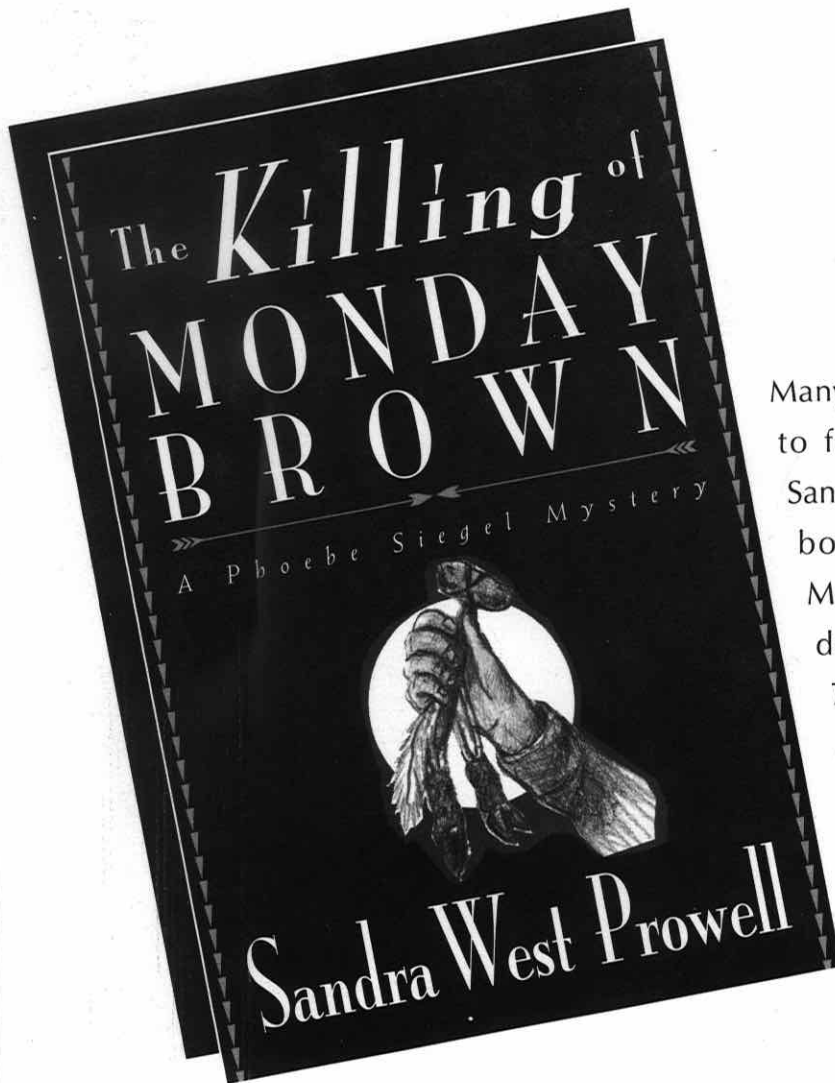


LEFT COAST CRIME IV



February 11-13, 1994
Hyatt Regency Alicante
Anaheim, California

Don't make the same mistake this year.



Many people were unable to find first editions of Sandra West Prowell's first book, *By Evil Means*. Make sure that you don't miss the boat on *The Killing of Monday Brown*: Order your first editions today.

THE KILLING OF MONDAY BROWN
A Phoebe Siegel Mystery
by Sandra West Prowell
ISBN 0-8027-3184-8
hardcover \$19.95
Publication Date: Friday, May 13th, 1994

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LEFT COAST CRIME has returned to Anaheim for its fourth annual gathering of fans and authors who read, write, relish and collect all aspects of mystery and detective fiction. Mystery fans tend to be a peripatetic lot, participating in conventions from coast to coast and occasionally journeying to foreign venues. So, we are pleased that you have chosen to join us at LCC IV. We know you will enjoy the elegant surroundings and the casual, yet intimate meetings between fans and authors.

WELCOME TO

LEFT COAST CRIME IV ANAHEIM

In four short years, LCC has developed a personality and style of its own with the special event on Friday, the Saturday autographing roundtable, the movie room complete with fresh popcorn, the Sunday evening banquet, and the infamous card room.

We want you to feel comfortable and at ease. Our hospitality suite is just that—a place to relax with friends, make new friends and refresh yourself with enough food and drink to enable you to prowl the dealers room for bargains and attend panels from morning to dusk.

This year's Guest of Honor Aaron Elkins is a favorite not only with us but with many of you as well. Our gracious Toastmistress, Carolyn Hart will be on hand to help us make this weekend a pleasurable event for everyone.

If you have questions or problems, our LCC volunteers are here to assist you. You can easily identify them by their blue LCC aprons. We, too will be available to assist you. You need but ask.

Kevin Moore
Kathy Johnson
Kathy Yturraide
Margaret Rose-Prete

CONFERENCE EVENTS

PROGRAMMING:

Royal Ballroom I-VI

BOOK DEALERS ROOM

Plaza Terrace I-V

HOSPITALITY SUITE

Room 1724

GAME ROOM

Granada - 2nd Floor

MOVIE ROOM

Pacific Salon

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Friday

Opening Ceremonies will be held from 4:30 to 5:30 pm in Royal Ballroom III-IV, introduction of authors and door prizes.

High Tea 5:30 pm - Atrium, special ticket required.

Movies and popcorn - Pacific Salon, 5:30 to 10:00 pm.

Saturday

Continental Breakfast 8:30 to 9:30 am and day long refreshments compliments of the LCC IV Committee, Hospitality Suite 1724.

Men of Mystery Event and Auction to benefit Orange County Public Libraries, 4:30 to 5:30 pm, Royal Ballroom III-IV.

Autographing Roundtable & Pasta Bar, no-host bar 5:30 to 7:00 pm, Royal Ballroom I-II.

Movies and popcorn - Pacific Salon, High Noon to 10:00 pm with Surprise Movie at 8:00 pm.

Sunday

Get out of bed! Sisters-in-Crime Breakfast, 8:00 am, Royal Ballroom I-II, special ticket required.

No host bar: 6:00 pm, Atrium

Banquet: 7:00 pm, Room to be announced, special ticket required.

Movies and popcorn - Pacific Salon, Noon to 6:00 pm.

REGISTRATION

Royal Ballroom Foyer

Registration opens at 9:00 am on Friday. Pick up your book bag, program packet and special event tickets.



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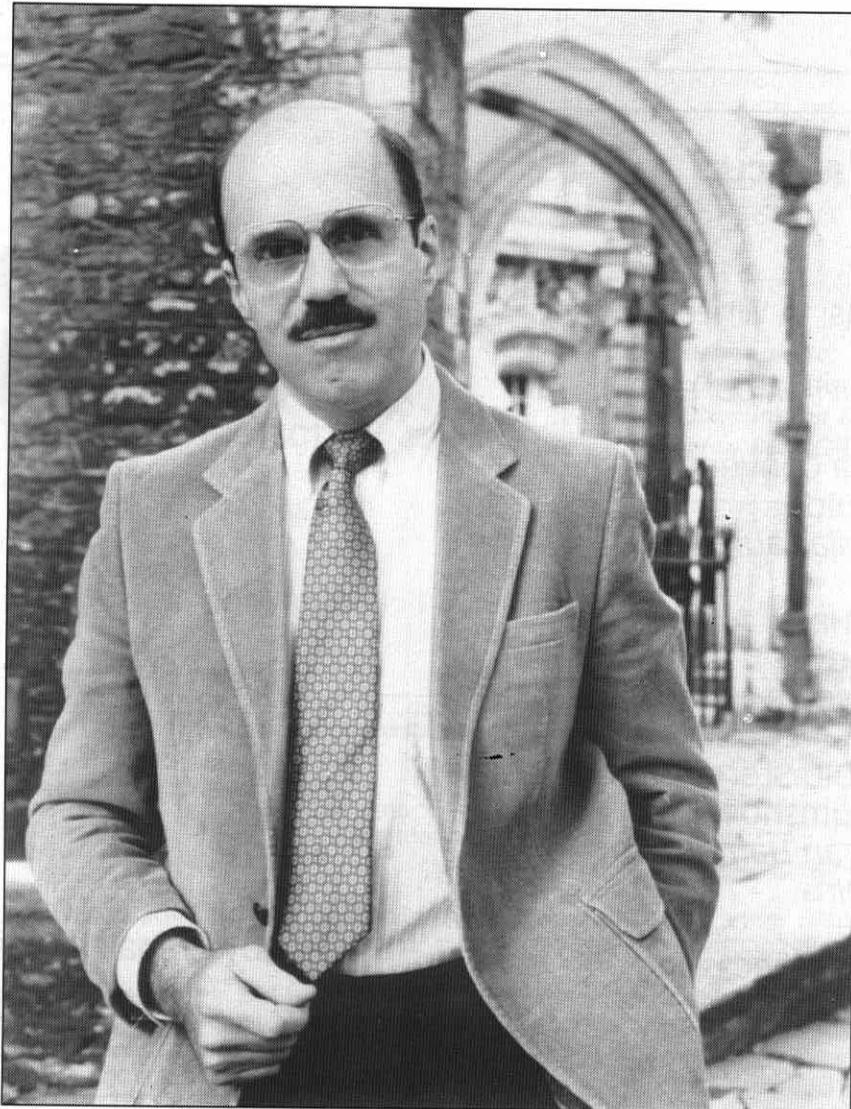
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Aaron Elkins

Guest of Honor

Left Coast Crime IV

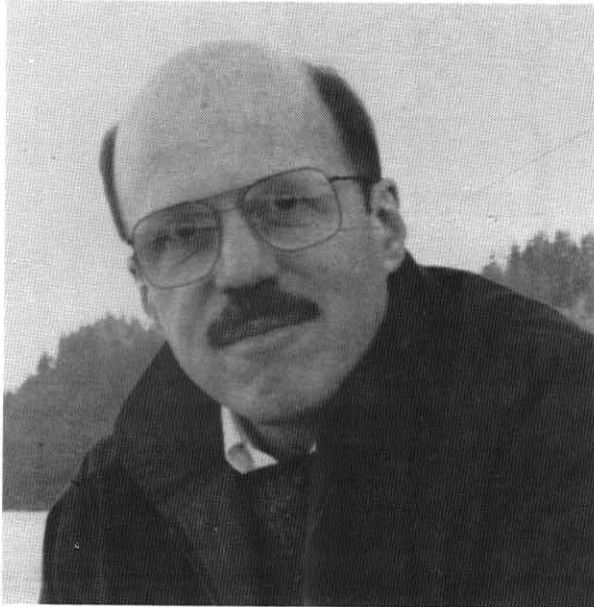
SCRIBNER CRIME



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AARON ELKINS: A WRITER IN TWO WORLDS

by Kevin Moore



There are many contemporary mystery writers who have created two or more series, but none have created such diverse worlds as Aaron Elkins.

I discovered Aaron Elkins' first world, anthropology, when I read The Dark Place, in 1983. I'd never heard (or read) of either Gideon Oliver or his creator at that time, even though I considered myself reasonably well-read in the genre. Correcting my oversight, I devoured Fellowship of Fear only to find there were no more books by Aaron Elkins to read. It was a long two year wait until Murder in the Queen's Armes appeared and another two year gap before Old Bones was published to critical and commercial success and a well deserved Edgar.

Not one to rest on his laurels, Elkins was at the same time creating a new character, Chris Norgren, immersing him in a far different world from anthropology, one

full of museums and classical art. A Deceptive Clarity (1987) has been followed by two more Chris Norgren mysteries including last year's Old Scores. Like the Gideon Oliver series, these books have won praise from the critics while gaining for the author an ever widening readership.

How can one writer successfully create such diverse worlds? Elkins' educational background and professional life prove to be key factors in his ability to create these authentic, believable worlds. For more than twenty years he worked in a variety of academic and government service jobs throughout the United States and Europe, jobs which cut across (and sometimes merged) the disciplines of anthropology, psychology and business.

Elkins has used these travels, his experience as a teacher and his knowledge of anthropology to create Gideon Oliver's world. The astonishing analyses of the "Skeleton Detective" are grounded in fact--some from his own experience and some from his life-long study of the field.

To create his other world, Elkins has acquired a respectable knowledge of art through diligent study and meticulous research. He has been supported in this effort by his wife Charlotte, who has a degree in art and experience as an art librarian. This ensures the authenticity of Chris Norgren's world.

Aaron Elkins is not easy to classify as a writer. I don't find his work cozy, hard or soft boiled. He says he writes to entertain but hopes to educate at the same time. He wants to find a readership

that is both literate and intelligent and can appreciate the wondrous worlds Gideon Oliver and Chris Norgren inhabit. To this end he is, indeed, successful. Gideon Oliver has taught me more anthropology than my college professor did, and taught it in such a way that I want to learn (and read) still more. Chris Norgren has lured me back to the museums and art galleries which I frequented as a student but have too often neglected as an adult.

As a reader, I thank Aaron Elkins for Gideon Oliver, Chris Norgren and their worlds.

Mysteries by Aaron Elkins

Gideon Oliver Series

Fellowship of Fear		1982
The Dark Place		1983
Murder in the Queen's Armes		1985
Old Bones		1987
Curses		1989
Icy Clutches		1990
Make No Bones		1991
Dead Men's Hearts	May	1994

Chris Norgren Series

A Deceptive Clarity		1987
A Gleaming Light		1991
Old Scores		1993

Co-Authored with Charlotte Elkins

A Wicked Slice		1989
(Sequel in progress for 1996 release)		



Carolyn G. Hart: A Not So Retiring Lady

by Orietta A. Hardy-Sayles

It is a nice day. As you stroll down the street, you casually window shop. You are not looking for anything in particular. Your nose twitches at the hint of coffee and you find yourself in front of a window display of books. All mysteries. You check out the sign. Death on Demand. Hmm. You enter its shadowed interior.

"Can I help you?"

"No, no. Smelled the coffee. Saw your sign. Thought I'd check it out."

"Great! Coffee's in the back."

Pretty soon, you are settled with a hot mug labeled Dead Man's Island and a book with an interesting title, Death on Demand by Carolyn G. Hart. Funny thing. It is the same as the name of the store. Wonder what that is all about? Before your coffee has a chance to get cold you are deeply involved with Annie Laurance and Max Darling and who killed who among their acquaintances. You can blame a writer called Carolyn G. Hart.

Soft spoken and lady-like, Carolyn G. Hart is also firm, focused, and absolutely sure that the cozy is the purest form of mystery. Carolyn had published several children's books and other fiction when she had written seven other manuscripts that had done the rounds without success. So this was it. When she wrote Death on Demand, Carolyn, had decided to write her type of book. A book she wanted to write, not one that had been dictated by marketing reports, trends, or surveys. A cozy with the emphasis on relationships and the opportunity to share with the reader her favorite mystery authors.



Carolyn started out wanting to be a journalist. She spent a year working for Norman, Oklahoma's city paper, "The Norman Transcript" and another year on the University of Oklahoma's alumni newspaper. Turning to fiction as an outlet for her relentless writing urge when she followed her husband to Washington, she even wrote a romance novel, The Devereaux Legacy. Something for you completist collectors to look out for while you prowl dusty resale shops. She spent three years on the University of Oklahoma's Journalism and Communications teaching staff before she "retired."

Death on Demand is how many of her fans first meet Carolyn Hart. It is a perfect bookstore conjured up by the Carolyn who is a mystery fan at heart. She says it is closely resembled by the charming Mystery Lovers Bookshop in Pennsylvania. But, she laughed, there are so many bookstores she has not been in yet.

Through seven more stories, we have followed Annie and Max through their courtship, marriage, and incursions of murder, and a mother-in-law. Set in a coastal resort, these mysteries are set at the beach, where Carolyn and her real-life family have enjoyed many summer vacations.

Last year she introduced Henrie O. in several short stories. Dead Man's Island was the first full-length novel she was in. Henrietta O'Dwyer Collins is a retired newspaper woman but not very retiring. She is called to the island retreat of an old acquaintance. Threats have been made, that he insists can only be fathomed by Henrie O. Before the story is over, he is dead and the characters, and you the reader, must survive a hurricane. Its telling is so authentic you will be checking the eaves for snakes. The second book in the series, Scandal in Fair Haven, is due this summer.

Carolyn has written a book a year and many short stories. Eight Death on Demand books, two Henrie O. books, and four short stories featuring the intrepid and retired newspaper woman. Pick up "Mystery Scene" magazine, the "Mystery Readers Journal," or "The Armchair Detective" and you will most likely find an article by Carolyn promoting mysteries, explaining the cozy, or demanding professionalism from journalists. You will just as likely find interviews with her or reviews of her books.

As president of Sisters in Crime in 1992, she promoted the works of all mystery writers, and those of women in particular. The Waldenbooks chain created a special promotion which she hopes will become a regular event.

Always accessible, Carolyn has logged many miles promoting her books. Unlike Henrie O. who seems to be setting a trend of sleuthing on the road, Carolyn is not as willing to live out of a suitcase, these days. She is also at work on a new Annie and

Max mystery for the Death on Demand series. She assured me that by the time the conference began she planned to know more what the plot will be about.

Before we ended our conversation, she did want to clear up one rumor that has been circulating since the publication of a book of names and pseudonyms of writers: Carolyn G. Hart is not a pseudonym for a male writer. Carolyn G. Hart has never hidden behind an alias and she is very much a lady.

"I'll have another coffee, if you don't mind."

"No problem. But are you going to buy that book before you finish reading it?"

"This one? I thought it was a guide to the store."

A Short List of Mystery Works
by Carolyn G. Hart

Death on Demand Mysteries

Death on Demand
Design for Murder
Something Wicked
Honeymoon with Murder
A Little Class on Murder
Deadly Valentine
The Christie Caper
Southern Ghost

Henrie O Mysteries

Dead Man's Island
Scandal in Fair Haven (due summer 1994)

ATTENDING A CONVENTION: A PRACTICAL GUIDE

by Leila Laurence

The prospect of travel and attending a mystery convention is exciting, but it can be fraught with feelings of anxiety and apprehension. The thought of meeting your favorite authors or being a featured writer can be thrilling and scary, especially when you are going for the first time. With some thoughtful preparation and a positive attitude, the experience should be fun, educational and hopefully profitable, depending on your personal agenda.

Do Your Homework

Read whatever information you have regarding the convention carefully. Note dates and start times. You do not want to miss something great because you assume things don't start until Saturday. We all have budget considerations, but try to make any reservations as soon as possible. You will ensure yourself a place and often you can take advantage of discounts for early registrants. If you wish to participate in a panel or some other aspect of the convention, follow the instructions given, in a timely manner. Convention planners only have so much space and people who call with last minute demands often evoke unpleasant responses. Panels need to be organized and programs need to be printed in advance. Latecomers create problems and the people who manage conventions have long memories. If you have requested something and have not heard or received information, after a reasonable time, contact the appropriate committee chairperson. Try to be gracious if you have been overlooked and offer to be helpful. The majority of conventions are put on by fans who have

donated their personal time, and often, their own money. They can become overwhelmed and overloaded.

Check out the area. Before you leave home, call the hotel and ask if it is cold, hot or rainy. Ask what the temperature is. In Southern California, it is cold when it reaches 60 degrees. It is a matter of perspective. You want to dress for the climate without having to lug a lot of baggage, especially if you are using public transportation.

Pick up a map of the area, even if you are not driving. It will come in handy when you are looking for a local restaurant or landmark.

Most writers' conventions will send an attending author list shortly before the convention. This will give you a chance to select some books to take with you for signature. If you end up with an excessive number of books, most hotels can arrange shipping for you. Just check with the concierge.

Read something by the guest of honor, even if the author writes strictly hard-boiled and you read only cozy. Authors who are chosen for honors all have something special to offer and you will enjoy the presentations more if you have an understanding of their work. You might discover a new area of interest or an unusual viewpoint. And better yet, a new series to pursue.

Business Cards

If you have business cards, take a supply with you. For about ten dollars, you can get a supply of very adequate,

simple, business cards at a local business supply discount store. All you need is your name, address and phone number. Just tuck a handful in purse or pocket. If someone you meet wants to exchange information, just scribble on the back. Occasionally there are drawings where you will be asked to drop your business card into the "hat". Most important, exchange cards with those wonderful, intriguing people you meet. These contacts can be extremely valuable.

Appropriate Dress

Comfort is important, but image is also a consideration. We West Coast people sometimes tend to push "California casual" a little too far. Jeans and tee shirts have their place, but avoid extremes in dress. If you are a panelist, dress appropriately. You would rather be remembered for the witty things you say, rather than how sloppy and unprepared you look. Have respect for the audience, some of whom will be very conservative.

Identification

Wear your name badge for the entire convention! Access to the dealer's room or to the panels may require proof of registration, so make sure your name badge is visible. This cannot be emphasized too strongly. Also, people who are meeting under new circumstances do not remember names unless they have a photographic memory. You can save yourself a bruised ego if someone has forgotten your name. Do not hesitate to remind someone who you are if you have met before. They will appreciate the courtesy.

Hospitality Rooms

When you register, ask if there is a hospitality room. Do not avoid hospitality rooms. Your hosts have set up these rooms so you can meet fellow attendees under comfortable circumstances. This is

where you find someone to go to dinner with. Usually there is some shy person sitting there who will be incredibly grateful if you just ask, "Is anyone going to dinner?"

Meeting People

The more different people you meet and get to know the more fun you will have and the more you will get out of the convention. Do not hide out in your room. If you happen to be attending with someone else, do not spend all of your time with that person. Discuss this up front, before you go, so there is a mutual understanding. Make an effort to sit with different people whenever you can. It is nice to be with old friends, but part of the learning experience is making new contacts. Eat lunch with a different person each day. Recognize that many people are shy and apprehensive and this may be a new experience for them. Seek those quiet people out. You may meet the Pulitzer Prize winner of the future. The wonderful thing about a mystery convention is that you automatically have something in common and there is always something to talk about. Pay attention to where people are from. And do not be intimidated by celebrity.

Collection Information

Pick up all those handouts and free resource materials. You can sort them out later. The convention is where you are going to find out the latest information. Take advantage of informational panels and displays.

Panels and Major Activities

As soon as possible after you get your registration materials, take a few minutes to look carefully at the program. Use a yellow marking pen and mark those items that you don't want to miss. There will be conflicts and you will have to make some choices. Usually the two authors you particularly want to see are on opposite

panels and you will have to juggle your time. Do not try to do and see it all. Select what interests you the most. Leave yourself some time and space, even if it means retreating to your room or taking a walk outside. Don't limit yourself to those panels with authors in the subgenre you prefer. Stretch a little. Go see someone who has an outrageous reputation. If readings are offered, attend a couple. Authors tend to share more of themselves in the intimate atmosphere.

Dealer Rooms

Seek out the dealer room, even if you do not intend to buy anything. The atmosphere is casual and you can often find your favorite writer in there. Go to the dealer room early in the convention. If there is a particular book you plan to buy, especially one that is out of print, don't wait to purchase it. Guaranteed, it will be gone when you go back. Be sure to budget some money for an unexpected find. During the convention, you may hear someone who inspires you to go racing to the dealer room to buy his book.

Mystery book dealers, especially used book dealers, are fans, just like you. Many of them are experts in the genre and gold mines of information. Take a few minutes to visit with them.

Signing Rooms

Your program will have a signing schedule for the authors. Usually, book signings take place directly after panels. Do not expect the writers to stay in the meeting room to sign books. Many authors are reluctant to turn fans away and as a result are late getting to the signing room where there are impatient fans in long lines. The Left Coast Crime conventions have a planned event where all the registered authors are available to sign books, whether or not they are panelists. If you have more than a couple

of books to be signed, it is courteous to get those signed and return to the end of the line.

Signing lines are a great place to meet people. Don't avoid those authors who are sitting there with no one in line. Carry your program book with you and have them sign it. There is nothing more miserable for a first time novelist than to have to spend an hour sitting next to an established author who has adoring fans lined up out the door and down the hall. Spend a few minutes talking to the loners. Tell them you have not had an opportunity to read their work, but you would like to know about it, and them. You may be meeting a future Edgar winner who might not have the time to chat in the future.

Note to Fans:

Use good judgment in approaching authors. Do not interrupt if they are eating or obviously involved in a business conference or serious conversation. The time to visit is when they are sitting in the hotel lobby or wandering in the dealer room, or at a signing. If you happen to meet your idol and start to get tongue-tied and gush, just go ahead and gush a little. He may be embarrassed, but he will love it.

At panels, do not ask personal questions of the participants and do not ask, "Where do you get your ideas?" You may get a sarcastic answer. If you must know how the author thought of killing Mrs. Magready with a can opener, ask that specific question. Do not be afraid to ask questions. Feedback makes the presentation become interactive and more spontaneous.

It is inappropriate to ask for agent recommendations or to offer your valuable manuscript. Make your contacts and do your networking, but conduct business after the convention. Be professional whether published or not.

Note to Authors:

Even though you may feel that you have no privacy and are being pulled in all directions, please be gracious. Every fan that you spend a few personal moments with is more likely to pull your new novel off the bookstore shelf, just because he met you. When you sign a book, please don't write, "Best wishes". This is equivalent to "Where do you get your ideas?" If asked for signature only, do not assume that the person with that book is a dealer. I often get a number of books signed so I can give them to friends and family on special occasions. Don't be insulted if someone asks you to sign an obviously remaindered or used book. It may be that the fan has searched for that particular book because he wants to read everything you ever wrote. And he will be the one who buys the new hard cover.

Note to Dealers and Collectors:

Expect to take your turn in the signing line. If you can only get two books signed, you will have to make choices. If you have a large number of books by a particular author, ask if you can meet at a different time, or if you can mail the collection for signature. If you have a large personal collection, tell the author, so he does not assume you are a dealer and can appreciate your loyalty.

Enjoy Yourself

Leave your problems at home. Every one needs a break, especially writers who spend most of their lives staring at a blank screen or piece of paper. Make an effort to mix. If you are invited to go along to a private party or reception, don't hesitate. Do it. Participate in as many activities as you can, but leave yourself some space. Try something that you ordinarily have no interest in. Keep an open mind and a positive attitude. Smile at people you don't know.

When You Get Home

Before you jump back into your routine, take a few minutes. If you promised someone that you would send them information, do it before you forget. File those business cards you have collected where you can find them. Sort your handouts and resource materials and pull out the good stuff for future reference and sharing with those who were unable to attend. Send short thank-you notes to anyone who helped you. If you are a writer, start writing. You should be energized.

Stack all those new books on your nightstand, with all those other ones. Consider getting another bookcase, and start reading. . .

ON YOUR MARK, GET SET, GO!



Remember!

Wear your badge for all conference events

LEFT COAST EYE Q

Test your knowledge of films and books most criminal . . .



1. Name three actresses who have played Miss Marple for cinema or television.
2. In what book is the victim murdered by poison in his contact lens solution?
3. Name Sue Dunlap's three series characters.
4. Who are the two actors who played Charlie Chan in the classic movie series of the 30's and 40's?
5. What is the name of the bar featured in Marcia Muller's and Bill Pronzini's collaborative mystery, Double?
6. Who was the sixties radical and Berkeley drop-out turned private eye played by Richard Dreyfuss in a 1978 film?
7. In what book was a victim killed by being "pressed" like a duck?
8. How did Annie Laurance acquire the bookstore, Death on Demand?
9. What unusual craft did P.I. John Denson ride down the rapids of the North Umpqua River?
10. What two American women writers have recently won Best Novel Edgars breaking a 30+ year losing streak?
11. What two real-life psychologists write mysteries with a psychologist amateur sleuth?
12. Name two priests, two nuns, two rabbis, two ministers and one Clerk of the Meeting who are also amateur sleuths.
13. Name three pampered cats and two pampered dogs in mystery fiction.

M

OVIE ROOM NOTES

Left Coast Crime IV is proud to offer alternative programming in the form of movies, movies, more movies and some popcorn.

Friday Features: Meet the classic movie detectives of the 30's and 40's; Charlie Chan, Bulldog Drummond and The Thin Man in their original black and white versions.

Saturday Features: More oldies but goodies, including Dame Agatha, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and the incomparable Hitchcock.

Sunday Features: Murder and mayhem up to date with FX, FX2, V.I. Warshawski and others.

SATURDAY SURPRISE MOVIE!

8:00 PM

(Our radical lives in the 60's are relived in this off-beat thriller that has become a cult hit)

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DISPELLING OLD STEREOTYPES -- THE GERIATRIC GUMSHOE

by Joan Hamerman Robbins

The sympathetic, elderly lady--Jane Marple, Dame Beatrice Lestrangle Bradley, or Maud Silver--with a "knack" for getting herself involved in other people's affairs is undergoing a notable change. This is reflected in the current surge of old women protagonists in mystery fiction. Undoubtedly, some of this change is the result of the continuing interest in women with a new perspective: aging.

This savvy contemporary senior sleuth moves about, actively engaged in her community; she also demonstrates more awareness than her predecessors did of her body and health. Dorothy Gilman's Emily Pollifax knows karate and practices yoga. Henrie O., Carolyn Hart's senior protagonist, jogs, aware she's not as fast as she used to be. Serita Stevens and Rayanne Moore's Fanny Zindel is a senior tennis champion--for the fifth year. Irene Allen's Elizabeth Elliot has arthritis; while sometimes that keeps her indoors and inactive, it doesn't hamper her pursuit of justice.

The earlier English models, created in a time when options for women were less varied, frequently were situated on the periphery of the action. From that vantage point they displayed great skill and patience in figuring out what was going on. They watched and waited for things to happen.

Our contemporary elders don't wait. They are doers, often busily engaged in seeking information and stirring things up. As Emily Pollifax says: "Adapt, adjust, and catch your breath later." Like their younger counterparts, many are right in the middle of things, confronting both life and injustice. While

much of what happens is serious business, humor frequently lightens up the tension, demonstrating that indeed, women do have a sense of humor.

Fifty years ago, our foremothers disguised their craftiness; it was assumed women were less self-assured than men. If one appears as a "harmless", "fluffy" old woman who constantly knits, few would realize that behind that facade lurks a very keen mind, capable of impressive deduction. Quite a difference today! Elder sleuths champion their strengths out loud. Hart's Henrie O. is a sharp, assertive woman who doesn't hesitate to take control of a situation. Nor does she defer to men. When she knows what to do, she does it. In a different style. Sister Carol Anne O'Marie's sleuth, Sister Mary Helen, is very persistent. Gallagher Gray's Aunt Lil, at 84, follows a "hunch" in the best Jane Marple tradition, but forges ahead on her own.

Another example of the revaluing of womanly talents is the reframing of gossip. Gossip was the medium through which Jane Marple conducted her work. She was very good at finding sources and using them to her advantage. Today, we speak positively of a woman's capacity to relate to people, listening with care and empathy.

While these protagonists represent some of the many complexities that make up an old woman's life, the life described is still primarily Caucasian and middle class. Occasionally however, as with Bowen Hall's Emma Chizzit, a working class woman sleuth is portrayed, and Stevens and Moore's Fanny Zindel models one of the many women, in real life, who

values that come from varied religious practices. Sister Mary Helen, a nun, often bolsters her faith in God with much personal action. Fanny Zindel is Jewish and the narrative is filled with references to her cultural heritage; she also reminds us that anti-Semitism is omnipresent. Elizabeth Elliot, as Clerk of her Quaker Meeting in Cambridge, MA., affords readers the opportunity to learn about the principles that influence that community. B.J. Oliphant's Shirley Mc Clintock, travels to Santa Fe, New Mexico in Death and the Delinquent. The practices and problems of Native Americans in a near-by Pueblo community are important to her story. These varied accounts illuminate women's diversity.

While Christie and Wentworth often decried the changes that were taking place in post-war England, their protagonists didn't consider taking political action. Today's aging sleuths tackle social and political problems, modeling senior involvement in the world around them. Emma Chizzit and Elizabeth Elliot, each in her own special way, actively participate in political issues which affect the quality of women's lives. In Bagels for Tea Nathan, in complimenting Fanny, addresses one of the significant contributions made by these elders: "...you focus much harder on life and making it better, saving it."

Maud Silver was often rescuing young women from bad situations, but rarely worked with one as her equal. While Ms. Marple and Dame Beatrice both occasionally relied on younger women to aid their investigations, the valuing of female friendship was not directly stated. Contemporary mystery novels have changed this. Women's support of one another is now de rigueur. Cooperation between them is often the key to unraveling the crime and, sometimes, more highly regarded than cooperation with the police. The importance of friendship between women is further underscored by Pele Plante, Sister Carol

Anne O'Marie and Corinne Holt Sawyer. In different ways, each protagonist depends on her close association with another woman to successfully solve the mystery.

Thanks to Christie and Wentworth's positive images of elderly spinsters, our current elders have moved on to more varied life styles. While several are widows, Gray's Aunt Lil was never married and enjoyed her life as a working single woman; twice divorced, Emma Chizzit prefers being single. Sister Mary Helen and CC Scott, a lesbian retired therapist, represent other alternatives.

An earlier break from convention that has been more difficult to sustain is creating an aging character who, like Maud Silver and Dame Beatrice, receives a fee for sleuthing. Among the current protagonists I know, only Kate Wilhelm's Constance Leidl, who works with her husband, is paid. Although many of the elder amateurs had impressive careers in other fields, no protagonist yet weaves together the value of life experience with professional sleuthing. Here's another area to develop.

Join us Saturday Morning at The Geriatric Gumshoe Panel. Learn more and exchange ideas about these savvy senior sleuths.

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PARANOIA IN THE MODERN MYSTERY WRITER

by

Earl Emerson

"I was trapped in a house with a lawyer, a bare-breasted woman and a dead man. The rattlesnake in the paper sack only complicated matters." As I plugged away on the initial draft of Fat Tuesday, these lines cropped up, but not until page 127, chapter eight.

We all have our theories of fiction, but one of my inviolable working tenets has always been that a mystery or thriller has to start out with a grab-the-reader sentence, scene or image.

If I don't start off with a bang, NOBODY will ever read my book, not even my mother. Although my mother denies this, I know it to be true. Whether through paranoia or just fickleness, I write under the assumption that the majority of readers are looking for an excuse to put my book down and forget about it. A certain amount of equanimity in the middle and final passages of a mystery seems reasonable. After all, by that time you hope you've involved the reader in the characters to an extent that they need to find out what happens to them. But in the beginning, there is nothing between you and the dustbin but a few lines.

We all know it's no longer a leisurely world nor an orderly life, as well as we know that mystery fiction ameliorates the dismay of those wretched facts somewhat, but even so, there are approximately fifty-thousand new titles a year, (by my reckoning at least half of these are by first-time mystery novelists) so the competition is keen, the fray fierce and we cannot afford to keep any of our

chambers empty of bullets.

It has often been said that if someone has already bought, borrowed or (gulp) checked your book out, they're going to give you the benefit of the doubt for a chapter or two. That's certainly true of movies where you pay your \$6.50 and you sit in your seat and you don't get up unless you need more popcorn or unless the flick is a real stinker. The beginning of a film makes little difference because once you buy your ticket and sit down, you're basically a captive for two hours. A book, however, can be put down and promptly forgotten at any moment, an event that is far more likely in the first few pages or chapters. How many times have we heard, "Oh, yeah, I tried that one." Me, I heft the thing, glance at the author bio, the blurbs, then read the first few lines. If they don't generate a spark of interest and unless the work has been very highly recommended, it gets deep-sixed. Admittedly, I'm not the insatiable, uncritical and omnivorous mystery reader some fans are, but the majority of readers aren't either.

But back to Fat Tuesday. "I was trapped . . . etc." As soon as the words tracked across the computer screen I began wondering how I had failed to come up with lines to equal these for the first chapter. After squandering most of a day trying to reshape the beginning, I knew it was pointless. I decided to move the lines from chapter eight to the beginning of chapter one.

It took weeks to junk the book,

replot the story, and regain the momentum of the narrative. It was scary, throwing away almost a hundred and fifty pages. Despite the setback, Fat Tuesday was the most enjoyable writing experience I've had, and curiously, the shortest.

It doesn't matter if it's an intriguing scene, character, bit of business or just a couple of catchy phrases. If you don't set the hook early, the reader will shake it out and float downstream.

Many fine mainstream writers obviously work under the same rule. Take The Thanatos Syndrome by Walker Percy. It begins, "For some time now I have noticed that something strange is occurring in our region. I have noticed it both in the patients I have treated and in ordinary encounters with people. At first there were only suspicions. But yesterday my suspicions were confirmed.

I have not always been successful in finding the right book, but I keep trying. My own Black Hearts and Slow Dancing began like this: "Fontana liked to think he wasn't a murderer. There was a subtle distinction between the words kill and murder, one he found himself reviewing until it became a catechism."

The Rainy City: "On Saturday some ghouel murdered my dog."

Deviant Behavior: "He's been missing for a week," said the thin woman ..."

Yellow Dog Party: "It was raining when they rolled me out of the big Lincoln and into the ditch."

Richard Hoyt began Siskiyou Two-Step with a scene in which his private eye protagonist is fishing, spots the naked body of a dead woman floating downstream, and in his efforts to retrieve same, ends up riding the corpse down a wild set of rapids. Beginnings like this not

only hook the reader, they get talked about years later.

My personal favorite from my own books? The beginning of next year's Hazards of the Profession. "Fontana thought firefighting was the best job on earth until Creed's boot fell out of the sky."

Of course, it isn't always possible to twist a plot around to satisfy my paranoia about jump-start beginnings, but it's fun to keep trying.

Originally published in the MWA annual (and edited)

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HOLLYWOOD HYPECASTING

by Sandy Siegel

Your novel is written, sold and published. And then it happens: Hollywood calls. What do you do? My advice: Put on your Reeboks and run!

Just kidding. But you might want to slip into a few extra layers of skin -- the thicker the better -- and keep plenty of grains of salt by the phone: you will need to take one with each conversation you have with a Hollywood type.

Unless you plan to do your own book adaptation (for this, add a large bottle of industrial-strength Valium to your supply list), you will probably deal primarily with the Hollywood species *HOMO literarus agentus*, more commonly known as The Agent. (Rumors abound that this species is related to *Homo sapiens*, but conclusive evidence has yet to be found.)

Your first few weeks of contact with The Agent are known as The Honeymoon, so named because of its resemblance to a honeymoon -- but without the sex. (In Hollywood, you get screwed *after* The Honeymoon.) During this time, you will be wooed, stroked, promised the moon, put on a pedestal and made to feel like you're the only writer in the world. Your phone calls will be promptly picked up, your book will be enthusiastically shopped to studios, networks, production companies and stars, and your head will be prematurely filled with delusions of grandeur, as The Agent whispers those sweet little nothings in your ear: "Dawn loves it. She's going to take a meeting with Jeffrey about packaging it -- with Whoopi and Robin to star and Steven to direct." (Translation: Hold off on the Mercedes and the summer cottage in Martha's

Vineyard.)

The Honeymoon ends when your material does not sell in a reasonable amount of time. (Beware: The definition of *reasonable* is still under debate in the Hollywood community.) You have now entered Phase 2: The Marriage -- aka The "S/he'll-have-to-get-back-to-you" Period. They will get back -- eventually. But conversations will shorten and enthusiasm will wane. Promises will still be made, but unless you have a picture phone, you will be spared the sight of The Agent's rapidly growing nose. As in many marriages, you will start to have your doubts: Can I trust him/her? Is s/he living up to her/his part of the bargain? And is s/he, God forbid, representing someone else?

If the answers to these questions are *no*, *no* and *yes*, then welcome to Phase 3: The Separation -- or The "S/he's-out-to-lunch-and-I-have-no-idea-what-time-s/he'll-be-back" Period. The signs are obvious: Lunch runs from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. The Secretary asks you to spell your name -- twice. And The Agent has changed the number on his/her car phone. Admit it: It's time for The Divorce.

But lo and behold, when you least expect it, The Agent calls (and none too soon -- you're down to your last grain of salt). Dawn convinced Jeffrey to make a deal, and Business Affairs phoned with actual numbers. What do you do? My advice: Take the money -- and *then* put on your Reeboks and run!

THE END

(of the article, not the hype)

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MUG SHOTS and RAP SHEETS

Whenever possible, photos and biographies of LCC IV participants have been provided. We regret that not all authors are so represented either because of our press deadline, or the lack of readily available material.

JEFF ABBOTT sets his first book in his home state of Texas. Due out in the fall of 1994 from Ballantine, Do Unto Others, a humorous traditional mystery, will be followed by The Only Good Yankee in 1995. Both books feature amateur detective Jordy Poteet and other oddball residents of Mirabeau, Texas.

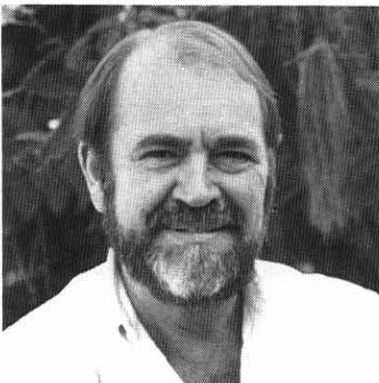
GARRISON ALLEN wants everyone to know that the featured character of his new "Big Mike" series is no refined KoKo or Yum Yum, but a 25 pound Abyssinian alley cat. Desert Cat, out in March, 1994 from Zebra Books will be followed by Royal Cat. Allen has been an English teacher, job corps counselor, newspaper reporter, free lance writer and a tank commander in the Marine Corps Reserve. None of these jobs however, prepared him for life with Mycroft, Archie and Holmes, the fearless, dog and vet-terrorizing real-life models for Big Mike.

GARY AMO's first novel Come Nightfall, was nominated for an Edgar as best first novel. Silent Night, Weeping Shadows, and the recently released Come Darkness, like his debut work were published by Pinnacle Books. A former teacher and political consultant, Amo has also written for numerous state and local political campaigns. He is now the editor of the Palos Verde Peninsula News.

NOREEN AYRES' second novel, Carcass Trade, will be out from William Morrow in August. Her first in the Smokey Brandon series, A World The Color Of Salt, featuring female forensic specialist Smokey Brandon, is now available in paperback from Avon, and on audio tape from Books On Tape, Newport Beach. Noreen is also the author of a book of poetry, Sorting Out Darkness, Pacific Writers Press; new poetry has recently appeared in the magazine Yellow Silk. She is the current Orange County Library Poster Author.

WILLIAM BERNHARDT made his debut as a novelist with Primary Justice, a national best seller now in its eighth printing. Bernhardt followed up with Blind Justice and Deadly Justice continuing the exploits of Tulsa attorney Ben Kincaid. Perfect Justice, the fourth book in the series and hardcover debut is now available from Ballantine. He obtained his law degree at the University of Oklahoma College of Law. He is a trial attorney and partner at a large Tulsa law firm. In 1993 he was selected by the American Bar Association's Barrister Magazine as one of the top 20 lawyers in the nation. He lives in Tulsa with his wife, Kirsten and their son, Harry.

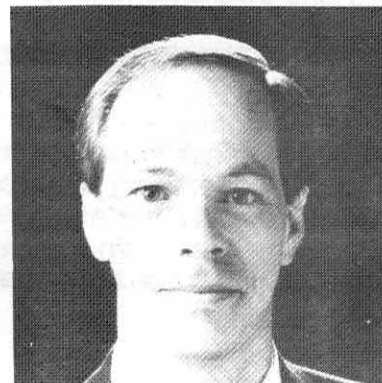
JAN BURKE's second book Sweet Dreams, Irene is in current release and follows her highly successful debut novel, Good Night,



GARY AMO



NOREEN AYRES



WILLIAM BERNHARDT

Irene. Both books feature Irene Kelly, a newspaper reporter in Las Piernas (Long Beach), California. During an interview which aired on *48 Hours*, President Bill Clinton, a true mystery lover mentioned that he was reading Good Night, Irene.

HARLEN CAMPBELL's first mystery Monkey on a Chain was released by Doubleday in 1992. He is currently at work on further books to feature (Rainbow) Paul Porter. Campbell lives in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

ROBERT W. CAMPBELL's writings cover all aspects of the genre but his current series featuring Jimmy Flannery, Chicago sewer inspector and precinct captain has won him a legion of new fans. The first in this popular series, The Junkyard Dog won an Edgar. Mr. Campbell lives in Carmel by the Sea, California.

TAFFY CANNON, who has worked as a journalist, social worker, and screenwriter, saw her first Nan Robinson mystery, A Pocket Full of Karma released to both critical and popular acclaim. The second book, also featuring California State Bar Attorney/Investigator Robinson, Tangled Roots will be out this fall.

MICHAEL COLLINS is the author of the Dan Fortune novels, the longest-running detective series today. A winner of the Edgar and PWA's Lifetime Achievement Awards, his stories have been included in Best Detective and Mystery Stories. He lives with his wife, novelist Gayle Hallenbeck Lynds, in Santa Barbara.

MICHAEL CONNELLY

ROBERT CRAIS is a Los Angeles screenwriter whose three Elvis Cole mysteries The Monkey's Raincoat, Stalking the Angel and Lullaby Town have earned raves (and award nominations) from both critics and fans.

CAMILLA T. CRESPI is the author of The Trouble With . . . series featuring Simona Griffo, a self-deprecating, food-loving divorcee who has moved from her native Italy to the advertising world of New York. Simona made her hard cover debut with The Trouble with Thin Ice published by HarperCollins. Crespi is currently working

on The Trouble with Going Home. She is President of the New York Chapter of MWA and a member in Sisters in Crime and the Author's Guild.

DEBORAH CROMBIE grew up in Dallas but has traveled extensively in England and Scotland so it is not surprising that her series (Scribner's) has a British setting. A Share in Death debuted in 1993 with the sequel to follow in 1994.

CATHERINE DAIN was raised in Reno, Nevada, the setting for her Freddie O'Neal series. All available from Berkley Jove, the books include Lay It On The Line, Sing A Song of Death and the just released Walk A Crooked Mile. Freddie O'Neal will return in Lament for a Dead Cowboy in August of this year. Catherine Dain is on the board of directors of the SoCal Chapter of MWA and is a member of both Sisters in Crime and the Private Eye Writers of America.

JAMES DALESSANDRO is the author of the recently released Bohemian Heart a fictionalized account of the Moscone/Milk assassinations in San Francisco.

THOMAS DAVIS is the Shamus Award winner for Suffer the Children his first novel in 1991. His second book, Murdered Sleep also features Dave Strickland and was just released by Walker. A philosophy lecturer at De Anza College, he lives in Los Gatos.

JANET DAWSON's first novel Kindred Crimes was nominated for an Anthony Award. The third book in the series featuring private investigator Jeri Howard is in current release.

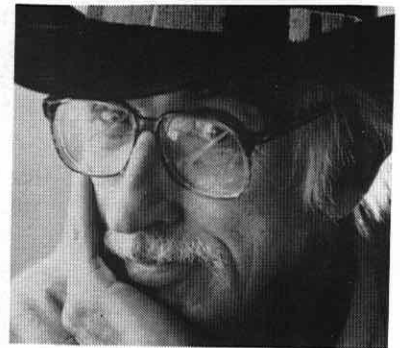
DENISE DIETZ's philosophy "Life is short, eat dessert first" comes through in her fiction. Her first book featuring Ellie Bernstein Throw Darts At A Cheesecake was released in 1992 and will be followed in July of this year by Beat Up A Cookie (both from Walker). Dietz gained inspiration from her jobs as waitress, lecturer for Weight Watchers and as an extra for Paramount. A graduate of the University of Wisconsin, she now lives in Colorado because of the majestic mountains and her love for the Denver Broncos.



JAN BURKE



TAFFY CANNON



MICHAEL COLLINS



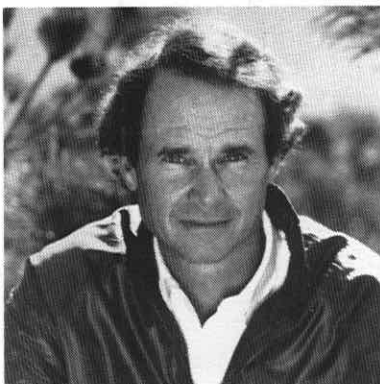
CAMILLA T. CRESPI



DEBORAH CROMBIE



CATHERINE DAIN



THOMAS DAVIS



DENISE DIETZ



HARRIS DULANY

JEROME DOOLITTLE is a former White House speechwriter, diplomat and newspaperman turned author. His first novel in the Tom Bethany series, Body Scissors, was a Shamus Award nominee and a Mystery Book Club selection. Two more Bethany novels have followed with a fourth due in 1994.

WARWICK DOWNING lives in Colorado, the location for many of his books.

HARRIS DULANY is a Left Coast Crime IV Rising Star whose first book One Kiss Led to Another is due in May from HarperCollins. Featuring PI Cornelius Leeds, it is set in and around Atlantic City and New Jersey's Pine Barrens.

SOPHIE DUNBAR is a true southern girl, growing up in Tennessee, Georgia, Florida and Louisiana. Her heritage makes itself known in her first book to feature Claire Jenner Claiborne, Behind Eclair's Doors. She intends to continue the steamy New Orleans adventures shared by Claire and her husband Dan.

SUSAN DUNLAP is the creator of three popular mystery series and last years Left Coast Crime's Co-Guest of Honor. Time Expired featuring Berkeley policewoman Jill Smith is her most recent release. Her upcoming book High Fall (September) features Kiernan O'Shaughnessy, former forensic pathologist turned detective.

CHARLOTTE ELKINS co-authored A Wicked Slice with her husband, Aaron Elkins. A golf mystery featuring Lee Olfsted. It was published in 1989. Much to the delight of the books many fans, she and Aaron are now at work on a sequel. Elkins is also the author of several romance novels written under a pseudonym.

EARL W. EMERSON's protagonists Thomas Black and Mac Fontana are two of the genre's most popular sleuths. One (Black) is a private eye and the other (Fontana) a firechief and acting sheriff. A Shamus award winner for Poverty Bay, Emerson lives (and writes) in North Bend, Washington with his wife and three children and continues to work for the Seattle Fire Department.

JEAN FEMLING is a 33-year OC resident and

Southern California is her turf. She began by publishing fantasy and children's short stories. Her mystery novels include Getting Mine, and Hush, Money featuring Moz Brant. Jean's current work in progress is Love-Crazy.

EARLENE FOWLER was raised in La Puente, CA by a Southern mother and a Western father which is probably why her Benni Harper series features quilts, cattle, smartmouthed women, cowboys and a sexy Latino cop. Fool's Puzzle from Berkeley Prime Crime debuts in May 1994 and she has recently finished the second in the quilt-titled series set on the Central Coast of California.

SARA ANN FREED is Executive Editor at Mysterious Press, a division of Warner Books. Some of the writers she works with who are here at Left Coast IV include: Guest of Honor Aaron Elkins, Abigail Padgett, Alan Russell and Rochelle Krich.

JAQUELINE GIRDNER is the author of four Kate Jasper mystery novels: Adjusted to Death, The Last Resort, Murder Most Mellow and Fat-Free and Fatal. She has been a psychiatric aide, a family law attorney, and an incorrigible entrepreneur during her forty-two years in California. She lives, works and practices her tai chi in Marin County, California. Tea-Totally Dead, the fifth novel in the series, is due for release in 1994. Jaqueline is currently busy at work on her sixth Kate Jasper novel, A Stiff Critique.

LINDA GRANT's novels feature Catherine Saylor, a San Francisco private investigator who specializes in high-tech crime. Grant's first novel, Random Access Murder was nominated for an Anthony Award for Best First Novel of 1988. It was followed by Blind Trust and Love Nor Money. Ms. Grant is the current President of Sisters in Crime.

JAN GRAPE is a contributing editor for *Mystery Scene Magazine* and the editor and publisher of "Reflections in a Private Eye, The Private Eye Writers Newsletter." A prolific short story writer, she currently has stories in print in Deadly Allies,

Invitation to Murder, Malice Domestic 2, Cat Crimes III and Santa Clues, with additional stories due in 1994. Grape and her husband live in Austin, Texas where they operate Mysteries and More, a specialty bookstore.

STEPHEN GREENLEAF's Southern Cross (William Morrow 1993) is the tenth in his series featuring John Marshall Tanner, a lawyer by training but a private eye by trade. Like his protagonist, Greenleaf once practiced law in Monterey and San Francisco. He now lives and writes in Seattle.

J.P. HAILEY is the creator of the Steve Winslow series of courtroom dramas (Donald I. Fine) and is the alter ego of Parnell Hall.

MARY BOWEN HALL is the creator of Emma Chizzit, an independent older woman who operates her own business and is featured in four mysteries (all from Walker). The most recent book is Emma Chizzit and the Mother Load Marauder.

PARNELL HALL is an actor and former private detective who has used his personal experience to create for the movies as well as two successful mysteries series. The latest in his Stanley Hastings series, Blackmail will be released in March by Mysterious Press. (See also J.P. Hailey.)

GAYLE HALLENBECK LYNDS is a former newspaper reporter and magazine editor-in-chief. She is the author of seven adult espionage novels and several mysteries for young adults. Her latest work in progress is a thriller.

TIM HALLINAN is the author of five widely-praised Los Angeles private-eye novels featuring Simeon Crist. Everything But the Squeal is presently in preproduction as a theatrical film. The sixth novel in the series The Bone Polisher will be published by William Morrow in 1994. Hallinan lives in Los Angeles, New York and on the beautiful but badly named Pee Pee Island, in the Thai portion of the Andaman Sea.

ORIETTA A. HARDY-SAYLES edits and publishes The Magnifying Glass, a newsletter devoted to informing mystery aficionados of news, upcoming events

and activities. Along with Gary Warren Niebuhr, she published The Big Jacuzzi, Farewell, My Lobby and The Revised Edition of The Big Jacuzzi are currently available. She is now at work on a true crime book set in historical California's mining camps.

GAR HAYWOOD

KEITH HELLER lived in the Midwest, Japan, Spain and Argentina before moving to California. He has published an historical crime trilogy concerning eighteenth-century London. Currently, two crime novels in manuscript are seeking publication, the debut of a Wine Mystery series set in the San Joaquin Valley and a mystery about seventh-century China.

SUSAN HOLTZER is a 1994 Rising Star whose first book Something to Kill For won the St. Martin's Malice Domestic contest and will be published in 1994. The book is set in Ann Arbor, Michigan and features a woman who runs her own computer consulting company.

WENDY HORNSBY is a native of So. California, where she teaches US History and History of American Women at Long Beach City College. Her books featuring Kate Byrd and Lt. Roger Tejada have made a hit with fans. Her new series with filmmaker Maggie MacGowen, Telling Lies and Midnight Baby has expanded her readership. She also won the 1992 Edgar for Best Short Story for Nine Sons, from the Sisters in Crime 4 anthology.

FRED HUNTER's first novel Presence of Mind is currently available from Walker. Set in Chicago, it is the first of what he hopes to be a long running series.

ROBERT IRVINE is the author of 13 novels, two of which were nominated for the Edgar Allan Poe Award by the Mystery Writers of America. His latest detective novel, The Great Reminder, was published last year by St. Martin's Press. Barking Dogs, (the first in a new series) and The Hosanna Shout are scheduled for publication later this year by St. Martin's. Irvine's private-eye Moroni Traveler was included in the recently published directory of "One Hundred Great

SIMPLY THE BEST*

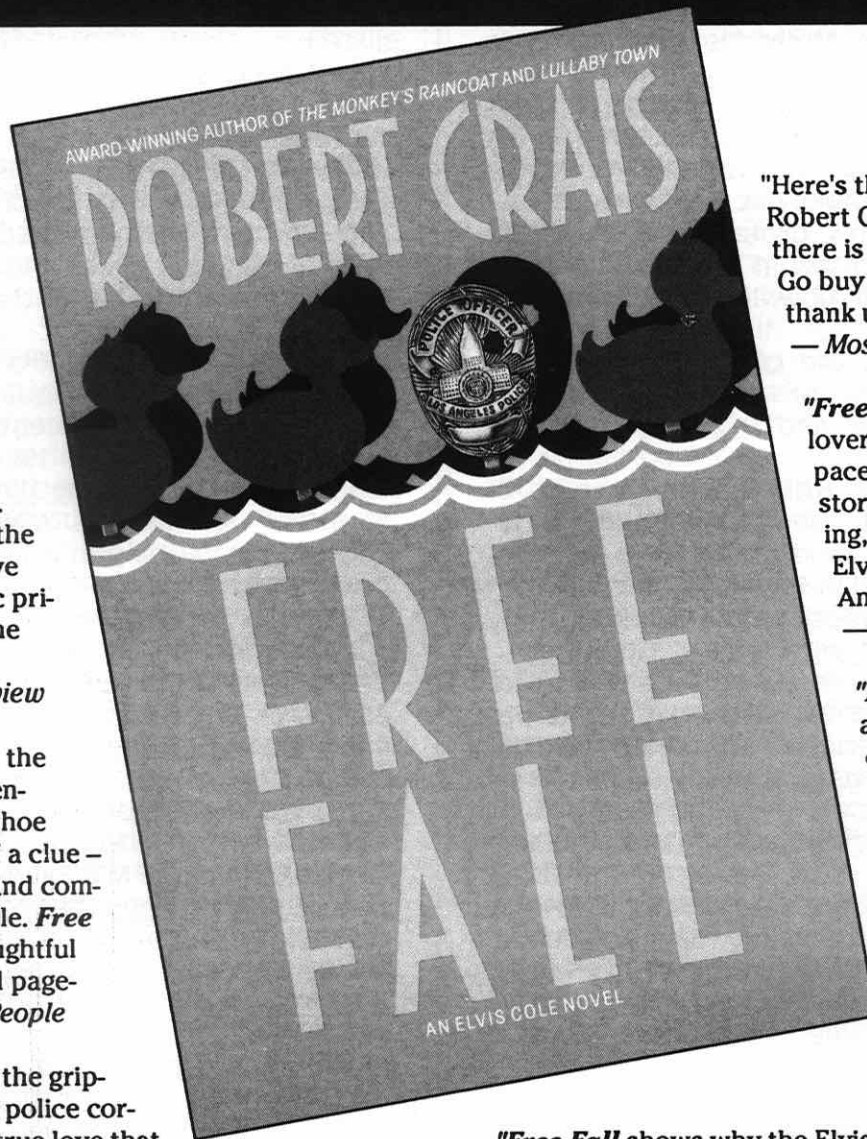
"Free Fall represents detective fiction at its best: funny, tough, sensitive, clever, hopeful, and insightful. A beautifully crafted work. Elvis Cole is the most sensitive and romantic private eye in the business."

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— *Mostly Murder*

"Free Fall is a PI lover's delight. The pace is excellent, the story fresh and exciting, the plot realistic. Elvis Cole is an American Original."

— *Rave Reviews*

"Free Fall is an adrenaline-charged, action-packed thriller that should send Robert Crais to the top of the charts as one of America's best mystery authors."

— *Lansing State Journal*

"Free Fall shows why the Elvis Cole series is one of crime fiction's best."

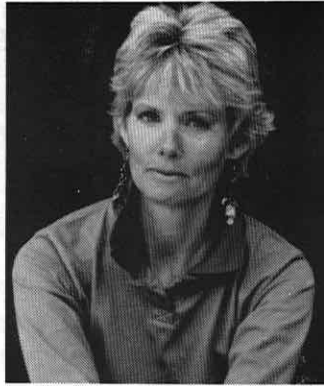
— *Detroit Free Press*

"Crais has a winner! The Elvis Cole books are tautly suspenseful, genuinely funny, and socio-logically relevant. **Free Fall** has a remarkable conclusion that will satisfy even the most astute mystery reader." — *Cedar Rapids Gazette*

* "Robert Crais is in a class by himself – he is quite simply the best." – *Eric Lustbader*



SOPHIE DUNBAR



SUSAN DUNLAP



CHARLOTTE ELKINS



JEAN FEMLING



EARLENE FOWLER



SARA ANN FREED



JACQUELINE GIRDNER



LINDA GRANT



JAN GRAPE

Detectives".

JON A. JACKSON grew up in northern Michigan and Detroit, and now lives in the Montana Rockies. He is a devoted jazz fan, an avid angler, and a carpenter. His first fourth Mulheisen mysteries, The Diehard, The Blind Pig, Grootka, and Hit On The House met with stunning praise. Grootka made *The New York Times* list of best crime books in 1990. Deadman is the fifth detective novel in the Mulheisen series.

JONNI JACOBS is a 1994 Rising star whose first book Murder Among Neighbors, a suburban cozy, will be released by Zebra Books this summer.

ELIZABETH JAMES is the author of more than 40 published books. Her psychological suspense novels for young adults are written under the pseudonym of Beverly Hastings. The most recent books are Somebody Help Me and Home Before Dark (Berkeley, 1993). She also writes children's non-fiction books under her own name. A past president of MWA SOCAL, she is a member of Writer's Guild of America, Sisters in Crime, the Author's Guild, Screen Actors Guild, P.E.N. and the National Writer's Union.

JERRY KENNEALY is the author of the Nick Polo mystery series. Kennealy has been a licensed private investigator for over twenty years. His most recent release is Vintage Polo (St. Martin's 1993).

KAREN KIJEWski has wowed both fans and critics with her Kat Colorado series set in Sacramento and environs. Her tough sleuth's latest outing is Copy Kat.

RONNIE KLASKIN has been a teacher, speech therapist and stand-up comic. She is a prolific short story writer and has also won prizes for her poetry.

ROCHELLE MAJER KRICH made her writing debut with Where's Mommy Now? which won the Anthony for Best Paperback Original Mystery Novel of 1990. Her first hard cover Fair Game is a psychological thriller introducing Detective Jessie (Jessica) Drake. Her latest book No Where to Run will be published by Avon in April and Angel of Death, the second in the Jessie Drake series, will be released by

Mysterious Press in October.

KEN KUHLEN's first mystery novel, The Loud Adios won the St Martin's Press/Private Eye Writers of America Best First PI Novel Award. His recent book, The Venus Deal is a prequel to The Loud Adios and was published in April 1993. They are the first two books in a trilogy about PI Tom Hickey's trials during WWII. The final book in the trilogy The Angel Gang will appear in August 1994.

M.D. LAKE has a spouse, two children, one grandchild, and one protagonist, Peggy O'Neill, a cop at a large midwestern university campus. The third in the Peggy O'Neill series, Poisoned Ivy, recently won the American Mystery Award for best paperback original of 1992. The sixth in the series, Once Upon A Crime, will be published in December. Lake is Vice President of the American Crime Writers League and served on the Edgar Best Short Story committee in 1993.

MARSHA LANDRETH is the author of the Doctor Samantha Turner mystery series. The Holiday Murders, the first Samantha Turner mystery, is in a second printing with Walker & Company and under option to Gross-Weston Productions for a two-hour movie-of-the-week starring Suzanne Pleshette. A Clinic For Murder was released in October 1993. Vial Murders is scheduled for publication in October, 1994.

JANET LAPIERRE's mystery novels are set on the chilly, foggy, sparsely-populated California northcoast, in the fictitious town of Port Silva. Children's Games, The Cruel Mother, Unquiet Grave, Grandmother's House and Old Enemies feature schoolteacher Meg Halloran and Vince Gutierrez, Port Silva chief of police and other town citizens.

DON LASSETER has written forty-plus true crime articles for paper back anthologies and various magazines. His book Property of Folsom Wolf debuts in January, 1995 from Windsor/Pinnacle and he is currently working on his second true crime book.

LEILA LAURENCE has just retired from her job as manager of Records &



MARY BOWEN HALL



**GAYLE HALLENBECK
LYNDS**



KEITH HELLER

Communications for a No. California police department. In law enforcement for 24 years, she spent 15 years dispatching police and fire calls. An avid collector and fan, she was involved in organizing Left Coast Crime I and II. She has published a number of articles on public safety issues for police journals and is currently at work on a 911 mystery.

CYNTHIA LAWRENCE is a new mystery writer who serves up terror with a side order of wit. Take-Out City is a Los Angeles mystery about food, obsessive love and murder and was released in 1993 from Carroll & Graf.

DICK LOCHTE is a theatre critic and book reviewer. He has written three mystery novels featuring the unusual investigative team of a hard-bitten, middle-aged PI and a precocious teenaged girl. Blue Bayou (Simon & Schuster) launched a new series to much acclaim and has Lochte busily writing the sequel.

LINDA MARIZ's two books Body English and Snake Dance (both Bantam) feature Laura England, a professional volleyball player.

LIA MATERA is the author of eight mystery novels featuring two series protagonists, tough litigator Laura DiPalma and former radical Willa Jansson. She has been nominated twice for the MWA Edgar and three times for the Anthony. Prior Convictions was a *New York Times* notable book in 1991. Now a full-time writer living in Santa Cruz, she formerly worked as a Teaching Fellow at Stanford Law School. Her most recent book Face Value is now available from Simon & Schuster.

PATRICIA MCFALL has lived and traveled extensively in Asia, particularly Japan. This experience provided the background for her first mystery novel Night Butterfly. Patricia currently resides in Orange County, where she is working on her second novel.

ANNETTE MEYERS is the author of five mysteries featuring Smith and Wetson, who operate a Wall Street head-hunting firm. Her latest, Murder: The Musical was released last September. She is currently working on a psychological novel called Fugitive Colors.

MAAN MEYERS was born in New York City on November 15, 1985 in the mind of Annette Meyers and nurtured by Annette and Martin Meyers. In November 1992, Doubleday published the Dutchman, the first novel in a historical trilogy written by Maan Meyers. The Kingsbridge Plot, the second in the series was published in August 1993. The High Constable is set for the fall of 1994. Part of Maan is now researching the fourth book, a return to the Dutchman and the seventeenth century.

MARTIN MEYERS is an actor and the author of five detective novels published by Popular Library and featuring private detective Patrick Hardy. A board member of the New York chapter of MWA and a members of Sisters in Crime, Meyers novelized the Cher movie, Suspect, for Bantam. You can also find him as part of Maan Meyers.

MARLYS MILLHISER is active in the Rocky Mountain Chapter of Mystery Writers of America and writes a column on regional mystery writers for *Mystery Scene*



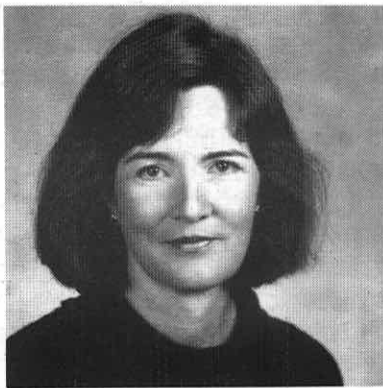
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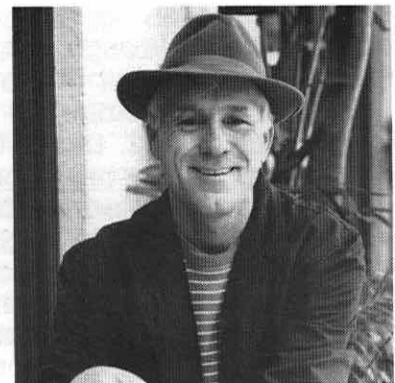
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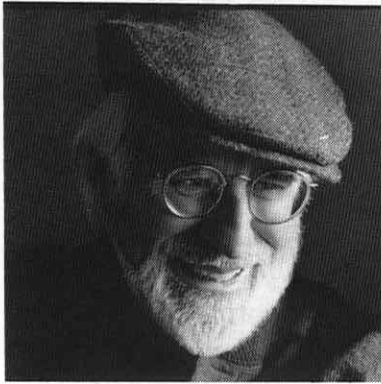
RONNIE KLASKIN



**ROCHELLE MAJER
KRICH**



KEN KUHLEN



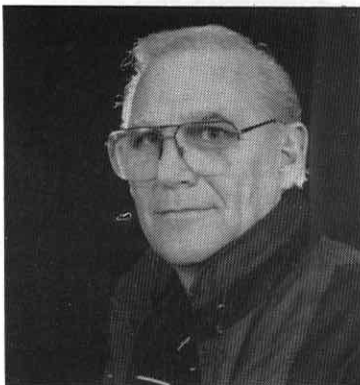
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MARSHA LANDRETH



JANET LA PIERRE



DON LASSETER



CYNTHIA LAWRENCE



DICK LOCHTE



LINDA MARIZ



LIA MATERA



PATRICIA MCFALL

Magazine. Her newest book Death of the Office Witch was published in hard cover by Otto Penzler Books, a new imprint of MacMillan in November 1993. It is the second in the series starring Charlie Greene--Hollywood literary agent, reluctant sleuth and unwed mom. She is a member of the Author's Guild, Sisters in Crime, Western Writers of America, American Crime Writers League and MWA. **BILL MOODY** is an English professor at UNLV and the author of Solo Hand, a 1994 Walker release introducing a jazz pianist detective.

JILL M. MORGAN now writes under five names (Morgan Fields, J.M. Morgan, Meredith Morgan, Meg Griffin and Jessica Pierce) because it gives her the freedom to test herself in multiple genres. Her novels include suspense, sci fi, horror, historical and YA. Her latest book is Cradle of Fear written under the pseudonym of Meg Griffin.

SHARAN NEWMAN is a medievalist and writer, currently working on her PhD in history at UC Santa Barbara. She is the author of Death Comes As Epiphany (Tor 1993) a mystery set in twelfth-century France, as well as an Arthurian trilogy and some obscure academic papers and even more obscure short stories. She lives in Southern California but would like to move back to a place that has seasons. The next book in the mystery series, The Devil's Door, will be out in the summer of 1994.

CARLA NORTON is a journalist whose experience with various newspapers and magazines gave her the background for her first book of non-fiction crime, Perfect Victim (William Morrow 1988). The paperback edition (Dell) was released in 1989 and made the New York Times paperback best seller's list. Her second true crime book Disturbed Ground will be out in May 1994 and is the strange tale of little old lady serial killer Dorothea Puente. In researching both books she found startling parallels in fiction.

MAXINE O'CALLAGHAN's nine novels include a series featuring Delilah West,

one of the mystery world's pioneering female private investigators. O'Callaghan's work has been nominated for both the Anthony Award and the Bram Stoker Award. The latest Delilah West, Trade Off, will be published in June 1994 (St. Martin's). She has just signed a two book contract with Putnam Berkley for a series to be set in Phoenix featuring a new character, child psychologist Dr. Anne Menlo.

ABIGAIL PADGETT, formerly a court investigator, now works as an advocate for the mentally ill. Her mystery series, beginning with Child of Silence features a protagonist who has a manic-depressive disorder. Strawgirl has just been released by Mysterious Press.

ROBERT PAPINCHAK is an English professor with an insatiable interest in the mystery genre, which he tries to fulfill through teaching courses in the mystery, writing about the genre and moderating panels at genre conventions.

GERALD PEARCE was born in England and raised in the Middle East and now resides in Los Angeles. A short story writer, his first novel, Orphans, was published by Walker in 1990. He is currently at work on a sequel to Orphans, a historical fantasy, and a mystery set in Baghdad in 1946.

JOANNE PENCE is a San Francisco native and the author of the romantic mystery series featuring Angelina Amalfi, an irregularly employed cook and journalist, and San Francisco homicide detective Paavo Smith. The first book in the series, Something's Cooking was published by HarperCollins Monogram in 1993. The second, Too Many Cooks, will be published in September 1994.

GERALD PETIEVICH

AUDREY PETERSON was a professor of English lit before turning her efforts to full time writing. Her first six mysteries feature music prof Andrew Quentin and his one-time graduate student Jane Winfield. Her latest book, Dartmoor Burial, introduces Claire Camden, a California professor.

GARY PHILLIPS' nonfiction pieces have

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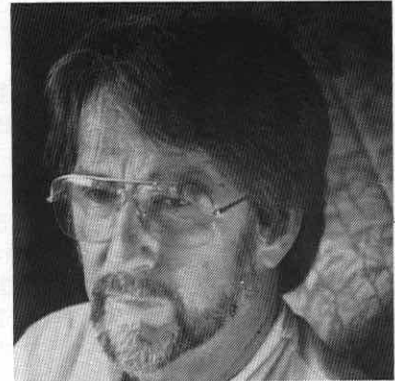
SHARAN NEWMAN



CARLA NORTON



MAXINE O'CALLAGHAN



GERALD PEARCE

appeared in such publications as *City Times*, the *San Francisco Examiner*, and *Freestyle* rap magazine. Currently, he writes a weekly opinion column for the *Compton Bulletin* newspaper. Violent Spring is his first novel, and he is working on a second book which will also feature black private eye Ivan Monk.

ELIZABETH PINCUS is the author of The Two-Bit Tango, and The Solitary Twist, both featuring San Francisco private eye Nell Fury. The third in the series, The Hangdog Hustle is forthcoming. She is film editor of the *L.A. Weekly*.

DIANE PUGH's debut novel, Cold Call (Pocket Books, 1993) met with both critical and popular acclaim. The second book in the series featuring investment counselor Iris Thorne, Slow Squeeze, will be published in October, 1994. Pugh is the Director of Marketing for a California computer firm.

ROBERT RANDISI has written lots of books. Boy, are his arms tired!

JOAN HAMERMAN ROBBINS is a San Francisco psychotherapist who also teaches women and detective fiction at UCSF Extension.

LYNDA ROBINSON's first novel, Murder in the Place of Anubis is the first in a series of historical mysteries set in ancient Egypt.

PETER ROBINSON's first novel Gallows View introduced Detective Chief Inspector Alan Banks and his "patch", a part of the Yorkshire Dales. It was short listed for the John Creasey Award in Britain and the Crime Writers of Canada First Novel Award. All of his subsequent books have been award nominees. Past Reason Hated (1991) won the Crime Writers of Canada Best Novel Award.

MARION ROSEN's first mystery, Death by Education was published by St. Martin's Press in June 1993. It has since been optioned by Simon Lewis Productions for a Movie of the Week. Rosen's second book, Don't Speak to Strangers was released in August 1993. She is a former English and Creative Writing teacher who lives in Los Angeles.

REBECCA ROTHENBERG's first book, The Bulrush Murders was nominated for both the Agatha and Anthony awards in 1992. The book introduced microbiologist Claire Sharples. The sequel, The Dandelion Murders will be published by Mysterious Press this August. Rebecca, an amateur botanist and medical researcher divides her time between LA and the Southern Sierra.

JANET A. RUDOLPH is the director of Mystery Readers International and Murder on the Menu and a regular contributor to *The Armchair Detective*.

ALAN RUSSELL bemoans the fact that it is usually easier to find him than it is to find his books. At 6 ft. 7" tall, Russell is hard to miss in a crowd. His first two novels, No Sign of Murder and The Forest Prime Evil have garnered critical praise. Now a full-time writer, Russell will be using his previous employment as general manager of an ocean front hotel as the basis for his new series. The Hotel Detective, first in a comedic series set at a luxury resort in Southern California will be released from Mysterious Press in May, 1994.

ROBERT SAMOIAN, Deputy District Attorney for LA County for more than 22 years, is the premier collector of mysteries. Sought after as an expert speaker on collecting, his home in LA is a cathedral of books and a testament to his wife's good humor. He has written the New Releases column for *Mystery and Detective Monthly* since April of 1989. He sells used mysteries by mail as Raven Books.

SHIRLEY SCHENKEL spent 16 years as a member of an international order of nuns founded for humanitarian work in Africa, an experience which provided first hand knowledge for her debut novel. In Blacker Moments revolves around the death of an aging nun. A 1994 Rising Star, her book is due in March from AKA Seattle, a new imprint of Accord Communications, Ltd.

MICHAEL SEIDMAN is the mystery editor at Walker Books.

SANDRA KAY SIEGEL is a free-lance writer

for newspapers and television. She is a member of the Writer's Guild of America, the Academy of Arts and Sciences and Sisters in Crime.

SHEILA SIMONSON's third mystery featuring Lark Dodge, Mudlark, was published by St. Martin's in 1993. It deals with the culture clash when Californians begin flooding a stable, rural community in Washington.

SHELLEY SINGER is the author of several mystery novels, including Searching For Sara, soon to be released by NAL/Dutton. This is the third in a new series featuring Barrett Lake, a woman detective who was first introduced in Sisters in Crime I. She has also written five books in the Jake Samson-Rosie Vicente series.

JANET L. SMITH is the author of Sea of Troubles and Practice to Deceive which are set in the Pacific Northwest and feature attorney Annie MacPherson. The third book in the series, which takes Annie to Washington's wine country, will be published in the fall of 1994.

MAUREEN TAYLOR SMITH is a 1994 Rising Star who writes under the pen name Taylor Smith. Her first novel, Guilt By Silence is a political thriller set in Washington, Vienna and New Mexico, and will be published in late 1994 under the New Privileges fiction line to be launched this September by Harlequin Enterprises.

JANICE STEINBERG is a Rising Star for Left Coast Crime IV and is an active member in the San Diego Chapter of Sisters in Crime.

SERITA DEBORAH STEVENS authored Deadly Doses: A Writer's Guide to Poisons, a Macavity Award winner. Her newest series, the Fanny Zindel mysteries began with Red Sea, Dead Sea. Fanny (a charming Jewish grandmother) had her second adventure with Bagels for Tea.

JIM STINSON has produced four Stoney Winston mysteries. Like his amateur sleuth, Stinson has a background in filmmaking which infuses his writing with authenticity. He is currently at work on the first book in a new series.

JUDITH VAN GIESON's series featuring attorney Neil Hamel has met with both

popular and critical success. Set in the author's home state of New Mexico, the books reflect both the beauty and the fragile nature of the environment. The Lies That Bind is the most recent release in the series.

DIANE WAGNER is the author of Corpus Delicti (St. Martin's/Marek) a true crime account of the landmark L. Ewing Scott murder case. She is currently at work on King's X, a suspense novel set in the Northwest.

CHARLENE WEIR now lives in California, but her roots are in Kansas, the setting for Winter Widow (1992) and Consider the Crows (1993). Winter Widow was the winner of the St. Martin's Press Malice Domestic award for best first traditional mystery. In addition to her novels, she writes short stories which have appeared in the *Ellery Queen* and *Alfred Hitchcock* mystery magazines.

STEPHEN WHITE's two books featuring Dr. Alan Gregory have been both best sellers and critical successes. Like his protagonist, White is a psychologist who blends his work as a therapist with his fiction. Privileged Information and Private Practices are available in paperback from Penguin.

ANN M. WILLIAMS is the author of Flowers For the Dead (St. Martin's 1991) and the editor/publisher of *The Criminal Record*, a "review-zine".

SHERRYL WOODS is the author of a successful romantic suspense series.

ANITA ZELMAN is the author of The Right Moves (St. Martin's Press), a mystery involving the game of chess.



JOANNE PENCE



ELIZABETH PINCUS



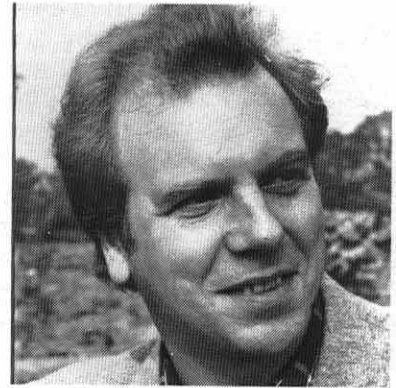
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**JOAN HAMERMAN
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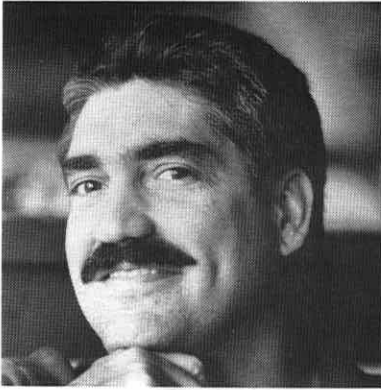
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**REBECCA
ROTHENBERG**



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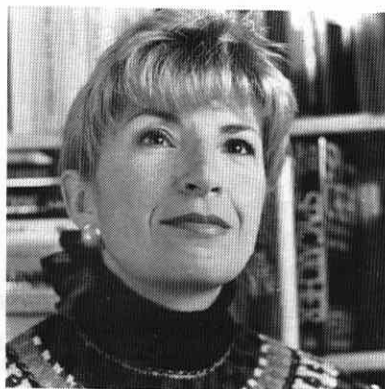
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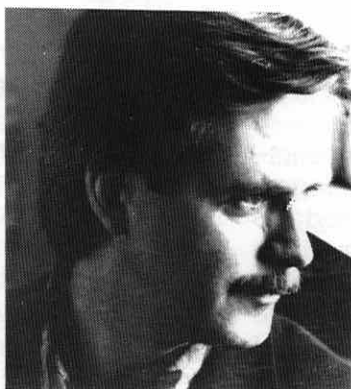
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By
Earlene Fowler***



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Romance,
Quilts and
Cattle on
California's
Central
Coast***

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ISBN-0-425-14041-5



MORE SEX, FEWER CATS

by Lia Matera

For a while, there was a hand-lettered sign above my computer. It read: *More Sex, Fewer Cats*. At the time, I was working on my new book, Face Value (Simon & Schuster, Feb. '94), about the pornography industry, sex gurus, and computers--what one friend termed a laundry list of "cozy" mystery no-nos. My then-editor was afraid my frank (but *not* gratuitous) description of an adult theater might startle my fans. She submitted the unedited manuscript to the president of the publishing house for approval. (Luckily, the president gave the green light, but I'd chewed off every fingernail by them.) It was during this month and a half that my boyfriend pinned up the *More Sex, Fewer Cats* sign. It was his way of condensing my belief that mystery



readers--especially fans of so-called cozies--are highly attuned to societal changes. They expect mysteries to spotlight today's mores, manners, and issues. They'd be insulted to think anyone wanted to limit them to pre-mapped preferences . . . like cats, for instances. Don't get me wrong--I love cats, too, especially the non-shedding

fictional kind. But their furry omnipresence shouldn't be misconstrued: readers are prepared to ponder anything, if it's presented well.

Admittedly, pornography is a confusing and even uncomfortable topic for most people. But right now, it's impossible to ignore. Late-night television, even network TV, flashes images that would have been considered shocking even last year or last week. Writers like Susie Bright and entertainers like Madonna speak for a generation of fans who want to reclaim erotica and be unashamedly "sex-positive." Other women see pornography as rape or brainwashing. But everyone agrees: pornography has burst out of the close and into the mainstream, partly in response to AIDS.

In Face Value, I try to let the characters speak from the heart. There are powerful, sensible arguments on both sides. If we listen to each other and think carefully about this, maybe we'll find some common ground. If we ignore the debate, TV and other mass culture outlets will make the decisions for us. And so far, all they've offered is pop sexuality that exaggerates our shallowest, anything-for-a-buck tendencies.

That's why we rely on books; we need the depth of several points of view, we need information in context. I gambled--and for a while was afraid I'd lose--a novel on the proposition that readers change and marvel and agonize with the times. New experiences, including hard ones, are part of the pleasure of escaping into fiction. Publishers, even in this era of conglomerate marketing, need to

demonstrate their faith in the intelligence and flexibility of readers. Mystery fans want good stories, not stories about "good" things.



Answers to Left Coast Eye Q:

1. Helen Hayes, Joan Hickson, Margaret Rutherford.
2. Dying for Chocolate by Diane Mott Davidson.
3. Kiernan O'Shaughnessy, Jill Smith and Vejay Haskell.
4. Warner Oland and Sidney Toler.
5. Cantina Sin Nombre (Bar without a name).
6. Moses Wine, created by Roger Simon. The movie was *The Big Fix*.
7. Someone is Killing the Great Chefs of Europe by Nan and Ivan Lyons
8. She inherited it.
9. A female corpse.
10. Julie Smith, for New Orleans Mourning and Margaret Maron, for the Bootlegger's Daughter.
11. Stephen White and Jonathan Kellerman.
12. Fathers Brown, Bredder, Dowling, Koesler et al; Sisters Joan, Emtee (Teresa) Dempsey, Mary Helen, etc; Rabbis Small and Winters, Reverends Randoliph and Aldington; and Clerk Elizabeth Elliot.
13. KoKo, Yum Yum and Agatha; Asta and Rowdy.

BEAT UP A COOKIE

An Ellie Bernstein
Mystery



Ellie Bernstein loves watching "M*A*S*H" almost as much as she loves eating. Her job with Weight Winners has helped her control her food intake, but what harm could there be in watching reruns? None, of course, until people who look like characters in the long-running series start dying. Then Ellie remembers an incident the night of the party she attended several years earlier, celebrating the final episode. She feels certain there's a serial killer loose in Colorado Springs, a feeling that's confirmed all too quickly. As Ellie begins to poke into matters, much to the disgruntlement of Lt. Peter Miller of the CSPD, she discovers something else: Now that she's lost all that weight, she looks a little bit too much like Hot Lips for her own good.

Denise Dietz lives in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Her first Ellie Bernstein mystery, *Throw Darts at a Cheesecake* 0-80277-1237-1, was published by Walker and Company in 1992.

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TRUE GRIT OR THE SECOND TALENT

by Martin Meyers

I write detective fiction.

I am also married to a writer of detective fiction.

Annette Meyers and I have been together for over 32 years. Throughout this partnership I'm afraid I tended to take her for granted. You see - the plan was for me to become a writer on the way up and then help her.

Well, it didn't work out that way. During the years I was an actor and while I was writing the Patrick Hardy Detective series for Popular Library and striving to be the Great American Novelist and Playwright, she was working on Broadway and Wall Street and making notes, storing up information.

She became a senior vice-president with Michael King Associates, a Wall Street recruiting firm, and rounded out her week by writing on Fridays and Saturdays.

Then it happened: Bantam bought her first Smith and Wetzon mystery, The Big Killing. It came out in 1989.

One day she asked, "Do you want to write a book with me?"

It was an offer I couldn't refuse. After all, she was this writer on the way up.

So we wrote The Dutchman, which I'm happy to say was published by Doubleday in November 1991, and was followed by The Kingsbridge Plot in August of 1993. The third book, The High Constable, is scheduled for the end of '94. Our writing-together name is Maan

Meyers.

But this is not about the writing talent. This is about The Second Talent.

The commercial writer's job is two-fold. More than that, the writer has to be a touch schizoid. One personality has to be the artist; the brilliant, literate, introspective loner who sits home and writes.

The companion personality has to be a brilliant, articulate gregarious people-person, with that one talent which is commercial death to hide; the talent for self-promotion. The person who goes to conventions and malls, does interviews early and late for television, radio or computer bulletin boards. If asked, this personality will even open a super market in her Dr. Denton's.

Annette is a seller. She can also work a room like a fund raiser, which she's been, or a politician/actress, which she's never been. (Perhaps I'm wrong about the actress part.)

Over the years I've watched her sell Broadway shows to investors, cancer research to philanthropists, union representation to regional theatres, and brokers to Wall Street managers.

Lately she's been selling an interesting new product. Annette Meyers.

And by extension, Maan Meyers.

Martin Meyers is on his own.

I hope I've learned something by her example.

While writing and hunting broker's heads, she's on the phone with a multitude of people, staying on top of the selling aspect of books.

There's a caveat here. One has to find that line between selling and nagging.


If book store owners and managers spent too much time listening to every writer who was pitching his/her case, they wouldn't have time to sell books. I know of several instances where an over zealous writer put himself in the dog house with the book store simply because he didn't know when to shut up and get out.

One of the best ways to sell books is attending conventions. Besides being effective, the book conventions have been fun, taking us to new cities, introducing us to new people. And we all know, life is with people.

Some of the best things that have happened to Annette and me have been through other writers. Several have recommended Annette for speaking engagements and workshops. But beyond the material things, we've made wonderful new friends.

The business side of the book biz ain't easy. An important part of The Second Talent is True Grit. Annette has it. But we all have it. The trick is to know how to summon it when you need it. Annette knows the trick.

Murphy's Law applies: if something can go wrong it will. But then you have to apply Annette's Law: if it can be fixed, I can fix it. Or Marty's Law: if you want a job done right send for an obsessive compulsive; send for Annette Meyers.



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THE LIZARDHEART TOUR

by Abigail Padgett

Don't ask me why I answered the phone. I had just made another cup of instant vanilla hazelnut coffee and was headed back to my computer, when it rang. The phone. Thoughtlessly, I answered it.

"Hello?"

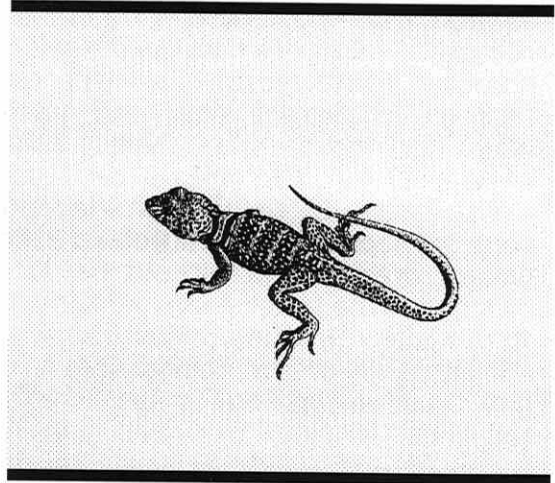
"Okay, I know you probably won't wear this terrific hip length lace mantilla I found at a thrift shop, but you've got to wear a concho belt. Real silver. Won't work if it's not silver. And fringed moccasins with little beadwork thunderbirds ..."

It was my publicist. Her name is Lois Laine. At least it was the last time I talked to her a week ago. Lo's name changes are as unpredictable as Santa Anas, and tend to reflect social trends more accurately than any ten government think tanks. When I met her fifteen years ago she was promoting a line of skimpy beachwear created by a hippie priest, and called herself Abbey Laine. When she sold the business for enough to buy a failing winery in Nebraska, she became Sunny Laine and took over publicity for a desert casino catering to AARP tour groups. Lo is terrific, could get her hairdresser on Letterman if she felt like it, and is one of the reasons I don't answer the phone when I'm writing.

"What are you talking about?" I asked. Fear had caused my voice to climb three octaves.

"Your tour. I'm planning your tour. Two weeks, seven cities, fifteen bookstores, five and a half radio interviews, three TV talk shows and a Bat

Mitzvah. I'm calling it Lizardheart. The Lizardheart Tour."



Her sigh of satisfaction spoke volumes.

"Lizardheart?"

My tinny voice spoke other volumes.

"Of course. For the southwest image," she explained tersely. "Lizards are very southwest, and the heart is kind of Poe, don't you think? The t-shirts will have this green lizard with a heart in its mouth, and drops of blood spelling your book title..."

My book, DEATH AND APPLE PIE, takes place entirely in an abandoned orchard outside Baraboo, Wisconsin.

"Southwest? Why?" I croaked.

Like many writers, I tend to speak in screenplay format when terrified. Single words, pronounced while inhaling.

"Because southwest in IN," Lo hissed, irritated. "Everybody knows THAT!"

"Let me run it by Merlin," I hedged.

Natasha Merlin, the second reason I fear my own telephone, is my agent and could easily have CEOed several military-industrial complexes if her heart hadn't insisted that she champion a stable of rumped, fidgety writers instead. Rumored to have bribed an Argentinian surgeon to implant a tiny fax machine near her aorta, she's never actually anywhere, but can always be reached immediately. By fax. Merlin's legendary contract negotiations rival Donald Trump's wildest dreams, and without her I'd still be living in the ladies' room at Nordstrom. Merlin is the first line of defense against an army of weird things which only happen to writers. But Lo had thought of this first.

"Merlin's in Sri Lanka," she grinned audibly, "negotiating contracts for a line of casual wear based on the works of Shakespeare. You can't reach her."

I gasped. Merlin represents some major talent, but I didn't realize it had gone this far.

"He's been dead for almost four centuries," I felt compelled to mention. "How on earth did she ...?"

"Not William Shakespeare, Amanda Shakespeare," Lo sighed. "You know. She writes that fantastic mystery series with the woman sleuth who works as a cook in a wolf sanctuary. Very southwest. Now ..."

"Women Who Cook For Wolves," I remembered one of the titles. "Wasn't it on the New York Times best-seller list for four months?"

"Precisely why I decided on Lizardheart," Lo forged ahead. "You've got to project an image that evokes saguaro cactus against a blood-red desert moon. Ancient mesas yielding up secrets lost in time. That sort of thing."

My coffee was getting cold.

"There are no mesas in Wisconsin," I reasoned, "or cactus. But I'm sure Nell will have some great ideas. Why don't you give her a call?"

Nellwin Van Dusen is my editor and of course lives in New York. She can actually spell "creme brulee" without looking it up and her dog is in a play group with Yoko Ono's doberman. Nell always appears just to have come from a penthouse reception for the entire cast of La Boheme, catered by impoverished but aloof Prussian aristocrats. A cultivated kindheartedness does much to mask editorial fists of iron which are intractable when it comes to stuff like titles and getting rid of Chapter Ten. My worst nightmare is a conference call involving Nell, Merlin and Lo all at once. The energy overload might permanently affect my ability to reason, already damaged as it is by the months of solitary fantasy necessary to create books. Invoking Nell was a feeble, and doomed, endeavor.

"You know Nell doesn't do publicity," Lo countered. "I do publicity. Now ... do you think you could grind acorns in a metate while signing books? Or maybe weave pine needle baskets? Too bad you don't cook ..."

Lo knows my weak spot.

"I'll do the thunderbird moccasins," I conceded, stunned by the possibility of having to serve frybread to strangers in unfamiliar bookstores.

"Good," Lo pronounced in tones of barely-disguised triumph. "And the concho belt?"

Which is how I came to be standing around a mall bookstore in Madison, Wisconsin, in fringed moccasins and a silver belt over the apple-red prairie blouse and denim skirt I'd selected to reflect my character's personality, when the call came from New York.

"The TIMES has just called DEATH AND APPLE PIE 'a recipe for ancient mystery which evokes the best of Hillerman and Amanda Shakespeare,'" the voice of Nellwin Van Dusen told me over a chamber quartet doing Mozart in the background. "We're thrilled and looking forward to your next one. By the way, what's the title?"

"Uh, BOBBING FOR POISON. It's set on Halloween, and ..."

"Terrific!" Nell interrupted. "We'll change that to GHOST APPLE MESA and tour you in South Dakota. Have Merlin call me about the contract. And congratulations!"

I was still basking when the second call came, from Merlin.

"Hey!" she enthused, "My office just faxed me the TIMES review here in Greenland. You're hot! I think we might be looking at some impressive figures in your next contract. I'll get on it tonight. And congratulations!"

Magic Merlin and her evocative words - "impressive figures". I was still lost in a daydream involving car repairs and lunches at upscale salad bars when the third call came. Don't ask me why I answered the phone.

"Okay, I know you think the moccasins make you look like you're still raising marijuana under gro-lites in the garage, but the TIMES ..."

"You're fantastic, Lo," I admitted. "The three of you are just fantastic."

She made no attempt to hide the vindication in her voice. "Does this mean you're going to start answering your phone?"

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NICK AND JERRY

by Jerry Kennealy

How much are Nick Polo and Jerry Kennealy alike? Well, let's see. Polo is relatively young, tall, dark and handsome. So far we're 0 for 4.

There are some similarities. We are both ex-policemen and Polo is a private eye. I've been a licensed private investigator for a number of years.

Nick gets a lot more interesting cases to work on than I do, of course, and he also gets away with so much more: breaking and entering, access to police files, purveying confidential information from a variety of sources, in short, committing a number of small misdemeanors and felonies in pursuing his career. Something we can't do in the real world. Anymore.

If there are similarities, it would be that Polo and I enjoy food and wine - both at restaurants and in the kitchen.

I like to help my wife Shirley in the kitchen. She's a great cook and I lend a hand. I also have a few dishes I do quite well, Caesar's salad and Osso Bucco, (labeled Awesome Bucco by my sons).

The restaurants are fun and I like to include them in the books. Vintage Polo, the eighth book, which came out this last November, ends up in Moose's Restaurant in North Beach, a current "in" spot. It is a great place and the owner is a friend of mine, so it's nice to throw these things in.

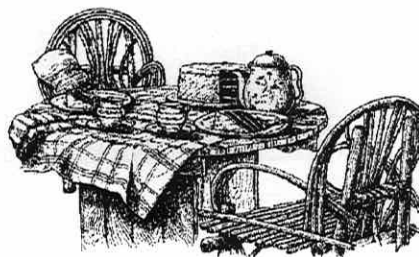
Polo and I were both born in San Francisco - he in the predominately Italian section of North Beach. I'm from a district, the Excelsior, that actually had more Italians than the Beach, when I was

a kid.

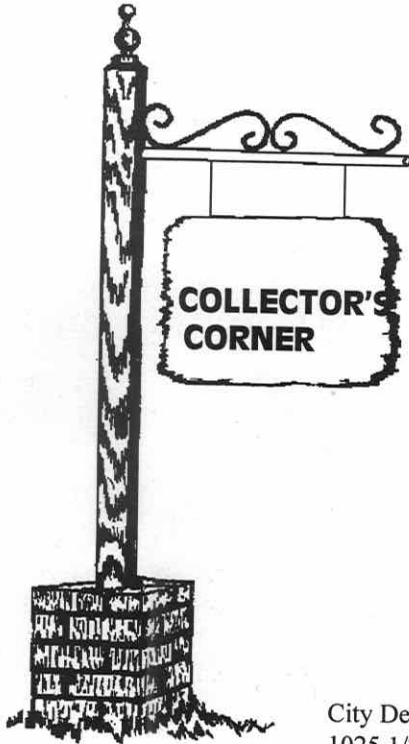
A wonderful place to grow up and I soon learned to appreciate the great smells and foods that came out of my Italian friends' kitchens. I got to know several women who bear a strong resemblance to Mrs. Damonte, a continuing character in the Polo books.

Being a private investigator certainly helps me in writing the series - not only with the PI techniques and pretexts, but with the locations. I go to some pretty interesting spots, and there are times when I know that some restaurant, hotel room, office, saloon, street corner, or the people I met there, will end up in a book. It cuts down on a lot of research time.

Polo is a bachelor, so there are those sexy women chasing and being chased (but not necessarily chaste). Being raised an Irish Catholic, I have little actual experience in these matters - so I just plagiarize the sexy stuff from Collin Wilcox's books.



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DESERT CAT

A "Big Mike" Mystery

By Garrison Allen

Big MIKE -- AKA Mycroft -- is a twenty-five pound Abyssinian alley cat from Abyssinia who believes he is a lion. Partial to lima beans and the ladies, Big Mike enjoys horseback riding and doing bear imitations. He has an American Express Gold Card and a frequent flyer account.

A cat in the hardboiled tradition of Sam Spade, Philip Marlowe, and Lew Archer, Big Mike prowls the mean desert of Empty By God Creek, Arizona, fearlessly.

This is what his friends and neighbors have to say about Big Mike.

"Of course, he's going to like anyone named after a cat food." -- Penelope Warren, Big Mike's friend and mentor, on his affinity for the songs of Jimmy Buffett.

"Nice butt."--Murphy Brown, Big Mike's paramour, a sleek calico who lives down the road.

"Big Mike would eat anything that didn't eat him first."--Doctor Bob, Big Mike's vet (and he has the scars to prove it).

"I knew I should have killed the damned cat."--A murderous villain after being brought to justice by Big Mike and Penelope.

"Goddamnedest cat I ever saw."--Hapless dog owner after Big Mike cleaned his German Shepherd's clock.

"Garrison Allen's DESERT CAT is a delightful mystery with an engaging, quick-witted, ex-Marine heroine sleuth, her formidable feline protector, and a menagerie of endearingly oddball characters you'll want to meet again. Purrfect fun."

--Rochelle Majer Krich, Anthony Award Winner
Author of FAIR GAME

DESERT CAT will be published in March 1994 by Zebra Books.

THE ONLY GOOD LAWYER . . .

by Taffy Cannon

People don't like lawyers.

Not exactly an earthshaking revelation, and hardly a new sentiment, either. Everyone's familiar with the Shakespeare quote--"First thing we do, let's kill all the lawyers"--a plan launched centuries before disgruntled clients started cutting loose with automatic weapons at fancy law firms.

But let's be reasonable. There's no particular reason why people *should* like lawyers. Consider the circumstances under which the average person comes in contact with one. It's not when life is rosy and the future glows with promise. It's when your business goes belly-up. Your kid gets busted. The IRS calls. You're center stage in the world's ugliest custody battle. You're rear-ended or--even worse--you rear-end somebody else.

Some professionals we associate with life's golden moments, but the lawyer's not like an obstetrician, present for the glorious moment of birth. The lawyer is the guy who does your divorce.

And then expects to get paid for it, big time.

There are many myths associated with the legal profession, and perhaps the most insidious is that legal work is terrifically interesting and dramatic. Some is of course, but for every attorney making a sensational closing argument on Court TV, there are fifty thousand others slumped in little rooms surrounded by reams of the world's dullest prose.

Small wonder, then, that so many lawyers secretly yearn to be writers (and

did so long before John Grisham became a multi-media event). Most legal work involves a gargantuan amount of writing, enough to put entire armies to sleep. You can hardly fault the folks producing this somnolent gibberish for wanting to believe they could be creating something entertaining, significant, perhaps even profound.

And maybe they could. Legal thrillers (a true oxymoron) abound today, partially in reaction to the vacuum created when the sudden end of the Cold War abruptly created a gaping hole in the literary marketplace.


But when I created Nan Robinson, attorney-investigator for the California State Bar, it wasn't because I considered the legal profession to be particularly exalted. Nor was I interested in presenting courtroom drama.

What intrigued me was the underbelly of the legal profession. Nan's job is trying to keep the legal profession honest, a truly thankless task reminiscent of the cleaning of the Augean stables--and dealing in some of the same materials.

This work brings her in contact with the lowest of the low, lawyers who fail dismally to live up to even the most minimal standards of their profession. Regrettably, there are plenty of them. These are the men and women who steal from escrow accounts, blow filing deadlines, chase ambulances, occasionally become so creative it takes the breath away. True fiction would never dare create a lawyer who orchestrated freeway collisions in which people were actually killed--then collected disability benefits

for "job-related stress" after being charged with murder. We're talking world-class scammer here.

The wonder, really, is that more lawyers aren't murder *victims* in fiction today. There are certainly enough readers willing to believe that the only good lawyer is a dead lawyer. Perhaps we, as mystery writers, owe it to them to remedy this oversight.



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MWA in Southern California

by
Gary Amo
Chapter President

The Southern California Chapter of Mystery Writers of America (MWA SO CAL) is a user friendly group of published writers working in all branches of the mystery and crime writing fields.

MWA SO CAL publishes a newsletter and holds monthly dinner meetings complete with guest speakers and door prizes (books--what else?). Guest speakers have included writers, editors, booksellers, agents, and professionals in the criminal justice field. In the past, we have featured our Edgar winners and nominees from the SO CAL chapter.

While active membership is limited to published writers in the mystery field, a number of editors, booksellers, agents and individuals working in other related fields hold associate membership.

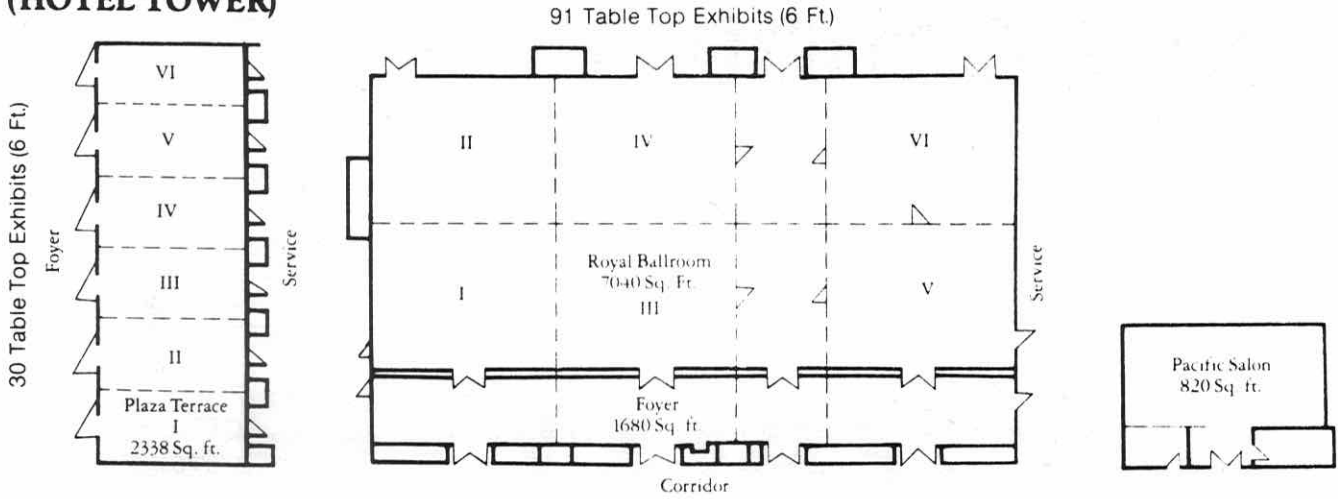
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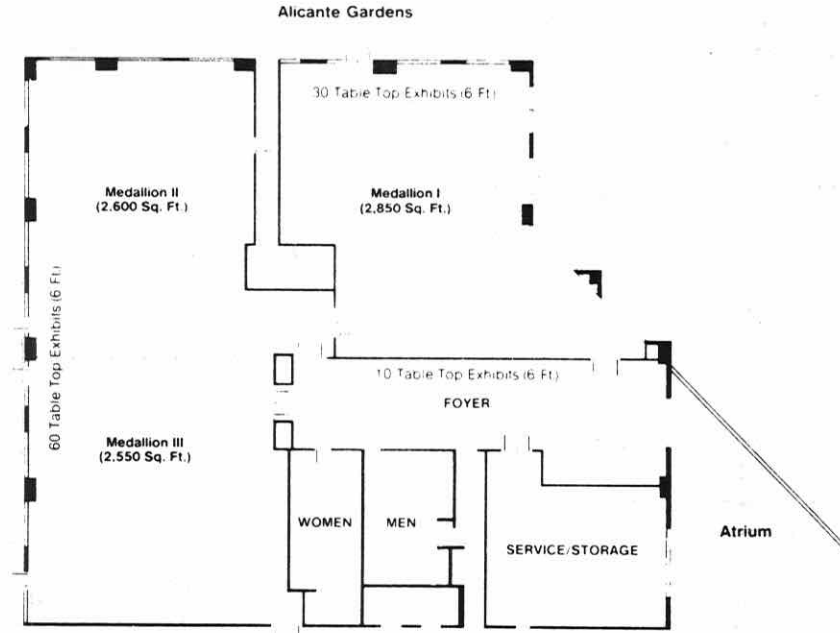
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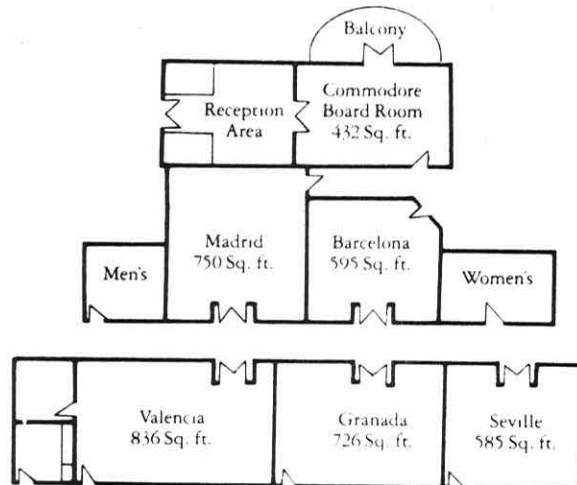
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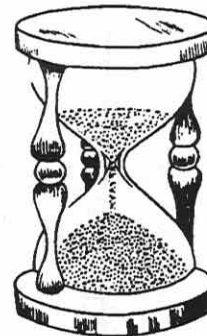
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SECOND FLOOR (HOTEL TOWER)



IT'S TIME TO SAY GOODBYE .



After two years in Anaheim, LCC will be moving to Scottsdale for 1995. Before you all go, we'd like to thank the fans, authors, book dealers and publishers who have supported our efforts and shared a couple of February week-ends with us in Orange County. Having a mystery convention in our own backyard has been a singular experience; producing one two years in a row has been an eye-opening one. None of us will ever again attend a convention without fully appreciating what it takes to make it happen.

We thank you all!

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DEAD MEN'S HEARTS

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Why would anyone want to kill Sister Theresa?

She's a perfectly pleasant, aging nun who runs the local Meals-on-Wheels program—the one person in the small Michigan city of Tanglewood who shouldn't have an enemy in the world. But the man who tries to run her down on a sunny afternoon in June knows that even a quiet nun can have a dangerous past that makes her a threat to some

of the wrong people.

What he *doesn't* know is that Sister Theresa has a couple of secret weapons on her side: Det. Ray Fredrick of the Tanglewood P.D., who sees the hit-and-run from a barber's chair, and Kate Fredrick, who is Ray's wife and Theresa's friend.

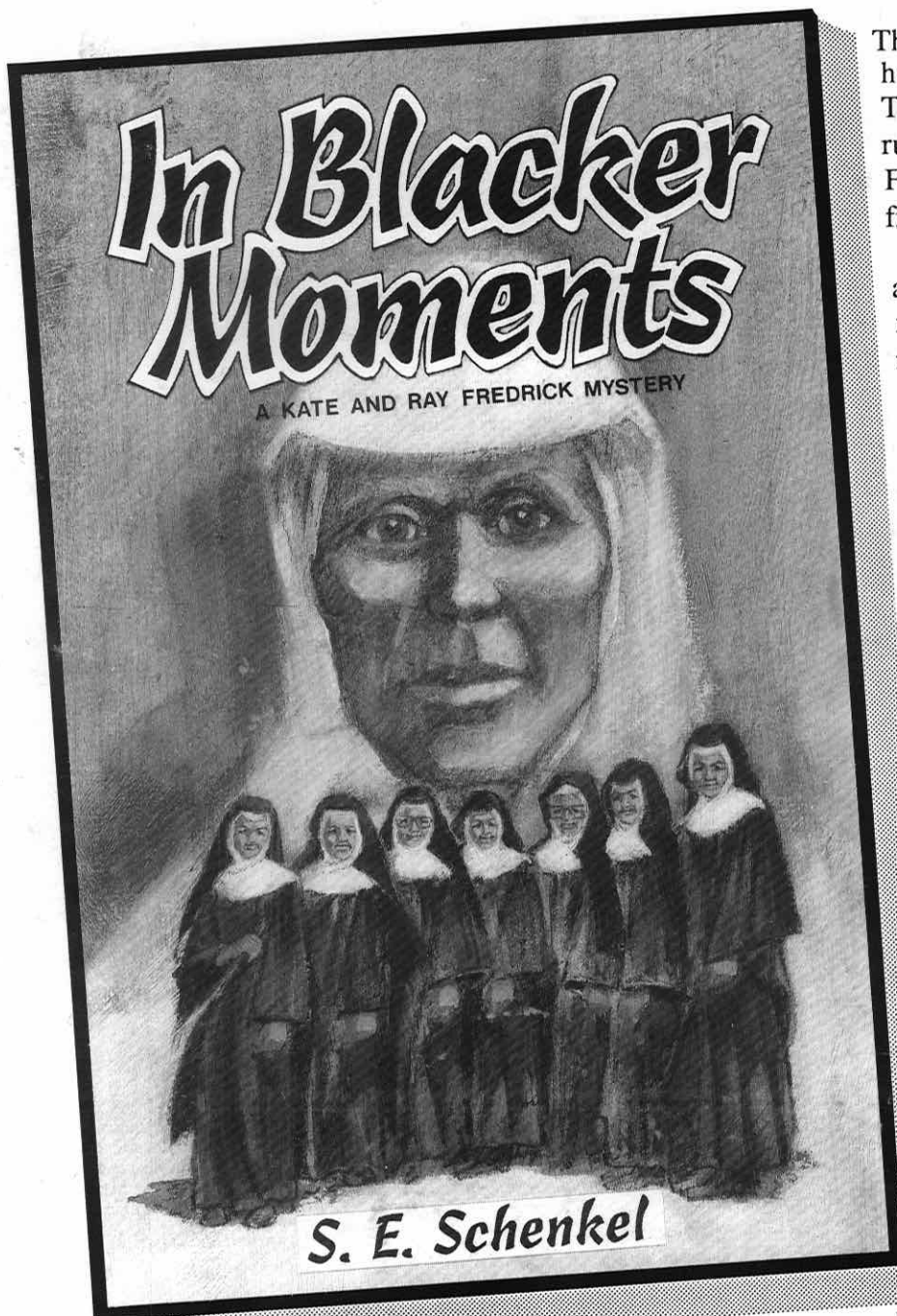
When Kate and Ray team up to find and stop the would-be killer, it's bad news for criminals and good news for mystery readers. The search for Theresa's past takes this intriguing pair west to Washington State, north into Canada, and back forty years to a gruesome double murder that they must solve before they can unravel the mystery surrounding Sister Theresa Loomis.

So who is **aka** anyway?

We're the new kids on the mystery-publishing block, and we're delighted to introduce S.E. Schenkel and her novel, *In Blacker Moments*, at Left Coast Crime IV. *In Blacker Moments* is her first title and ours.

We're dedicated to bringing you quality hardcover mysteries at reasonable prices. Watch for the next Kate and Ray mystery, and other **aka/SEATTLE** titles by talented new authors, at your local mystery bookstore or independent bookseller.

Meet S.E. Schenkel in Anaheim at Left Coast Crime IV!



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