relationships, and cats (her fictional cat is a character, not a pet.)

CHRISTINE MATTHEWS has been published in *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine*, and in the anthologies *Vengeance is Hers*, *Love Kills*, *American Pulp*, *Deadly Allies*, *Lethal Ladies*, and others. She was co-editor of *Lethal Ladies II*. Her new book is called *Murder is the Deal of the Day*, co-written with Robert J. Randisi.

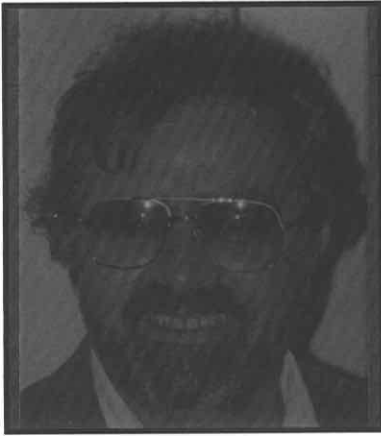


CAMILLE MINICHINO grew up about a mile from Revere Beach, MA, the setting for her periodic table mysteries. Like one of her amateur sleuths, Gloria Lamerino, she has a Ph.D. in physics and a long career in research and teaching.

The Hydrogen Murder and *The Helium Murder* were released by Avalon Books in 1997 and 1998. *The Lithium Murder* is due from William Morrow in May, 1999, and

so is *The Meitnerium Murder*. One of Camille's favorite occupations is creating and teaching special classes in science literacy for nontechnical people. Camille lives with her husband and satellite dish in San Leandro, California.

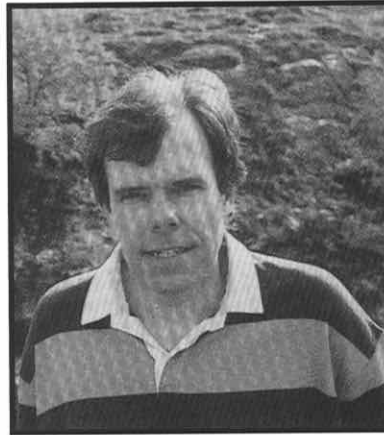
Left Coast Crime 9 Guests



BILL MOODY lives in Northern California where he teaches creative writing at Sonoma State University.

A longtime jazz drummer, he's toured and recorded with Maynard Ferguson, Jon Hendricks, Lou Rawls and Earl Fatha Hines. His writing has appeared in *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine* and *Jazz Times*.

Moody is the author of three Evan Horne mysteries. His fourth, *Bird Lives!* will be published this spring.



MICHAEL NEWTON has published 143 books since 1977, with 11 more pending release from various houses over the next two years. Although some 80 percent of his work has been fiction, including Westerns, police procedurals, and action-adventure, he is best known for his true-crime volumes, concentrated on the field of serial murder.

Representative titles include *Hunting Humans*, *Silent Rage*, *Waste Land* and *Rope*. Forthcoming titles include

The Encyclopedia of Serial Killers and *Stolen Away*.



MIRIAM ANN MOORE is a native New Yorker who was raised in New Jersey and escaped to San Francisco as early as possible. She writes the Marti Hirsch Mystery series, featuring a tough, neurotic heroine who gets to do all the things that Miriam wishes she could have done back in the 70's. Marti was introduced in *Last Dance* published in 1997. The second book, *Stayin' Alive* was published

by Avon in 1998, and the new one *I Will Survive* is due out in October of 1999. She lives in the Mission District of San Francisco with her husband Matt. Her hobbies include Karaoke, going to the gym, and her favorite soap opera, *Guiding Light*.



KRIS NERI combines a background in writing non-fiction articles for magazines with a lifelong love of mysteries that began with Nancy Drew to become an award-winning mystery writer. Her zany mystery novel, *Revenge of the Gypsy Queen*, featuring mystery writer Tracy Eaton and her wacky family, will be published by Rainbow Books in 1999. Her short fiction has appeared in

a variety of magazines as well as a number of anthologies. She teaches crime writing at several universities in California.



TIINA NUNNALLY's new novel, *Fate of Ravens* (1998), is the second featuring translator Margit Andersson, whom Candace Robb describes as "a refreshingly intelligent sleuth." Again set in Seattle, the story has sinister connections to the Scandinavian past. The first in the series, *Runemaker*, was called "a beautifully crafted first mystery" by Nevada Barr. In her other life, Tiina is well-known for her award-winning translations from Danish, Norwegian, and

Swedish, including the bestselling thriller *Smilla's Sense of Snow*. Her current project is Liv Ullmann's debut novel. Tiina lives in Seattle with her husband and their calico cat.

BONNIE NIXON and Robin Danek are publisher and webmaster of e-pulp™ an electronic (files or disks instead of paper, but the author gets royalties) venture which markets primarily over the Internet.

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To mark **MAXINE O'CALLAGHAN's** 25th year of writing about her private eye Delilah West, both the short story that introduced Delilah in AHMM and the first novel, *Death is Forever*, were published by Thorndyke Press in their Five-Star Mysteries series, February, 1999. The sixth novel, in the series, *Down for the Count*, was nominated for the Shamus award. Max-

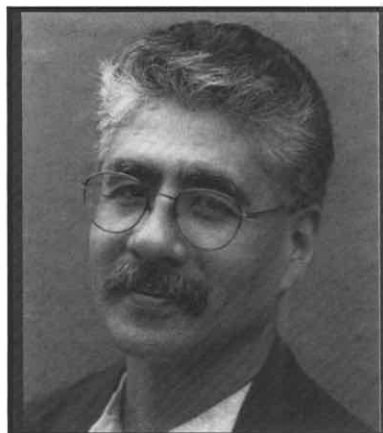
ine also writes novels of dark suspense and has two books in the Dr. Anne Menlo series.

BARBARA PETERS, a native of Winnetka, Illinois, holds a B.A. in Political Science and French from Stanford University and Masters Degrees in History and Library Science from Northwestern University and the University of Tennessee, completed a post-graduate intern program at the Library of Congress, and read for the Virginia Bar. In 1989, she founded The Poisoned Pen, A Mystery Bookstore, in Scottsdale, Arizona, as a retirement present to herself, which has since grown into a multiple-employee corporation with international connections. In 1992, she helped founded the Independent Mystery Booksellers Association, and remains active in promoting the specialty book trade. In 1997, she joined the English faculty at Arizona State University, teaching an upper division course Crime Fiction and courses in Directed Readings, while continuing to oversee an active events program and bookselling schedule at The Poisoned Pen. Forseeing the need to keep crime backlist books in print, she founded Poisoned Pen Press in January, 1977, which will publish 14 titles in 1999 including 4 original novels in hardcover, 10 Missing Mysteries, and one reference work.



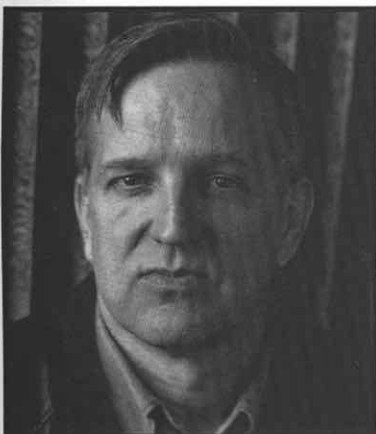
LESLIE O'KANE recently sold her seventh and eighth mystery novels to Ballantine. She's the author of two humorous series. *The Fax of Life* (Spring 1999 Release) is the fourth in her series featuring Molly Masters--full-time mother of two, part-time creator of faxable greeting cards, and occasional reluctant sleuth. *Play Dead* is the first in Leslie's second series, fea-

aturing a dog psychologist in Boulder, Colorado, where the author makes her home, along with her husband, two children, and a cocker spaniel.



MANUEL RAMOS is an attorney who also teaches Chicano Literature at Metropolitan State College of Denver and writes the Luis Montez mystery novels, all published by St. Martin's Press. Among the Montez mysteries are *The Ballad of Rocky Ruiz*, *The Ballad of Gato Guerrero*, *The Last Client of Luis Montez* and the recent *Blues for the Buffalo*. Ramos also reviews

books for various media outlets such as radio station KUVU, *The Denver Post* and the *Bloomsbury Review*.



STEVE OLIVER is a journalist, artist, computer programmer, and former taxi driver. He lives in Seattle.

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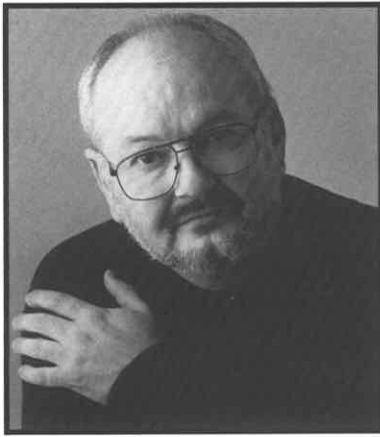
NOT

AVAILABLE

LEV RAPHAEL escaped academia a decade ago to write full-time and, even though his work is taught at colleges and universities across the country, he's never looked back. He's won prizes for short fiction and creative nonfiction and been in dozens of anthologies. After publishing books of short fiction and psychology, essays, a novel, literary criticism, he turned to academic myster-

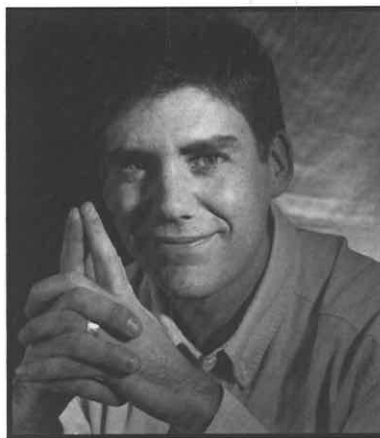
ies including *The Edith Wharton Murders* and *Let's Get Criminal*.

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FATHER BRAD REYNOLDS, a Jesuit Priest, writes the Father Mark Townsend mysteries. While currently serving as the formation director for Jesuits in the Pacific Northwest, he also works as a writer and photographer, with over 300 articles and 500 photographs published in magazines and newspapers throughout the U.S. His work for National Geographic was the basis for his first novel, *The Story Knife*.

ROBERT J. RANDISI is the author of the "Nick Delvecchio," "Miles Jacoby" and Joe Keough series, and editor of over 15 anthologies. He has been nominated for the Shamus Award on four occasions, twice for Best Novel. His new book is *Murder Is the Deal of the Day*, co-written with Christine Matthews.



RICK RIORDAN is a native San Antonian who recently returned to his home state after eight years in the San Francisco Bay area. A graduate of the University of Texas at Austin, Riordan has been a middle school teacher for the eleven years, and teaches sixth grade English at Saint Mary's Hall in San Antonio. Riordan's Tres Navarre mystery series, set in San Antonio, began with *Big Red Tequila*, which won

the 1998 Anthony Award for Best Paperback Original and the 1998 Shamus Award for Best First Private Eye Novel. Riordan lives in San Antonio with his wife and two sons.



ANN RIPLEY currently has four gardening mysteries in print. A former newspaperwoman, she turned to fiction recently, inventing Louise Eldridge, an organic gardener and foreign service wife. Louise is a woman with a green thumb and a toe dipped in politics. Ripley has been a gardener since she was a child and a political activist since she reached voting age. *Mulch* was the title of her first book published in 1994. Then came *Death of a Garden Pest* and *Death of a Political Plant*. *The Garden Tour Affair* is just being released in hardcover by Bantam Books.



J. R. RIPLEY currently divides his year for the most part between Belgium and Florida, when not traveling. He states he has worked at everything from A to W (archeologist to window-washer) and currently works full-time as a writer/musician. Ripley has been employed at most sorts of writing, including technical, copy, editor, etc., and worked for Warner Records and Disney among others. He is also a song writer/producer and composer, with a complete recording studio and album credits. He is the author of a children's series of chapter books under another name.



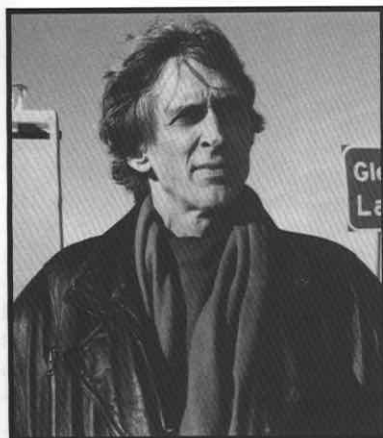
LORA ROBERTS lives an ordinary life in an ordinary house with the requisite husband, 2.0 kids. Inside her head, though, is another world. It uses the same setting as her real life, Palo Alto, California, but is peopled with the fruits of her imagination. The books feature Liz Sullivan, former vagabond, freelance writer, gardener, occasional temp worker and reluctant amateur sleuth. Starting with *Murder in a Nice Neighborhood*, they now number five; the most recent is *Murder Crops Up*, in which Liz finds something rotten in the community garden compost pile

JANET RUDOLPH is the editor of *Mystery Readers Journal*. She lives in Oakland, California.



MEGAN RUST's flying career was ended by a head injury which also proved a beginning. Determined to wrest success from tragedy, she turned to writing and crafted Taylor Morgan, the star of her Alaskan mediflight mystery series. The first book, *Dead Stick*, came out in early 1998, and the second, *Red Line*, is due to debut in April, 1999.

MARY SARBER is a semi-retired librarian and book reviewer from El Paso who has been reading detective fiction since Dorothy Sayers and Mary Roberts Rinehart. Her main claim to fame is having sat next to Tony Hillerman in a course on literary criticism at UNM in 1964, when he was no better known than she is now.



WALTER SATTERTHWAIT has lived in New York City and Portland, Oregon, as well as Africa, Greece and England. He has worked as an encyclopedia salesman, proofreader, bartender and restaurant manager. His Santa Fe, New Mexico, series features detectives Joshua Croft and Rita Mondragon. His "historical figure" series includes *Miss Lizzie*, *Wilde*

West and *Escapade*, all originally published by St. Martin's Press.

MICHAEL SEIDMAN has been on the editorial side of the desk since 1970. Currently responsible for the mystery publishing program at Walker & Company, he has worked at various publishing houses and was the Editor in Chief of Mysterious Press and Editorial Director of Zebra/Pinnacle (now Kensington), and served for ten years as the editor of *The Armchair Detective*. He has edited everything except y.a. titles.

Michael is the author of two non-fiction books, *From Printout to Published: A Guide to the Publishing Process* and *Living the Dream: An Outline for a Life in Fiction*, his articles and essays appear in *Writer's Digest*, *Byline*, *The Writer*, *West Coast Review of Books*, *American Bookseller*, and other magazines; an experimental essay on the writing process will appear in *Fourth Genre*. His short stories have appeared in *Twilight Zone*, *Mystery*, and the original anthology, *Stalkers*.



BARBARA SERANELLA was born in Santa Monica and grew up in Pacific Palisades. After a tumultuous childhood, she settled down to become an auto mechanic. After five years with Arco and 12 with Texaco, she rose to the rank of service manager, married her boss, and decided she'd taken her automotive career as far as it would go, so she took up writing. Her first novel, *No Human Involved*, debuted at

#5 on the LA Times best-seller list and made Amazon.com's list of best ten mysteries of 1997. *No Offense Intended*, another mystery featuring Munch Mancini, lady mechanic with a past, was released in January, 1999.

ANDI SHECHTER remembers reading *Edwin of the Iron Shoes* when it was first released. She spent many years attending and working on science fiction conventions, and in recent years, became more involved in mystery conventions. Andi ran programming for Bouchercon 25, and chaired Left Coast Crime in 1997. She is Cass Jameson on DorothyL and writes a column entitled "Conventional Wisdom" for *Murderous Intent* magazine. She is chairing a convention called "Mean Streets: A Hard-Boiled Convention," scheduled for May, 2000.

Left Coast Crime 9 Guests



CONNIE SHELTON grew up in Albuquerque where she became a mystery fan early in life. She has written four Charlie Parker mysteries including the most recent, *Small Towns Can Be Murder*. She is also an award winning essayist. Her work has been published in several anthologies and her short stories have won several prizes. She and her husband live in Angel Fire, New Mexico.



JOYCE SPIZER and her husband Harold are considered the "Hart-to-Hart" of Southern California investigators. Her career became bountiful fruit for her debut Harbour Pointe Mystery Series, *The Cop was White as Snow*. Under cover of fiction, she is free to nail those whom she knows to have slithered through the cracks in our justice system. The locations have changed, but the detail remains, for the

most part, and paints the patina of true crime. The second in her Harbour Pointe Mystery Series, *I'm Okay, You're Dead*, was published in early 1999, and the third, *It's Just a Spleen and a High School Ring* will be ready for 2000. The Harbour Pointe Mysteries are under consideration for a television series.

KATHLEEN SWANHOLT published *Mysterious Women* newsletter. She lives in Walnut Creek, California.



DANA STABENOW is the author of the Kate Shugak mysteries which include *A Cold Day for Murder*, *A Fatal Thaw*, *Dead in the Water* and *A Cold Blooded Business*, each of which brings to life a different aspect of the Alaska experience. Her new character, Liam Campbell, was once an up-and-coming Alaska state trooper who now lives and works in a rough and tumble fishing town on the shores of Bristol Bay. She lives in Anchorage.



Tishy's passions -- country music and mystery fiction. She lives in Nashville with her husband, Bill. They have two daughters.

CECILIA TISHY was born in Pittsburgh, Pa., and lived in Boston for twenty years before moving to Nashville where she teaches American literature at Vanderbilt University. Tishy wrote *High Lonesome: The American Culture of Country Music* (under the name Tichi). Her Kate Banning mystery series includes *Jealous Heart* (1997) and *Cryin' Time* (1998) and combines two of



Meter, an Albuquerque book collector. The first book in the series will be published in the spring of Y2K.

JUDITH VAN GIESON is the author of a collection of poetry and short stories and of eight mystery novels featuring Albuquerque attorney/sleuth Neil Hamel. The latest, *Ditch Rider*, is set in the North Valley, where Judith lives. She was awarded the Spirit of Magnifico Literary Award from the Albuquerque Festival of the Arts in 1996. Judith has a new series featuring Anika Van



perback in July, 1999. The second and third, *Half the Truth* and *Applaud the Hollow Ghost*, are available in hardcover. Walker is working on a new Mal Foley novel. Walker has been a parish priest, an investigator with the Chicago Police Department's Office of Professional Standards, and a lawyer. He lives with his wife, Ellen, just north of Chicago.

DAVID J. WALKER is the author of *A Ticket to Die For*, the first in his new "Wild Onion, Ltd." series. Released in November, 1998, it features a wife-husband private detective team and will be followed by *A Drink at the Bawdy House*. Walker's other series stars Chicago PI Malachy P. Foley, an ex-lawyer who lost his license for keeping his mouth shut. The first Mal Foley mystery, the Edgar-nominated *Fixed in Folly*, will be reissued in

Left Coast Crime 9 Guests



PENNY WARNER has sold over 25 books, including four books in the Connor Westphal mystery series from Bantam. *Dead Body Language* was nominated for an Agatha Award and Macavity Award. With her husband, Tom, she writes and produces murder mystery events for organizations across the country. She has a Master's Degree in Special Education/Deaf, and teaches child development, sign language, and special education at the local college. She also teaches creative writing and mystery writing courses at Cal-State University, Hayward, and University of California, Berkeley and Davis extensions. She has spoken at numerous writing conferences.



WALTER JON WILLIAMS is a master of a number of martial art forms and is the author of twelve SF and fantasy novels and one story collection. He lives in New Mexico.

She also teaches creative writing and mystery writing courses at Cal-State University, Hayward, and University of California, Berkeley and Davis extensions. She has spoken at numerous writing conferences.



ROBERT WESTBROOK grew up in Hollywood, the son of legendary columnist Sheilah Graham, whose international bestselling autobiography, *Beloved Infidel*, describes her tragic affair with F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Robert's first book, *Journey Behind the Iron Curtain*, was published when he was 16 by G.P. Putnam's Sons in 1963. A novel followed, *The Magic Garden of Stanley Sweetheart*, published by

Crown and made into an MGM movie.

His current mystery, *Ghost Dancer*, was written during a year in China. *Warrior Circle*, the second novel of the Howard Moon Deer series, is due out from Signet in summer, 1999. He lives in Taos, New Mexico, with his wife, Gail.



VALERIE WILCOX was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest and graduated from the University of Oregon. She spent over 25 years as a teacher and management training consultant before embarking on her writing career. She is a graduate of the Writers' Fiction and the Writers' Mystery and Suspense Fiction Certificate Programs at the University of Washington

and a member of the Mystery Writers of America, International Association of Crime Writers, Sisters in Crime, and the Pacific Northwest Writers Association.



Selective Adjectives Describe Albuquerque Author, Build Profile

By Betty Parker

Reports and rumors have been arriving at Left Coast Crime 9 regarding a mystery writer who has lived and worked in the Albuquerque vicinity for several years. We have, therefore, used our Form LCCIXTH1999 to compile a small dossier on the author and are making the following excerpts available for this conference as a need-to-know service for building a profile,

Though not widely publicized, there are indications that the subject may be considerate and compassionate. A bookseller who wishes to remain anonymous claims the author visited her husband after surgery and entertained him by telling stories. An author reports a similar experience receiving a phone call from the subject when recuperating from an illness.

#TH1999 is accused of storytelling in many of the reports, both written and oral. This is easy to document as we have numerous samples of book reviews and critiques from all over the world where he is actually called a storyteller. Right here in his hometown, one man reported a fish story told by the author. This is hearsay, but the witness claims he helped the writer maintain his footing while fishing in the river, and the author started telling people he was saved by this man. It sounds suspicious, but we're still checking of evidence.



Author accused of storytelling.

We are almost certain the investigatee is at time indiscriminate. We know for a fact that he signed a paving stone for an unnamed fan, and he has been heard to say that he signed various other items which were not books. There seems to be no limit to what he will sign. One person even asked him to sign his car!

There are bits and pieces of information that lead us to suspect this writer may also on occasion be jealous. Another writer claims that when he was diagnosed with a condition requiring surgery, he mused to himself, "Well, this is one thing I have that he (#TH1999) doesn't have."

Only a short time elapsed before this subject called his friend to announce that he, too, was given the same diagnosis. Another incident extracted from the same source recounts a

friendly evening together at a lecture after which the two stopped at a pie shop before going home. They were just settling in with their piece of pie when a fan approached with an “I-sure-do-like-your-books” look and, being a well-known writer and accustomed to adulation, the subject produced his genial smile and prepared to greet the stranger.

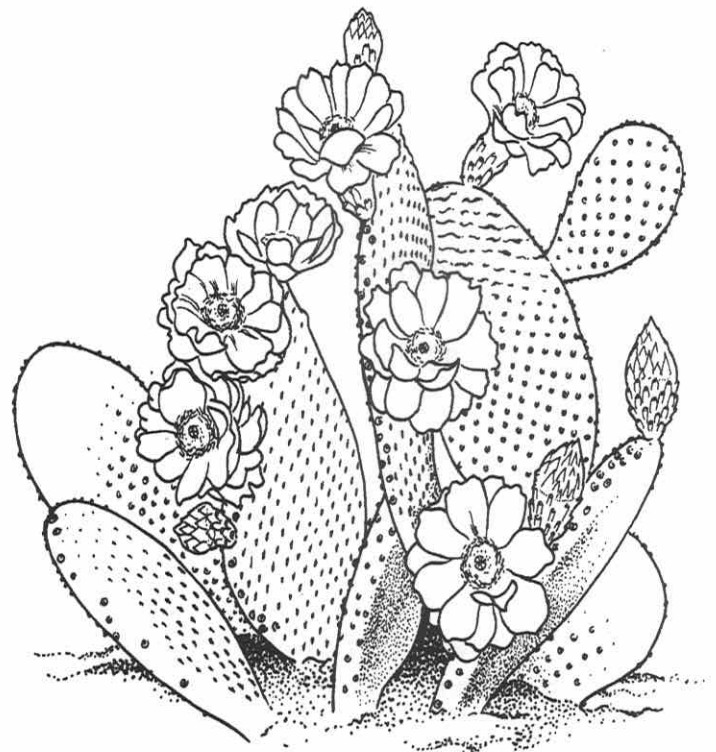
To his surprise the stranger turned to our reporter and began to tell him how he liked his work. Later, the subject claimed he had been tricked into coming to that place. Still another oral report was, “I heard him say as he was signing a book that he wished he could say he had written Richard Bradford’s *Red Sky at Morning*.”

Literary integrity seems to be a problem for this author. Our sources indicate he has refused monetary reimbursement from movies because he doesn’t want to misrepresent the truths in the fiction he writes. One producer wanted to film a story about Navajos on site at a New Mexico pueblo, but the author refused. Apparently the Navajos have the same feeling about his integrity, for they use his stories in their classrooms. Relating to this same character trait, a magazine editor was heard to say that she was going to use a picture of a cactus on her cover story about the writer. When warned not to use a saguaro cactus because saguaro are not indigenous to the areas where his stories take place, she exclaimed, “Don’t worry! This cactus doesn’t look like a cigar!” Unfortunately, the telephone conversation was not taped, so cannot be entered as evidence.

A late report has just been processed. #TH1999 is sneaky. A customer in a bookstore

asked for help. He said his wife liked the subject’s work and sought titles by other authors that she might like as well. Another customer began suggesting authors and titles, and the first customer was pleased and selected some. When the bookseller thanked the second customer for helping and turned away, she heard the second customer introduce himself as the subject!

There is just one other aspect to be considered in this profile, and that is the occurrence of heretofore unknown titles (by this author) reportedly appearing on the Internet. There is no documentable evidence at this time, but one wonders if he has been writing secretly and not telling his fellow authors and fans. If it should ever get out that there is a cover-up of hidden Hillerman titles, what kind of chaos would result? We can only shudder.



A question of cactus

From Where Come the Plots?

by Margaret Coel

When Willie Nelson was asked where he got the ideas for his songs, he said they dropped out of the universe and into his head.

Which is to say that Willie Nelson is probably like most authors: we often don't have a clue where the plots for our novels come from. They drop into our heads at the most unexpected moments — in bed, stuck in traffic, shopping for groceries. They can be triggered by an impromptu comment, a billboard passing outside the car window, a snatch of conversation overheard months, no, years, before. Suddenly the neon lights are flashing in our heads: Plot! But where did it come from?

Let's back up a moment. What do we mean by plot? Henry James called plot "the prime and precious thing." Hmmmm. Okay, but what does that mean? Most how-to-write-a-novel books refer to plot as the arrangement of events with the emphasis on cause. In other words the events are not just connected, like pearls on a string, but are caused by one another. E.M. Forester gave us a famous example when he differentiated between a story and a plot. "The king died and the queen died" is a story, pearls on a narrative string; but "The king died and then the queen died of grief" is a plot.

Okay, but that brings us back to the question: Where do plots come from? I tend to think they grow from tiny seeds planted in the subconscious as we go about our everyday activities. This occurs due to what I will call the writer's mind set. In other words, we are receptive and ever on the lookout for plot seeds which we know to be everywhere: in newspaper articles, books, movies, television sitcoms, airport conversations with total strangers.

Once they take root, these plot seeds start nagging at us — "tend to me, tend to me." And we have

no recourse, if we ever want peace again, but to turn our full attention to the persistent, pesky little devils and start asking the questions that begin with: What if . . ."

Let me give you an example. A couple of years ago, I was having a conversation with a friend who happens to be the Colorado State Historian. "Wouldn't it be wonderful," he said, "if there were an Indian ledger book on the Sand Creek Massacre?" The seed was

planted, and I began asking myself: What if such a book existed? What if someone was willing to commit murder to get a hold of it? What would my characters do to protect it? The answers began clicking into place, and I realized I had the plot for *The Story Teller*.

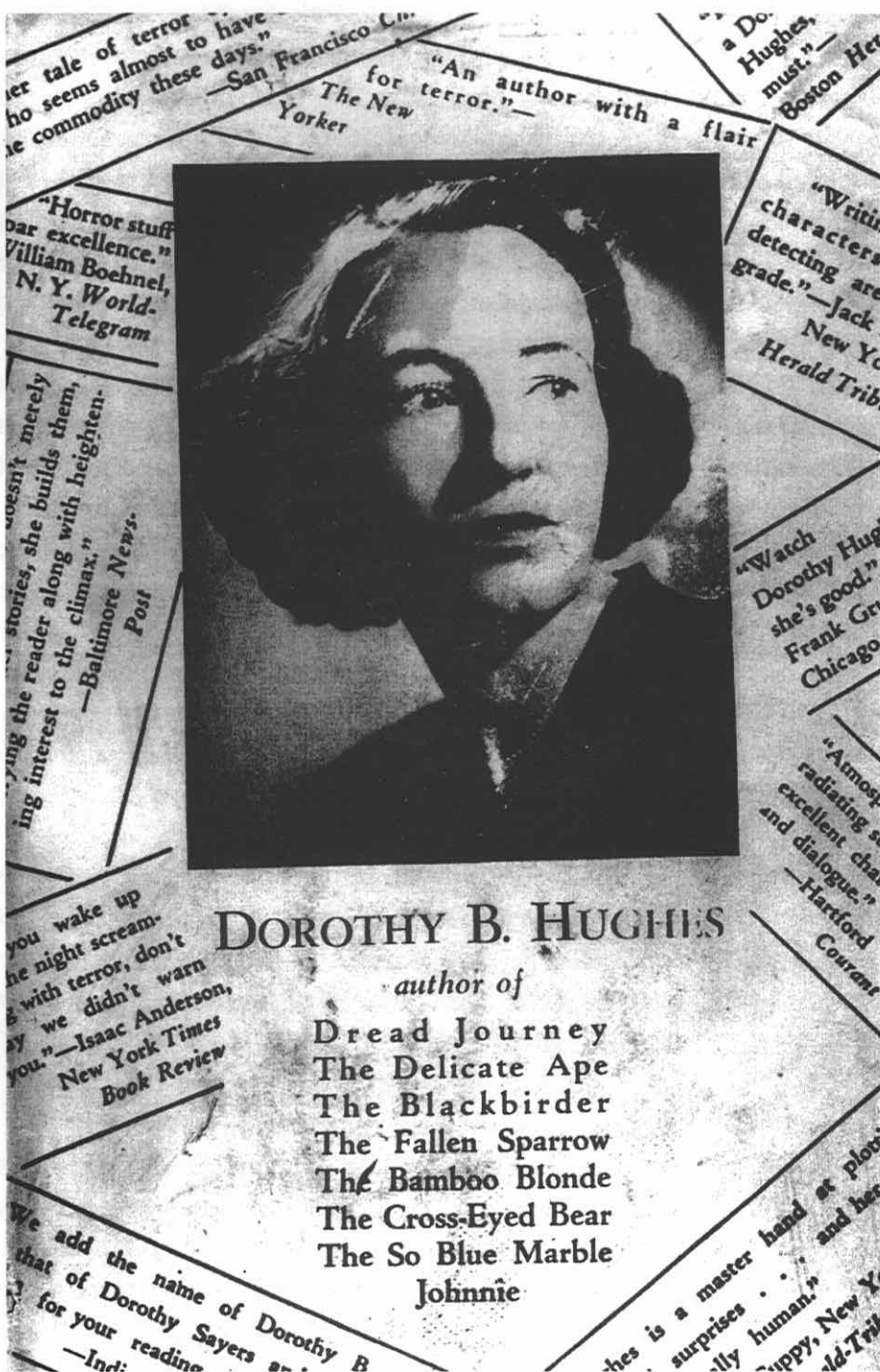
With such a mind set (I am always on the lookout for a plot and everything is a possibility), is it any wonder that those who are brave enough to be our friends learn to be careful about what they say around us? Yes, once in a while they slip up and say something incredibly profound, or something off-the-wall, often followed by "You're not going to use that are you?" My answer is always, "Well, one never knows."



The king died and then the queen died of grief.

Who Was Dorothy B. Hughes?

by Ernie Bulow



er tale of terror
ho seems almost to have
e commodity these days."
San Francisco Ch.
The New
Yorker

"An author with a flair
for terror."
Boston Her

"Horror stuff
par excellence."
William Boehnel,
N. Y. World-
Telegram

"Writing
characters
detecting are
grade."—Jack
New Yo
Herald Trib

doesn't merely
ing the reader along with heighten-
—Baltimore News-
Post

"Watch
Dorothy Hug
she's good."
Frank Gru
Chicago

"Atmos-
radiating su
excellent char
and dialogue."
—Hartford
Courant

you wake up
the night scream-
g with terror, don't
we didn't warn
you."—Isaac Anderson,
New York Times
Book Review

We add the name of Dorothy B
that of Dorothy Sayers a
for your reading
—Ind:

hes is a master hand at plotti
surprises . . . and her
ally human."
Happy, New Yo
ld-Trib

DOROTHY B. HUGHES
author of
Dread Journey
The Delicate Ape
The Blackbirder
The Fallen Sparrow
The Bamboo Blonde
The Cross-Eyed Bear
The So Blue Marble
Johnnie

Dorothy B. Hughes' life nearly managed to span the Twentieth Century, but her legacy goes far beyond living long and well. While we all know that fame is a fickle handmaiden, Dorothy Hughes deserves better of American literary history. Her influence on the mystery field alone is impressive. She was one of the founders of the Mystery Writers of America, and compiled a truly admirable body of work, winning awards in poetry, biography, criticism and mystery fiction, the genre she championed all her life.

Dorothy Belle Flanagan was born in Kansas City in 1904 and though she always maintained she was not the child of privilege, she recalls a household that included parlor maids. When she graduated from high school at the age of fifteen, her parents let her attend the newly founded Art Institute because they felt she was too young to go away to college. One of her classmates there was Walt Disney. She was one of the first women to get a college degree in the fledgling field of journalism and, with degree in hand, took off for New York. She did some post-graduate work at Columbia University where she studied under the novelist Dorothy Scarborough, author of "The Wind."

Continued on Page 46

Dorothy Hughes.....Continued from Page 7

Her first published work, a book of poetry, won a Yale writing award, but her career as an author was put on hold in the early Thirties when she spent time with her sister in the exotic art colony of Santa Fe. She stayed on, marrying into a leading local family and having three children. Her second book was a history of the University of New Mexico.

Hughes never let go of her ties in New York, spending at least some time there every year. She was already involved with writing for the film industry when her first novel *The So Blue Marble* was published in 1940. She was a “liberated” woman long before the concept—or even the term—became fashionable. She didn’t let family duties interfere with her writing career.

When she moved to Los Angeles for her work, her husband, Levi “Boy” Hughes, kept his offices in New Mexico and flew his own plane back and forth to Southern California for occasional conjugal visits as Pueblo nannies took care of most of Dorothy’s child-rearing chores. Hughes established an eccentric routine, which included sleeping until noon and doing most of her writing late at night.

Though she made a career of screenwriting for many years, she only has one film credit. She says she was a script doctor, a “fixer” who was largely responsible for maintaining something close to grammatical correctness and proper usage, story continuity and the like. Her real impact on the film industry was with the adaptation of three of her best books to the screen.

Almost any top ten lists of all-time great Film Noir will include *In A Lonely Place*, a story Humphrey Bogart’s own production company bought and produced as a “sure thing” for Bogart to finally score an Academy Award. He didn’t win, though the film is a stunning classic of the Noir genre.

John Garfield starred in her gothic Nazi tale *The Fallen Sparrow* and Robert Montgomery, able but miscast, had the leading role in the screen adaptation of one of her best books, *Ride the Pink Horse*, which is set in Santa Fe during Fiesta, a celebration honoring the City Different’s Hispanic heritage. The wonderful character actor Thomas Gomez won an Academy Award as

Pancho, the proprietor of the little hand driven carousel Tio Vivo (Uncle Lively) that features so symbolically in the film.

The merry-go-round used in the movie belonged to a group of Taos businessmen who allowed it to be shipped to Hollywood only on the condition that their “caretaker” went along with it. I haven’t yet found out what ever happened to the wonderful contraption.

All three of the film adaptations of Dorothy Hughes’ books were tamed significantly for the screen. Hughes probably comes closer than any other woman writer does to the great Noir novelists like Goodis, Himes and McCoy. She is the female Jim Thompson, boldly creating characters whose twisted souls and hell-bent destinies take them to the darkest depths of human sensibility. Nothing in her background—unlike Thompson’s—would seem to have prepared her for such dark imaginings.

This stream of American literature, flowering in the postwar era and giving the lie to Eisenhower optimism, is only now getting the attention it deserves. The best of Dorothy Hughes stands at the top of the genre. Ironically, as they say, she hated the early novels of Mickey Spillane and remembers giving *I, The Jury* a bad review when it came out, just a year after her story of a serial killer, *In A Lonely Place*. She won an Edgar Award for criticism in 1951.

Hughes is a deliciously evocative writer whose command of language, the vocabulary of fear, stands with the best. Look at this brief passage from *In A Lonely Place*:

He could have caught up to her with ease but he didn't. It was too soon. Better to hold back until he had passed the humped midsection of the walk, then to close in. She'd give a little scream, perhaps only a gasp, when he came up beside her. And he would say softly, "Hello." Only "Hello" but she would be more afraid.

Hughes raises the hair on the back of the reader’s neck, whispering the thoughts in the killer’s mind—his pure joy—as he stalks the pretty, innocent girl. The suspense of the novel comes from the twisted relationship he has with an old army buddy who has become a detective on the Los Angeles police force.

Her best books are also ahead of their time in her subtle but very effective use of sensuality. In the Forties, bold references to sex, especially in the work of women writers, were rare and often foolishly coy. Hughes obviously felt differently about the subject and her characters, male and female, are frank in their appraisal of possible, and actual, sexual partners.

The stalker from *In A Lonely Place*, Dix Steele, even comes on dangerously to his friend's wife, sensing that his evil stirs something unconscious in her. In Bogart's adaptation of the story, Dix Steele is a Hollywood screenwriter who is accused of killing a hat check girl and mercilessly pursued and harassed by the police and his old army buddy Drub. Given the major change in the plot, it is astonishing how close the film sticks with the sensibility of the Hughes original.

One of the most evocative strains in *Ride The Pink Horse* is the potent sexuality of the Pueblo Indian girl Pila, only fourteen but a woman aware of her powers when she becomes tangled in the web that traps the doomed hit-man Sailor. Both Pila and the Hispanic Pancho talk openly of sex, and race and reality. Pila is every inch the nymphet popularized a few years later by Lolita. Sailor, the doomed protagonist in *Ride The Pink Horse*, is a mob gunslinger who follows a crooked politician from Chicago to Santa Fe to extort money he thinks he's owed and get revenge. In the film he ends up cooperating with the police while in the book he follows his dark and destructive destiny.

Dorothy Hughes was a decidedly inconsistent novelist and her espionage tales tend to be weaker than her Noir thrillers. She admired Eric Ambler among others but it wasn't her strongest arena.

She was at her best when she wrote about New Mexico, where she set her only comic novel *The Big Barbecue*. However, her sense of place in the books set in Southern California is strong and evocative.

Hughes wrote more than a dozen novels in the Forties, returning to the genre only once more, a decade later in 1963, for one of her most interesting books, *The Expendable Man*. The reader is well into the story before it becomes clear—and meaningful—that the protagonist is black.

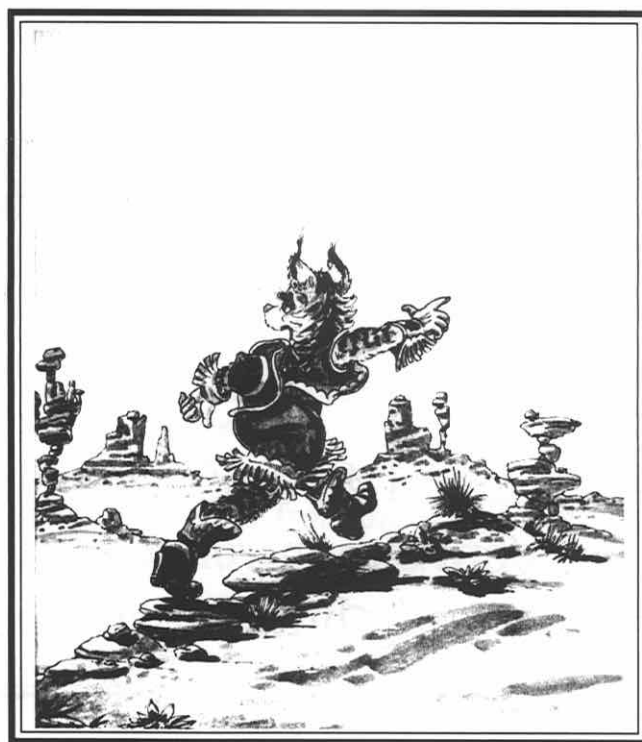
Race relations had long been an area of interest for Hughes and an early short story of hers, "The Black and

White Blues", dealt with a trashy young white girl who picks up, taunts and then boldly extorts a black bluesman in Kansas City. Like so much of Hughes' work, the dangerous theme and its bold handling still has shock value today. In *The Expendable Man*, Hugh Densmore picks up a fifteen-year-old white girl on his way to Phoenix and when she winds up dead he knows what kind of trouble he's in if he doesn't solve the crime damned fast.

Dorothy loved New York and spent time there every year. Part of the reason was to keep up her contacts in the publishing world. It rankled her that mystery fiction was considered second rate, a poor relation to the literary mainstream and mystery writers were paid accordingly—about a third less than other authors. Hughes was a founding member of the Mystery Writers of America, an organization dedicated to promoting genre fiction and its authors. She was honored with the title of Grand Master in 1978.

Though she published only one novel after the early Fifties, she continued to write; criticism, short stories and, finally, in 1978, a much-honored biography of her lifelong friend Earl Stanley Gardner whom she admired both as a person and a literary artist, a book that certainly helped Gardner win some respect.

Dorothy B. Hughes was a remarkable woman who had a rich and varied career and she deserves to be rediscovered as an important writer of American popular literature.



LEFT COAST CRIME 10

10th Anniversary

March 17-19, 2000

Holiday Inn City Center

Tucson, Arizona



Guest of Honor:

SUE GRAFTON

Toastmaster:

HARLAN COBEN

Fan Guest of Honor:

GEORGE EASTER

Register now at LCC9 for only \$115!

Regular 3-day registration fee is \$125 until 11/30/99

Registration fee includes 2 continental breakfasts,
2 bag lunches, and a book bag.

1-day registration fee is \$50

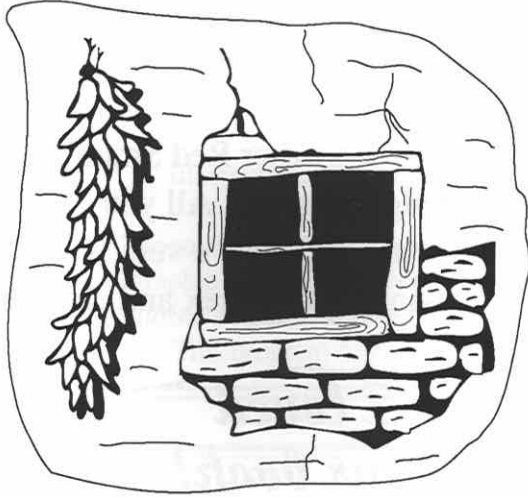
Extend your convention fun by taking a Mystery Train Ride, scheduled for Thursday, March 16. We'll have great panels, exciting activities, and lots of fun!

Call 1-800-659-8808 to register and make all your convention-related reservations, or visit our website at <http://www.tdigital.com/clues/LCC10/>

“I Loved Your Book” or

Why Authors Come to *Left Coast Crime*

By Steve Brewer



Writers can live pretty much anywhere we choose since we're not tied to a corporate job, and a lot of us have chosen New Mexico. It's a beautiful state and it used to be a cheap place to live. It's trendy now, and not so cheap, but we're stuck here because we love it.

Once a month, New Mexico authors come together for lunch at the Page One, Too! bookstore located at the intersection of Juan Tabo and Montgomery Boulevards. Since the kind folks at the store supply the food for free we usually have a pretty good turnout.

The luncheons give us reclusive writers a chance to commune and commiserate and congratulate. But

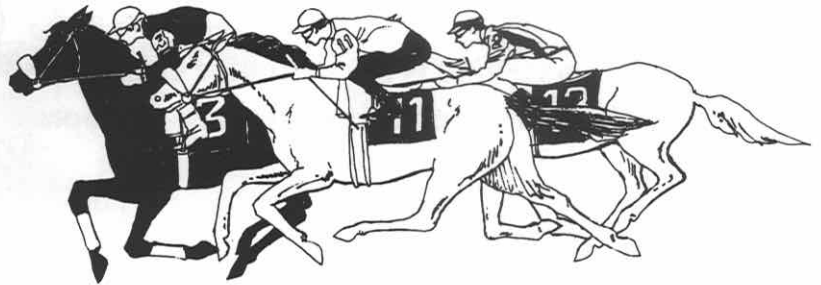
mostly what we do is complain.

There's plenty to complain about when you're an author: puny advances, cloutless agents, revolving-door editors, disastrous cover art, creative accounting practices, invisible promotion budgets, lonely book signings.

For every story you hear about million-dollar advances and breakout best-sellers, there are hundreds of authors who barely squeak by from month to month.

John Steinbeck once said, “The profession of book writing makes horse racing seem like a solid, stable business.”

So why do we do it? I believe writers are like runners — we get addicted to the struggle. Just as runners get a “high” from the pain of pushing ahead, writers get hooked on the “flow,” that magical moment when the right words seem to come from the ends of our fingers into the keyboard. It's an adrenaline rush, a surfeit of joy, the feeling that you could drown in your own creative juices.

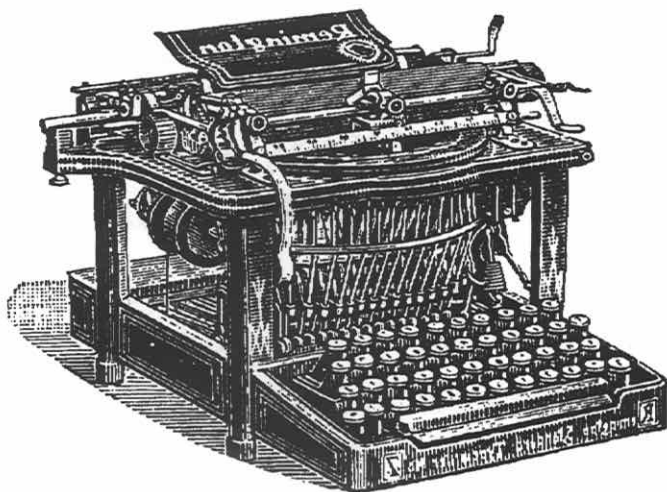


“The profession of book writing makes horse racing seem a solid, stable business” — John Steinbeck

Don't get the idea that it's an everyday sensation. On some days, writing novels is akin to

Continued on Page 50

“I Loved Your Book” . . . *Continued from Page 50*



“Sit down at a typewriter and open a vein”
— Red Smith

steadily banging your head on the top of your desk. I’ve had days when everything I’ve written had to be tossed out later. And I’ve had other days when everything should’ve been tossed out, but I’ve kept it because I didn’t have anything better.

In the words of Thomas Mann: “A writer is someone for whom writing is more difficult than it is for other people.”

Or, as the great sportswriter Red Smith once said, “There’s nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and open a vein.”

Ah, but when its flowing, it’s like sex and choco-

late and the wind in your hair.

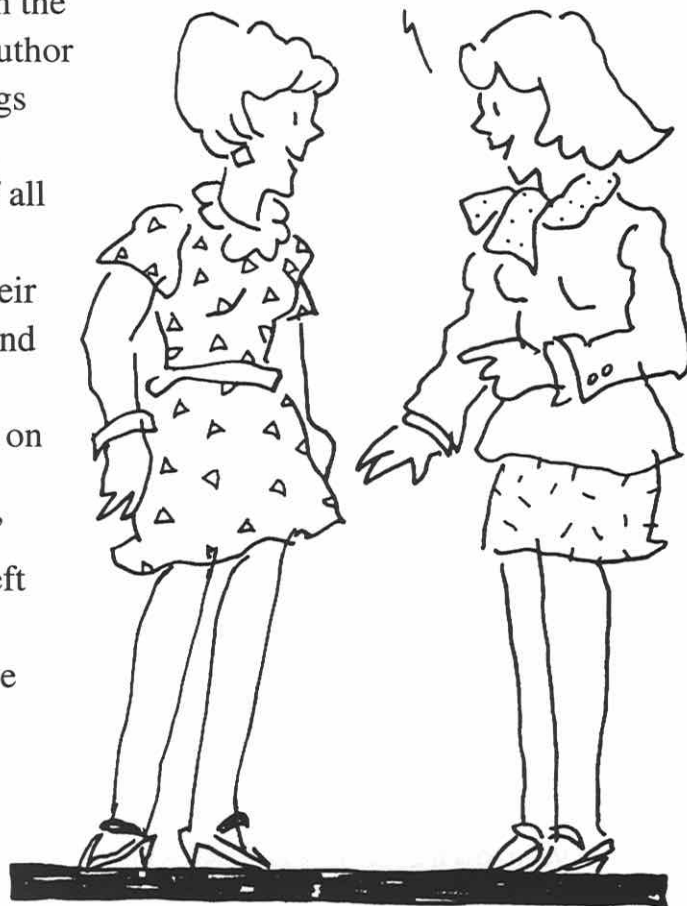
Mystery writing has other rewards, too. Ask any author and you can probably get a confession: Someone they’ve hated (former boss or former lover or former friend) has been put out of their misery in the pages of their fiction. And mysteries allow the author to find perfect justice and perfect solutions, things that are often unavailable in an imperfect world.

Finally, there’s perhaps the best reward of all — meeting readers, people with whom you’ve shared a moment, people who’ve volunteered their imaginations in the creation of your characters and your stories. Storytelling is a cooperative effort between reader and writer, and we writers count on readers to fill in the blanks. Nothing feels better than hearing a stranger say, “I loved your book.”

And that’s why we come to events like Left Coast Crime. To hear those words. To meet the readers who’ve bothered to try our stories. To see that our stories have become a part of someone else’s life.

That’s worth all the hours of lonely head-banging and vein-opening. And you’ll never hear us complain about it.

*I loved
your book!*



Left Coast Crime 9 Committee Members

Harlen Campbell	Prime Perpetrator
Steve Brewer	Unindicted Humorist and publicity hound
Ernie Bulow	General Advisor and A/V Mogul
Lou Hieb	} Book Room Czar
Betty Parker	} and Czarina
Mary Sarber	Literary Forensics (Book Reviews)
Sandy Schauer	Paper Trail (Publications)
Diana Sprayberry	Hotel coordinator, mob boss
Shirley Tanzola	SinC coordinator and Mistress of Souvenirs
Judith Van Gieson	Panel Selection

And, of course, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks to all of the convention volunteers who, unfortunately, haven't been identified as we rush this program to press.

Illustrations provided by RT Computer Graphics of Rio Rancho, DeskGallery, and a myriad of fine photographers/illustrators.

LCC9's logo and graphics were designed by Navajo Artist Ernest Franklin of Gallup, New Mexico. Franklin has provided graphic designs for special editions of work published by Buffalo Medicine Books. He recently illustrated a children's book written by Ernie Bulow. More of his work can be seen at www.BuffaloMedicine.com.

This program designed by Montañita Publishing Inc. under the direction of Sandy Schauer.

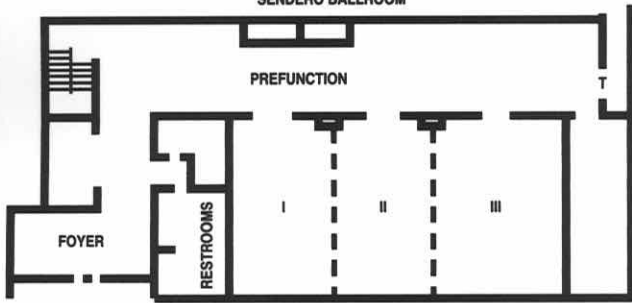


Miscellaneous Notes

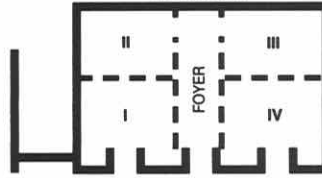
HYATT REGENCY ALBUQUERQUE

FIRST FLOOR

SENDERO BALLROOM



FIESTA ROOM



BOARDROOM NORTH

ELEVATORS

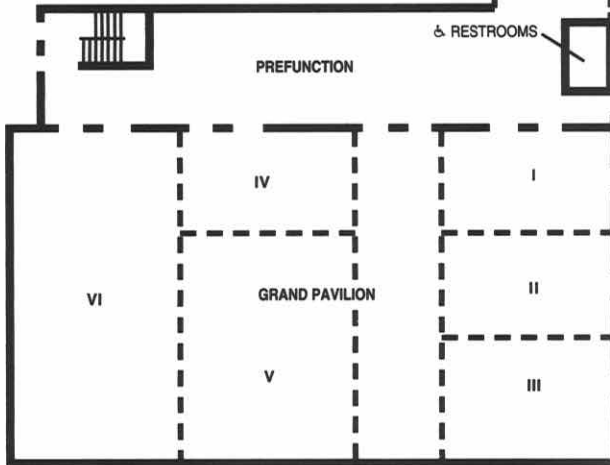


PHONES

ATRIUM

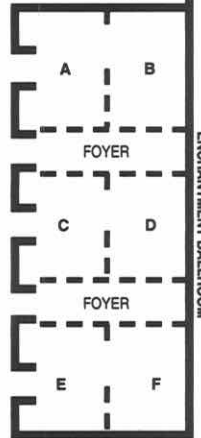
RESTROOMS

& RESTROOMS



FREIGHT ELEVATOR

BOARDROOM EAST



ENCHANTMENT BALLROOM

SECOND FLOOR

LEFT COAST CRIME 10 TUCSON, ARIZONA MARCH 17-19, 2000

Holiday Inn City Center

Guest of Honor: Sue Grafton

Toastmaster: Harlan Coben

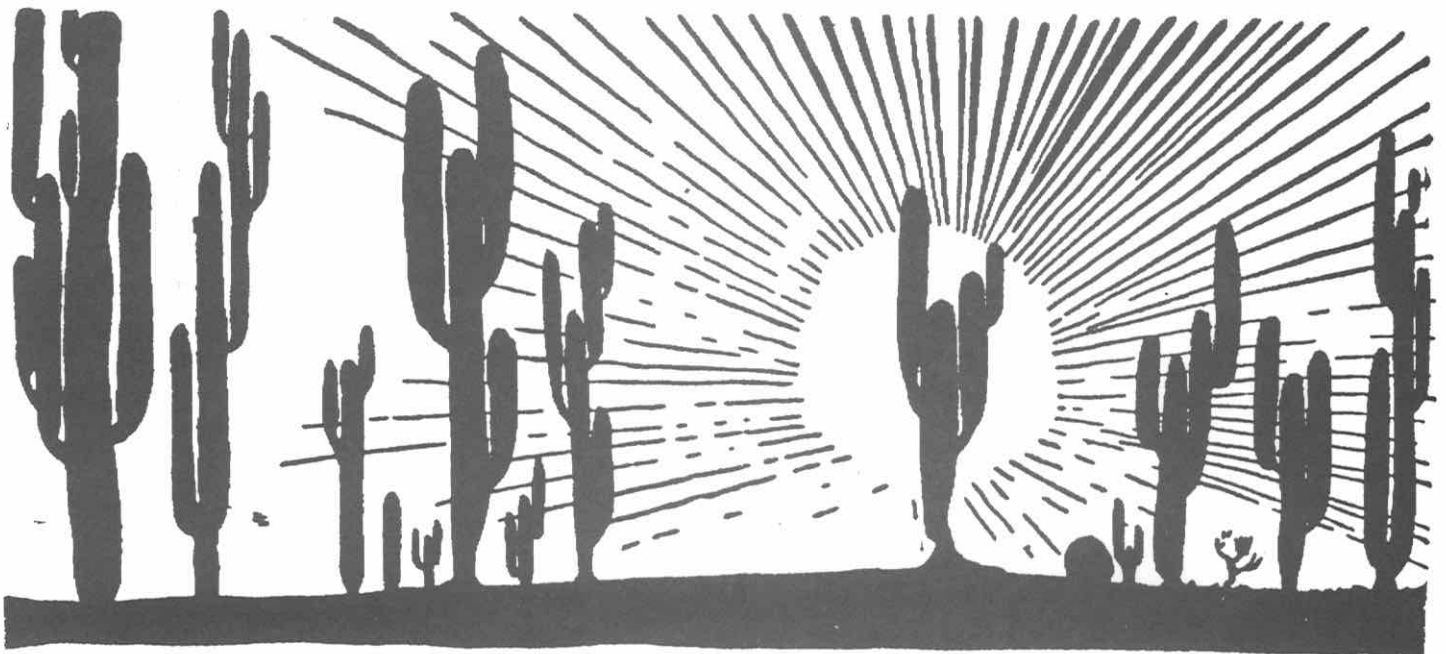
Fan Guest of Honor: George Easter

More info! URL <http://www.tdigital.com/clues/LCC10>

LCC11 Alaska

LCC 12 Portland

LCC 13 Open



Saturday March 6, 1999

2:00 p.m.

Sendero I & II
Are Mysteries Literature?
Deborah Crombie, moderator;
Ann Ripley, Lev Raphael, Bill Moody

Fiesta Room

The Significant Other in the Mystery
Philip Craig, moderator;
Margaret Chittenden, David Walker,
Jerrilyn Farmer

3:00 p.m.

Sendero I & II
**I Died Laughing --
Humor in the Mystery**
Steve Brewer, moderator;
Joyce Christmas, Pete Hautman,
Leslie O'Kane, Bill Fitzhugh

Fiesta Room

Forensics -- Solving the Unsolvable
Sarah Lovett, moderator;
Leslie Glass, Luci Zahray,
Carla Norton, Aaron Elkins

Sendero III

First Time Mystery Novelists
Kris Neri, moderator;
Sherri Board, Valerie Wilcox,
Lori Fairweather, Dennis Charles Evano

4:00 p.m.

Sendero I & II
Martial Arts Demonstration
Walter Jon Williams, moderator;
Rick Riordan, Charlene Harris

Sendero III

Breaking the Rules
Martha Lawrence, moderator;
Christine Jorgensen, Barbara Seranella,
Penny Warner

Saturday March 6, 1999

Fiesta Room

Amateur Sleuths, or Not Another body!
Valerie Malmont, moderator;
Miriam Anne Moore, Delores Johnson,
Megan Rust, Cecelia Tishy

6:30 p.m.

Pavillion & Prefunction
**Cocktail hour followed
by the Banquet**

Sunday March 7, 1999

8:00 a.m. -- Continental breakfast

Pavillion I & II
Sisters in Crime Breakfast
Speaker will be Tess Monahan,
Special Investigator from the New Mexico
Attorney General's Office.
Fiesta Room
Breakfast with the Agents
Esmond Harmsworth, Michael Rosenberg,
Barbara Collins Rosenberg, Alice Volpe



Sunday March 7, 1999

9:00 a.m.

Fiesta Room
More First Time Mystery Novelists
Kathleen Swanholt, moderator;
April Henry, Gregg Main,
Robert Levinson, P.J. Liebson

Pavillion I & II

Biographers of Mystery Writers
Carol McGinnis Kay, moderator;
Margaret and Peter Lewis, Ernie Bulow

Pavillion III

A Slide Show with Margaret Coel
The Mystery of the Plains Indian Ledger Book

10:00 a.m.

Pavillion I, II & III
**Barbara Peters interviews
Deborah Crombie**

11:00 a.m.

Fiesta Room
The Professional Woman Sleuth
Janet Dawson, moderator;
Jonnie Jacobs, Gini Hartzmark,
Sally Chapman, Camille Minichino

Pavillion I & II

**Turning Up the Heat --
Writing the Southwestern Mystery**
Rick Riordan, moderator;
J. A. Jance,
Connie Shelton, Robert Westbrook

12:00. -- Lunch break

1-2:30 p.m.

Pavillion I, II & III -- **Final event**
Tony Hillerman
Award presentations
Raffle for the Quilt
Silent Auction results
Next year in Tucson



LEFT COAST CRIME 9

**Albuquerque,
New Mexico
March 5-7, 1999**

Schedule

A map of the hotel is
located in the program.

Friday March 5, 1999

10:00 a.m. -- Registration begins
(Top of stairs, 2nd floor)

12:00. -- Book Room opens
Enchantment Ballroom

1:00 p.m.
Sendero I & II
**Writing About Mystery Writing --
the Critics Speak**
Lev Raphael, moderator;
Steve Brewer, Marv Lachman

Fiesta Room
Beyond Y2K
Publishing in the Next Millenium
Harlen Campbell, moderator;
Bonnie Nixon, Michael Seidman, Loretta Miller

2:00 p.m.
Fiesta Room
Terry Baker interviews Tasha Mackler

Sendero I & II
**Another Way of Doing It --
Alternative Publishing**
Connie Shelton, moderator;
Joyce Spizer, J. R. Ripley,
L.C. Hayden, Alex Matthews

3:00 p.m.
Sendero I & II
**Small Press, Large Press --
The State of Publishing**
Barbara Peters, moderator;
Susanne Kirk, Alice Volpe, Keith Kahla

Fiesta Room
**Old Crimes --
The Historical Mystery**
Andi Shechter, moderator;
✓ Lauren Haney, Walter Satterthwait,
Ken Kuhlken, Jon Jackson

Friday March 5, 1999

4:00 p.m.
Fiesta Room
The Mystery Short Story
Martha Lawrence, moderator;
Christine Mathews, Robert Randisi,
Cynthia Lawrence, Kris Neri

Sendero I & II
The Book and the Art of Collecting
Ernie Bulow, John Dunning, George Easter

5:00 p.m.
Pavillion I & II
**The DorothyL'ers get-together
and chat session**
Pavillion III
MWA Regional Meeting

6:30 p.m.
Pavillion Ballroom IV-VI
Cocktail party

Programs run 45 minutes.

Author's Signings
follow each program
on the
Pavillion Landing
between the
Stairs and Elevator

Saturday March 6, 1999

7:00 a.m.
Continental breakfast

8:00 a.m.
Fiesta Room
**Paperback Originals --
Hardcover Envy?**
Lora Roberts, moderator;
Patricia Guiver, Brad Reynolds, S.J.,
Pat Frieder

Sendero I & II
Mysteries vs Main Stream
Bill Moody, moderator;
Donna Anders, Rhys Bowen,
Michael Newton, Mary Logue

9:00 a.m.
Sendero I & II
The Chicano Mystery
Teresa Marquez, moderator;
Rudolfo Anaya, Lucha Corpi,
Manuel Ramos, Clyde Aragon
coordinated by Diana Rebolledo

Fiesta Room
**How'd They Do That? --
Couples Who Write**
Bill Crider, moderator;
John and Cathie Celestri,
Bill and Susan Albert

Saturday March 6, 1999

10:00 a.m.
Sendero I & II
The Wild West
Dana Stabenow, moderator;
Sinclair Browning, Walter Satterthwait,
Michael McGarrity

Fiesta Room
Why PI?
Robert Randisi, moderator;
G. M. Ford, Wendi Lee,
Jerry Kennealy, Maxine O'Callaghan

11:00 a.m.
Sendero I, II & III
John Dunning interviewed by Enid Schantz

12:00. -- Lunch Break

1:00 p.m.
Sendero I & II
Writing About Another Culture
Margaret Coel, moderator;
James Doss, Judith Van Gieson,
Earlene Fowler

Fiesta Room
Beating the Odds
The Art of Promotion
Dale Furutani, moderator;
Elizabeth Gunn, Michael Allen Dymmoch,
Elizabeth Cosin, Steve Oliver

