



MYSTERY WRITERS OF AMERICA

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA



June/July 2013

The March of Crime

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I can breathe again. A year and a half of my life seemed to be crowded with helping to put together the California Crime Writers Conference, that biennial event sponsored by Sisters in Crime Los Angeles and our chapter. Fellow co-chairs Patty Smiley (prez of SinC-LA) and chapter member Darrell James slogged through heaps of info of past conferences, heaved emails back and forth, argued, cajoled, and herded the occasional cat to get it all together. From all accounts — minus a few glitches here and there — it was a rousing success.

The event sold out for the first time. If you weren't able to make it, I think you missed some wonderful panelists and information about publishing. But never fear. It will roll around again in 2015...with someone else at the helm!

Meanwhile, our chapter is host to numerous nominees for a slew of mystery awards. I congratulate you all on this achievement! Getting shortlisted is quite a well-deserved honor. I wish you all the best of luck!

Things are slow in the summer, but our chapter still has events. I hope you've noticed that this year, SoCalMWA has sponsored events in libraries — for free! And we're moving all over the southland in hopes of making these occasions more accessible to folks who live out of the L.A. area. In July, for instance, we will be at a La Jolla Library for a True Crime panel. I hope to see some of you there. August, we will again join with Sisters in Crime Orange County for a TBA event. So keep an eye out in your emails for that eblast.

And mark your calendars now for our "Summer" Gumbo Party on September 28 in Woodland Hills! Bill Fitzhugh has generously offered his home and his gumbo skills for us! Details to come!

President's



Rap Sheet

As always, I hope you are all getting a lot of writing done. Summer is no time to slack off. Remember Raymond Chandler's words, "There was a desert wind blowing that night. It was one of those hot dry Santa Ana's that come down through the mountain passes and curl your hair and make your nerves jump and your skin itch. On nights like that every booze party ends in a fight. Meek little wives feel the edge of the carving knife and study their husbands' necks. Anything can happen. You can even get a full glass of beer at a cocktail lounge."

Jeri Westerson

President SoCalMWA

Save The Date! SoCal MWA July

Noon, July 13 • La Jolla Library

An Afternoon of True Crime with

Thomas Basinski

Caitlin Rother & Cathy Scott

Event is FREE! Refreshments available

See Page 8 for details

PLEASE READ

If you print your newsletter and want to save ink, printer preferences give you the options of printing in black and white and printing a legible draft. Also make sure to click to print beyond margins.



Sally Richards



Dear You!

Congratulations to the Sisters in Crime and Mystery Writers of America members who helped to pull off the first sold out California Crime Writers Conference! Wow! That's huge! There have been rave reviews and kudos for the management team that made it happen — congratulations!

I wish I could have been there, but it was my seven-year-old's birthday and my presence was needed as 50 crazed children gathered on the shoreline. I hope to make the next one! Perhaps it will even be taped or streamed and made available worldwide so other writers will see just how good we have it in Southern California. What a fabulous writing community we have here!

Speaking of Southern California, the weather has been *hot!* We survive. Endure. We need not be reminded as often as we are

about often how Southern California is only as permanent as the elements allow. People outside the state always ask me how we survive without much rain, not to mention the startling earthquakes, blazing wildfires and cascading mudslides...when we're lucky enough to get more than the six inches of rain we got last year, that is. I tell them it's all part of the dynamic landscape that inspires our imaginations...our writing. Nothing is permanent, thank goodness, not even the blank page when we open a new file.

And in this spirit, I'm here this month to tell you that this will be the last MWA SoCal newsletter I'll be editing, at least for now.

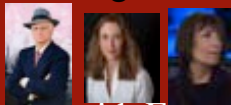
I don't want you to think I gave up this post without some regret, or without a great deal of thought, as it was a great gig and I had a lot of fun interacting with all of you and reading your contributions. Thank you for participating! You were very gracious with your time, expertise and willingness to help. Thank you for your letters and calls!

I now leave you in the capable hands of Holly West who has agreed to take the helm. See you at the upcoming meetings. Have a wonderful summer — write well, write often.

Signing off,

Sally

Save The Date! July 13
SoCal MWA July Meeting
See Pg. 8



An Afternoon of True Crime with Former Homicide Detective
and Author Thomas Basinski
& Authors Caitlin Rother & Cathy Scott

Save the Date!
September 28
Summer Gumbo Party
At Bill Fitzhugh's in Woodland Hills
Details to come!

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If you feel the need to complain about anything in this publication, please remember the Golden Rule your Momma taught you. Instead, please volunteer to help. We are looking for others to work with. As Mahatma Gandhi once said, "Be the change that you wish to see in the world." We'd be happy to have you!

Turning Anxiety into Creativity

By Dennis Palumbo



Someone once said, “The problem with being a writer is that it’s like always having homework due.”

Which is as good a starting point as any for a discussion of deadlines, a fact of life in every writer’s existence. Whether a series author with the next installment due, a true crime writer on assignment, or a wannabe writer who’s promised his or her agent a terrific new thriller, everyone’s faced a deadline at some point.

But not every writer views a deadline in the same way. Like most facts of life, this aspect of writing holds a different meaning for different people. And most of these meanings were formed years ago, embedded in a writer’s childhood experiences concerning ideas of expectation and performance.

For many of my writer patients, a deadline is viewed with dread — the same pressure to deliver the goods that they experienced in school when homework was due. Or a big final exam was to be given. Or some try-out in team sports. The same fears of failure, the same concern that they would somehow fall short of their own and others’ expectations.

For some, then and now, a deadline represents the date at which their long-held belief in their own inadequacy and unworthiness is finally confirmed. In other words — not a good thing.

We’re all familiar with this *deadline dread*, and the stereotypical way that most writers cope: namely, procrastination — which can take the form of household chores, distracting social activities, or just anxious fretting. Experienced procrastinators can spend hours *researching* on the Internet, or re-writing again and again the stuff they’ve managed to produce so far.

The point is, the dread is the same — the potential danger of shaming self-exposure. The fear that once written and handed in, the finished product *exposes* us as inadequate, untalented or undeserving.

On the other hand, there’s a smaller group among my patients for whom a deadline, despite its attendant anxiety, is an absolute *must*. These writers feel they need the prod of a deadline, or else they’d never finish the work (or even start it!).

While this may seem an acceptable state

of affairs, I think it’s a good idea to investigate a bit further. Often, there’s a kind of negative reinforcement in this line of thinking, the meaning being that the writer feels him- or herself to be a lazy, unmotivated slacker who

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needs to be whipped into compliant productivity by the authority of an imposed deadline.

As one patient of mine, a veteran novelist, confessed, “Without a deadline to meet, I’d go all to hell...I mean, I’d just screw around, not accomplishing anything....”

A noted nonfiction writer in my practice put it this way — “Deadlines just put a big gun to my head. If I don’t get the damned thing in on time — *Bang!*” Now *there’s* a pleasant way to spend the next 20 or 30 years of one’s life!

Regardless of how you view deadlines, they can offer an opportunity to explore and maybe temper the self-critical, self-shaming ways you might be viewing yourself. How?

When the next deadline for a writing project looms, take some time to investigate your feelings about it. Look under the almost automatic response of anxiety and dread to see what kind of message you’re sending yourself.

For example, do you feel the same way with every deadline, or does it change depending on the type of project, the person you’re delivering it to, your perceived (or their explicit) level of expectation? How are these ways of experiencing deadlines similar to the ways you felt as a child in your family, a student at school? Whose authority and judgment evoked these feelings the most? Do you experience your project’s potential reader — the editor, agent, even your fans — in some similar way?

By exploring and illuminating these issues, writers can sometimes get the perspective

needed to ease the grip that *deadline dread* has on them. Moreover, they can develop coping strategies based on these understandings.

For instance, if you use deadlines as a motivator, but suffer anxiety, you can gain some measure of control by setting a series of private, personal deadlines for yourself — points at which you not only see where you are on the project, but also take some time to assess your feelings about it. Identify your various creative and emotional concerns and re-group. In other words, *become your own authority regarding your writing process*, instead of merely being vulnerable to that imposed from outside.

Let’s face it. As long as there are writers, there’ll be deadlines. How we deal with them, how we weave them into the fabric of our working lives, is up to us.

In fact, as I once suggested to a forlorn writer patient, “You could keep a journal about it...maybe jot down the issues that deadlines evoke for you....”

“Can I bring it in to show you?” he asked.

“Sure. Our next session, if you’d like.”

“Great.” He suddenly brightened. “A deadline.”

Formerly a Hollywood screenwriter (*My Favorite Year; Welcome Back, Kotter, etc.*), Dennis Palumbo is now a licensed psychotherapist and author of *Writing From the Inside Out* (John Wiley). He also blogs regularly for *The Huffington Post* and *Psychology Today*.

His short fiction has appeared in *Ellery Queen’s Mystery Magazine, The Strand, and elsewhere, and is collected in From Crime to Crime* (Tallfellow Press). His series of mystery thrillers, *Mirror Image, Fever Dream, and the latest, Night Terrors* (all from Poisoned Pen Press), features a psychologist who consults with the *Pittsburgh Police*. For more info, go to www.dennispalumbo.com.

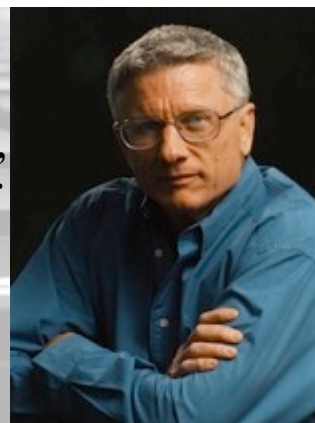


The Pro Shop

In each installment of The Pro Shop, John Morgan Wilson interviews a chapter member about crime writing and writing in general

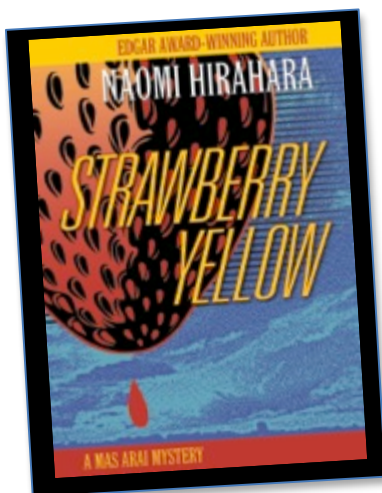
This Month — Naomi Hirahara

By John Morgan Wilson



Naomi Hirahara broke into the mystery scene in 2004 with the publication of *Summer of the Big Bachi*, which launched the Mas Arai series and earned an Edgar for Best Paperback Original. The series protagonist is an elderly Japanese American gardener and atomic-bomb survivor who solves crimes, a character inspired by Naomi's late father. The Mas Arai novels, which have also been nominated for Macavity and Anthony awards, also include *Gasa-Gasa Girl*, *Snakeskin Shamisen*, *Blood Hina*, and *Strawberry Yellow*, which was released in March. Naomi's short crime fiction has been featured in several anthologies, including *L.A. Noir* and *L.A. Noir 2: The Classics*. She's also authored an award-winning book for middle-grade readers, *1001 Cranes*, with another in the works. Next April, Naomi will launch a new and very different mystery series for older readers (details below).

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JMW: Your Mas Arai mysteries are infused with authentic cultural detail from your father's life. How does that work in terms of universal appeal among readers?

NH: Chester Himes, Chaim Potok and Walter Mosley have been my literary guides. My readers say that either I've introduced them to a world they never knew existed or else that I've replicated their family or community life. I'm proud to serve both purposes. Since *oy vey*, *kvetch*, etc. are part of America's lexicon, I figure that I can throw bachi and gasa-gasa its way.

JMW: Your Mas Arai series has been handled by three publishers, multiple editors and two agents. How have you survived?

NH: Since my debut in 2004 the publishing industry has gone through seismic changes. I've received four phone calls from different editors regrettably informing me that they were leaving their respective company. I've learned that is the reality of our business and not to take it personally. We need to be agile and open to new partnerships. With my Mas Arai series, publishers approached me about continuing the series, so I feel very fortunate. And I'm still with the same

agency, but with a different agent.

JMW: How did your foray into books for younger readers come about?

JMW: How did your foray into books for younger readers come about?

NH: It started with a story concept, which I thought fell within the genre of women's fiction. I was told that the voice of my character as a child resonated more than her adult one. I then learned that I was writing middle-grade fiction, a more innocent subgenre than edgy YA. Connecting with younger readers is extremely rewarding; it's a honor to touch people while they are discovering their love for reading and story.

JMW: Tell us about the new series you're starting for Berkley Prime Crime, due to launch next year.

NH: In 2012 [after losing her father] I figured that I needed to inject youthfulness and energy into both my professional and personal life. I came up with a twenty-something female bicycle cop with the LAPD. Writing about law enforcement is definitely not my forte, but since she's a rookie, we'll both be entering new ground. She's also of mixed race; her mother is Japanese American and her friends are very ethnically diverse, so I can still investigate cultural issues that greatly interest me.

JMW: What's your criteria for choosing lead characters for your novels and how do you develop them?

NH: I select characters that I can emotionally connect to because I'm a very emotional (hopefully not melodramatic!) writer. For me, the first book in a mystery series is an awakening

Pro Shop to 21

Hollow Points

Size Matters

By
**Gregory
Von Dare**



A Writer's Guide to Instruments of Violence

There's an old maxim about not bringing a knife to a gunfight. Similarly, you probably don't want to arm your hero character with a little pip-squeak, pea-shooter when the heavy is packing a magnum. It may raise the stakes, but it also raises the mortality of the hero.

In last month's episode, we floated the idea that matching your characters with the right weapons gave them greater credibility and realism. In truth, a single, signature weapon may be fine for most situations but many professionals opt for something stronger when facing a determined, skilled or maniacal antagonist. How do you judge what to pick?

In simple terms, the major characteristics of a gun — loudness, deadliness, recoil, range, etc. — are largely dictated by its caliber. There are exceptions, where a smaller diameter cartridge may be more powerful than a larger one, magnums for instance, but mostly, bigger is stronger.

Caliber is the measure of the outer

diameter of the bullet, or the inner diameter of the gun barrel. To make it even more interesting, there is a global split between metric calibers — used worldwide — and Imperial calibers, used mostly in the UK and USA.

Americans measure caliber in tenths, hundredths and thousandths of an inch; the rest of the world uses millimeters. You may recall that there are roughly twenty-five millimeters to one inch. We have our .38 Special, they have their 9mm Parabellum. While some metric and Imperial cartridges look very similar in size they are *not* meant to interchange.

Before we look at various calibers, I want to review the anatomy of a cartridge. Every cartridge. Unchanged in well over a hundred years, the design of modern ammunition is a champion of efficiency. And yet, it's all 19th Century thinking, materials and technology.

For our purposes: a bullet (1) is the lead piece that shoots out of the gun barrel, the case (2) is a brass cylinder that holds the powder (3). The complete unit is known as a load or round or cartridge. The primer (5) is a small highly volatile compound at the back end of the brass case, held in a tiny metal cup. This compound, when hit by a gun's firing pin, explodes on impact, setting off the main powder charge that sends the bullet speeding down the barrel. The rim (4) is a raised edge that helps some guns load the cartridge and eject it after firing. Not every cartridge has a groove just above the rim.

Now, one more wrinkle. The primer can also be located inside the rim, (see illustration) and is then called rim-fire. Or centered, as in the first diagram, and that is called center-fire. Handguns use both kinds of cartridge, rim and center-fire, with center-fire dominating the larger and more powerful weapons. Rifles above .22 caliber are almost exclusively center-fire. Shotguns are center-fire.

There, in a nutshell, is the modern load, cartridge or round.

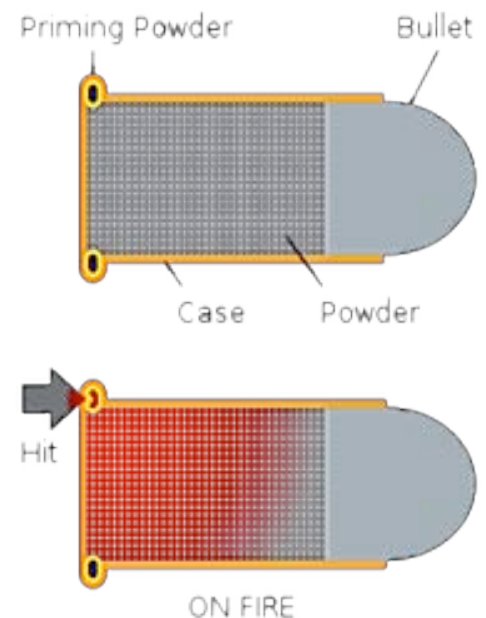
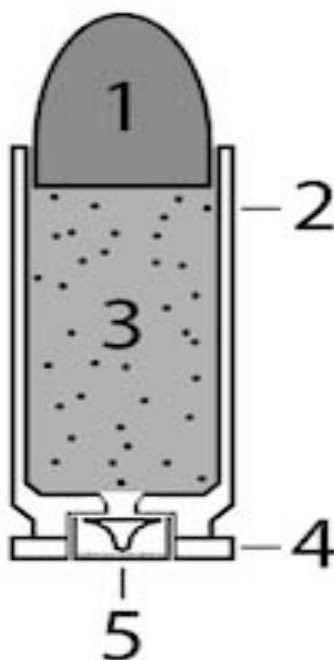
Let's go from small to large handgun calibers with some notes on each one that

will help you get a feel for the ammunition, beyond the dry numbers. For this column, we're going to consider only modern, popular and established firearm calibers. The .450 Webley revolver for example (Dr. Watson's sidearm), can be used straight up in a historical setting, or as a piece of collectable exotica today, but you won't find someone robbing the corner liquor store with one because it's too hard to find ammunition — or if you do, thereby turns a tale.

Next up is the hugely popular .22 caliber, the starter gun for most young people and first time shooters, and the bane of squirrels everywhere. The .22 comes in a variety of cartridge lengths including the Short, Long, Long Rifle and Winchester Rimfire Magnum. Each one increases the length of the brass cartridge and the Long, Long Rifle and WRM each hold progressively more powder for a more energetic bullet.

As a sidebar, remember it is "smokeless" gunpowder in all these rounds, not black

Jump to 9





Men of Mystery

CELEBRATING MEN WHO WRITE MYSTERIES

By Sally Richards

“The only way that you will get men to attend a literary event is to offer sports or porno,’ my friend Dr. Jim Day, LBCC professor once said to me,” says Joan Hansen, literary maven and founder of Men of Mystery. “I, of course, thought —how about mysteries?”

And thus was born the winner of the MWA Raven Award – Men of Mystery event – fourteen years ago. This year’s event falls on November 16, and looking at the requests for information Hansen has already received — and with headliners Alex McCall Smith and Scott Turow it looks like it will be the largest event yet.

“Our attendance has grown from our initial 250 to 500 avid readers who attend and buy the books from our superb Mysterious Galaxy — this year’s Bookstore Raven awardee,” said Hansen about what began as an event some thought may not succeed. “And the number of men in the audience expands each year fulfilling our dream of creating a unique and exciting event.”

The event is unique in such a way that it is the only one of its kind — authors actually pay their own way (at a discount) to become part of an elite list of the Men of Mystery. Participants go to the event not knowing too much about what to expect, but are very soon enveloped in the adoration of the readership public at large. Each Man of Mystery has his own table to preside over and many of those attending are returnees who’ve been spreading the word all year long. The event doesn’t have money for advertising, but has instead grown organically upon the reputation of

both the Men of Mystery and the audience having a great time.

Hansen strives to reach out to established mystery writers, as well as those new to the field, so she can have the honor of introducing new writers to attendees.

“Because we also feature fifty other writers, everyone is able to be seated at a table with an author — men who come to us from all across our land — and from Canada as well. I find particular joy in my *man-hunting* skills,” says Hansen about gathering the 50-plus men who participate as Men of Mystery each year. “I find new authors each year by receiving referrals from publishers and from our authors — as well as discovering their books in the library and online.

“Our first year we were honored to have Michael Connelly as one of our Headliners — charming man that he is, he returned to celebrate our tenth anniversary. Over the years we have had the privilege of hosting most of the giants of the genre including the lamented Vince Flynn and Stephen J. Cannell — as well as Dean Koontz, Lawrence Block, Robert Crais, Thomas Perry, John Lescroart, Greg Hurwitz, Christopher Rice, the Goldbergs, Bob Levinson, Jeffery Deaver and James Patterson, just to name just a handful from these past thirteen fantastic years. I do have room for a few more Men of Mystery this year and I can be reached at JHansen36@Juno.com.”

That’s Hansen — always networking and finding a way to gather others to help on the quest to promote authors and literacy.



Michael Connelly and Joan Hansen at the 2009 Men of Mystery event.

Some of her other projects? Her other conference, the Festival of Women Authors presented by the Literary Guild of Orange County just celebrated its 20th annual event this year. The Orange Country Literary Guild is also one of her creations. She also has a program that sponsors high school students to attend the conferences. Personally, after seeing her in action at the Festival of Women Authors conference this year, where she covered all of the genres including mystery bringing in two of our own members to speak — I have two words that describe Hansen — *she’s amazing*.

Hansen, once a secondary school teacher — introduced new generations of readers

Men of Mystery Jump to pg. 19

Correction



We misspelled Jeff Mariotte’s name last issue. Sorry, Jeff. Here he is with the Raven Award at Mysterious Galaxy’s birthday bash on May 11.

Calendar Year 2012
Total: 11,210
Total of All Meth Clandestine Laboratory Incidents
Including Labs, Dumpsites, Chem/Glass/Equipment



Source: El Paso Intelligence Center (EPIC) National Seizure System (N2S2)
Query Date January 27, 2013

Courtesy DEA

Plotting the Impossible

Lycaon: the Coming of the Werewolf

By Barry H. Wiley

*Melancholike persons, and madde men, imagin many things which in verie deede are not.
Men which are dull of seing and hearing imagin many things which in verie deede are not so.*
Ludvig Lavater . *De Spectris*. Geneva, 1570



Writers of series mysteries tend to become too predictable to the reader unless the writer is diligent about shaking things up. In my own case, I have been developing a series (my second), *Steele Mackaye Investigations*, set in Marina del Rey, but with international involvements. Mackaye is not a private investigator, but something else entirely. His first story, called *Darknot*, opens with his answering a client's question regarding werewolves. Werewolves? Now that's not something you normally read about in an LA-based mystery, nor in one containing international intrigue. But, there it is.

It required my digging into the source of the werewolf legend. Naturally, research often exceeds the final need, but that is what makes it fun. That and the often fascinating people you encounter, who may even end up as characters in the story.

I am a writer who enjoys the research quests my characters often demand of me. I find the research I do not only helps me develop deeper, more dimensional characters, but sub-plots that become as intricate to the book as the original plot. I never shortchange my readers on research. Because I don't, the research usually ties into the reader's zeitgeist, giving them a ring of truth and recognition that they might connect with, but may not even be aware of. Researching the truth to integrate into fiction is the writer's secret weapon in your arsenal of writing believable fiction. It gives you the ability to cause the reader to suspend their disbelief, if only for as long as it takes to read your book.

This werewolf research I reference here took me several days of work, but paid off in gold. I suppose many of you are asking yourself, Werewolves aren't real, how can researching them bring the reader closer to an iconic fictionalized character? That's just it, all that's gone on with werewolves in the past has become their past, their legend...and the fodder I padded the story with to the reader's own knowledge. You'll see what I mean in a minute...and feel free to use the research in your own writing, should the moon be shining brightly.

The Werewolf

Werewolves, of varying ages and gender, have become familiar set pieces in fantasy and mystery fiction. But, what is a werewolf?

The final scene of the 1941 Universal film, *The Wolf Man*, is set in a dark desolate forest with heavy mists drifting like lost spirits across the land. A man is seen desperately defending himself against a werewolf attack with his heavy walking stick. With each hard strike of the stick, the wolf man is clearly weakened, its angry growling diminished. Eventually, the beast is beaten down, finally falling to the earth, dead — just as the old gypsy woman, Maleva, comes slowly up the road on her small horse-drawn cart.

The camera moves in on the face of the werewolf as, in the final comfort of death, the wolf man slowly reverts to human form, to Lawrence Talbot, the tragic man afflicted with the curse of werewolfery. As the last vestiges of the wolfish cast vanish from Talbot's face, the old gypsy whispers, "Now he is at last at peace."

In his 1933 in-depth investigation, *Werewolf*, Montague Summers, observed, "Actually the werewolf is not a theme for the theatre...attempts at the supernatural as I have witnessed upon the screen were almost uniformly banal or ridiculous."

But in the case of *The Wolf Man*, with Lon Chaney, Jr. taking the role of Lawrence Talbot coupled with Jack Pierce's stunning makeup design, the portrayal of the tragic impact of an ancient curse on an innocent man raised the film from Summers' banal experiences to a modest classic of early Hollywood.

In established Hollywood folklore, established, that is, in 1935 in *The Werewolf of London* with Henry Hull, the accursed would always involuntarily transform into a werewolf in the mystic light of a full moon - - but only between the hours of nine and ten. And, the werewolf would principally attack those whom he loves most.

The reason that the man in the 1941 film could fend off and finally defeat the supernatural werewolf was that his walking



stick had a head of silver. *The Wolf Man* added to the accepted lore that contact with that metal in any form was deadly to werewolves. Even touching silver by someone with the curse would burn their skin. Thus, silver was established as a plot necessity in future werewolf films.

The other contribution to modern werewolf lore from the 1941 film was that the accursed human would be marked by a pentagram on the chest.

The lap dissolve of that final moonlit supernatural transformation, while taking only seconds on the screen, required almost ten hours of careful stop-motion photography for makeup adjustments, something which Lon Chaney, Jr., endured with endless private complaining about his discomfort; but publicly claiming a martyr's devotion to his famous father's legacy, wildly exaggerating his artistic agony. Werewolf tradition then, as popularly understood now in the 21st century, is based primarily on the screenplays by Robert Harris & John Colton in 1935 and Curt Siodmak in 1941, coupled in both films with Jack Pierce's pioneering complex

Impossible to pg. 26

July 13
Noon

Mystery Writers of
America SoCal & the La Jolla
Riford Branch Library Present

An Afternoon of True Crime



Caitlin Rother – This New York Times bestselling author has written or co-authored eight books, including true crime thrillers *Lost Girls*, *Poisoned Love*, *Dead Reckoning*, *Body Parts*, *Twisted Triangle* and the thriller *Naked Addiction*. Three of her books were named in the Top 10 True Crime Books in 2011 and 2012, and two of them were San Diego Book Awards Finalists.

Tom Basinski – In 1987 Basinski began a 17-year career with the San Diego District Attorney as an investigator, retiring in 2005. In 2006, Berkeley True Crime published Basinski's first book, *No Good Deed*, the true story of a shocking LaJolla murder that rocked the community and has been featured in several true crime documentaries. In 2009 Berkeley True Crime published his second book, *Cross Country Evil*, the shocking true story of an eighteen-year manhunt for a killer/rapist on the run.



Cathy Scott – Author, journalist and blogger for Psychology Today, Scott has written for New York Times Magazine, George, The Christian Science Monitor, Los Angeles Times and Reuters News Service and others national publications. She is known for her bestselling hip-hop true crime books *The Killing of Tupac Shekur* and *The Murder of Biggie Smalls*. Her seventh book, *The Rough Guide to True Crime*, a title in *Rough Guide's* series of books, was released in August 2009.

A FREE event
Come for the discussion
Stay to ask questions
Network
Book signings afterward



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Size Matters Jump from 5

powder. Today black powder is sold and used for antique weapons, such as muzzle-loading rifles, muskets and blunderbuss, cannon, and to launch fireworks and model rockets. All the rounds shot by the police, Feds, PIs and bad guys are filled with smokeless powder. Despite the name, smokeless powder makes a small amount of smoke. Black powder makes a thick, opaque cloud of smoke. Both create that distinctive gunpowder odor, although black powder has a more expressive sulfur bouquet and a tangy charcoal finish.

The .22 is not only a good starter cartridge, it is cheap and widely available (although prices rose sharply in 2002). It also has the lowest recoil and report of any popular load. In the past, .22 rifles with live ammo were commonly used at shooting galleries and county fairs. The .22 has enough power to kill a small animal but can't kill a human with a body shot unless it dives right into heart muscle, or sunder a major artery.

.22 pistols are often carried as silent, up-close killers by pro hit men. Since the .22 bullet does not go supersonic, it is easier to silence than the bigger, faster, more powerful calibers. For a quiet assassination at close range, the .22 is ideal. One oblique, point-blank shot behind the ear and the .22 bullet bounces around inside the cranium doing horrid damage directly to the brain.

The .22 caliber bullet is used in handguns, rifles, competition guns in the Olympics and Derringers, a special class of short-range weapons, often with more than one barrel, named after Henry Deringer (sic), a 19th Century pistol maker from Philadelphia. The best-known version of the Derringer, the Remington 95, with its over-and-under barrels, exposed hammer, unguarded trigger, and small, curving grip was the firearm equivalent of brass knuckles — a nasty, up-close weapon for card-games or wedding-nights gone bad. The Derringer is made in almost every caliber from .22 to .45 but is rarely seen today in professional use except as a second backup or hideaway gun.

Just slightly larger than the .22, but with a different mission and reputation is the .25 ACP. ACP stands for Automatic Colt Police. Popular in small, concealed handguns, the .25 caliber is a dated load. It makes the quintessential woman's gun because it is small, light and easy to conceal in a purse, *decolletage* or under a springy garter, and recoil is light. The best known .25 gun, Colt's Vest

Pocket Automatic, designed by the legendary John Browning, debuted in 1908 in the USA. Several versions of that same gun were made and sold by Fabrique Nationale (FN) in Belgium for European use as a 7.65mm.

The .25 cartridge is hardly more powerful than the .22 Long, but is considered more reliable due to its center-fire design. The .25 ACP typically uses a 50 grain full metal jacket bullet and delivers about 88 Joules of energy to the target. You could probably spit harder than that with a little practice. However, under ideal conditions, you could have up to 127 Joules of impact and do some damage with a hit in a critical place.

Another digression: Jacketing is a process of putting a copper coating over the lead bullet. This increases the stability of the bullet in flight and improves penetration at the target. A partial or half metal jacket covers only the tip of the bullet and you can see clearly where the copper sheath ends and the lead is exposed. A full metal jacket covers the bullet from its rounded or pointed tip to its flattened bottom. A complete metal jacket covers the entire bullet, even its backside, and exposes the shooter to less friable lead when the round is shot. For target and range shooters who fire indoors, less exposure to lead is always desirable.

A recent class of "green" ammunition attempts to minimize the target shooter's exposure to lead and certain toxic products of combustion such as formaldehyde and phosphorous oxides. These rounds feature complete metal jacketed bullets (or sometimes steel bullets) and specially compounded primers and powders to reduce toxins in the air. These loads are not available in all calibers.

Anyone looking for further information on armaments should try Wikipedia as a first source. It has an amazing amount of data about firearms, ammunition and gun makers. Recent input from global sources has opened up a world of knowledge about foreign arms, especially those from former Iron Curtain countries. Peace out.

Gregory Von Dare comes from Chicago and was raised on crime, corruption and clout in the big city. He has written non-fiction books, magazine articles and radio scripts, as well as stories, plays and screenplays. He once worked as a pyro detonator and talent manager for Universal Studios Hollywood.

SHAMUS AWARD NOMINIES

The Shamus Award is given annually by the Private Eye Writers of America (PWA) to honor excellent work in the Private Eye genre. Committee members of PWA select the winners. (The series private eye is noted in brackets following the book's title.) The Shamus Award is awarded by the Private Eye Writers of America (PWA) for the best detective fiction genre novels and short stories of the year. The Prize is given annually to recognize outstanding achievement in private eye fiction. The Shamus Awards will be announced at Bouchercon World Mystery Convention at the Bouchercon XLIV (2013) in Albany, NY in September. This year's Shamus Award nominees are as follows:

Congratulations to our chapter members
Shamus Award Nominees



Best Indie P.I. Novel
White Heat
Paul Marks



Best Hardcover PI Novel Nominee:

- Lullaby* by Ace Atkins
- Taken* by Robert Crais
- Hunting Sweetie Rose* by Jack Fredrickson
- Blues in the Night* by Dick Lochte
- The Other Woman* by Hank Phillippi Ryan

Best First PI Novel Nominee:

- Hush Money* by Chuck Greaves
- Murder Unscripted* by Clive Rosengren
- Black Fridays* by Michael Sears
- Racing the Devil* by Jaden Terrell
- The Twenty-Year Death* by Ariel S. Winter

Best Paperback Original PI Novel Nominee:

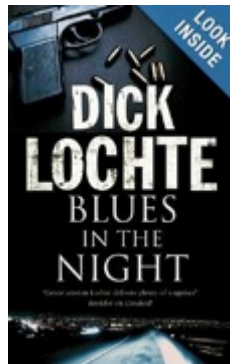
- Death Warmed Over* by Kevin J. Anderson
- And She Was* by Alison Gaylin
- Archie Meets Nero Wolfe* by Robert Goldsborough
- False Negative* by Joseph Koenig
- Pulse* by John Lutz

Best PI Short Story Nominee:

- The Sequel* by Jeffery Deaver (The Strand)
- After Cana* by Terence Faherty (Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine)
- O'Nelligan and the Lost Fates* by Michael Nethercott (Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine)
- Illegitimi Non Carborundum* by Stephen D. Rogers (Crimespree)
- Ghost Negligence* by John Shepphird (Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine)

Best Indie PI Novel Nominee:

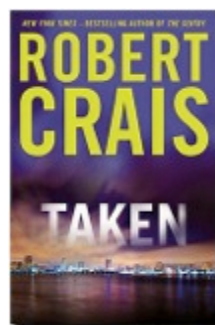
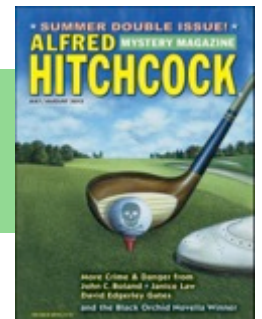
- Stranger in Town* by Cheryl Bradshaw
- One-Eyed Jack* by Christopher J. Lynch
- White Heat* by Paul D. Marks
- Devil May Care* by James Mullaney
- Enamorted* by O'Neil De Noux



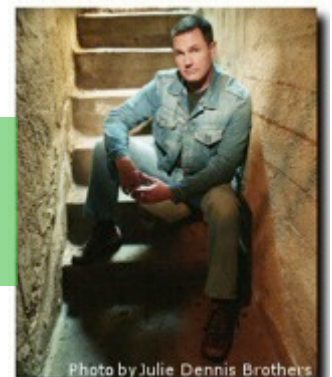
Best PI Short Story
Blues in the Night
Dick Lochte



BEST P.I. SHORT STORY
Ghost Negligence
John Shepphird
Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine



Best Hardcover PI Novel
Taken
Robert Crais





The Art of Interrogation May Meeting

By Holly West

Wrap-Up



For crime fiction writers, particularly those who write procedurals, it's not uncommon to include an interrogation scene. We think we know how it goes — after all, we've seen and read such scenes many times in movies, on television and in books. Maybe we've even conducted our own research — but do we really know what makes up an authentic interrogation?

"Not exactly," says Paul Bishop, a 35-year veteran of the LAPD and expert in the art of interrogation. Fortunately for us, SoCal MWA treasurer and award-winning author Eric Beetner treated us to a conversation with Mr. Bishop at the May 26th meeting.

Beetner's first question got straight to the point — *What do writers get wrong most often?*

As it turns out, *a lot*. But first and foremost is the usual setting, in which a detective sits at a table across from the suspect, grilling him or her until a confession is procured.

If you're writing such a scene, you need to ditch the table. In an effective interrogation, the detective will sit face-to-face with the suspect, so close that the interrogator can easily make eye and physical contact. Anything within 12 inches is what you're aiming for.

The table is the first and most obvious boundary that must be dispensed with, but in truth, the entire interrogation is a process of removing barriers. Some, like that table, are immediately apparent, but others, like dressing appropriately for the situation and not wearing a badge or gun, are subtler.

According to Mr. Bishop, a lot of cops get it wrong too. They think the point of an interrogation is simply to go in and get the suspect to confess. Anything less is considered unsuccessful. Not so. Take this scenario — five gang members are interrogated and not one confesses. But one of them shows signs of deception. That's a successful interrogation because now you know where you're going to focus your resources — on the one suspect who seems to be lying. As Mr. Bishop put it, you're looking for signs of progress and deception.

What are some of those signs? Tone of voice, a shrug or a smirk, the carotid artery popping, the smell of fear (or, as Bishop calls it, *eau d' dirtbag*), the "butt swipe," when the suspect shifts in his/her seat and other physical



Eric Beetner and Paul Bishop, Author and 35-year veteran of the LAPD and expert in interrogations, sit across from each other with the ideal interrogation 0-12" space between them.

"An interrogation will often begin with a series of quick questions about things that a person will generally be honest about — *Where do you live? Are you married? Do you have a dog?* This will help establish the suspect's "truth face." Then he'll ask a question of relevant to the crime — *Why did you steal the car?*"

— Paul Bishop

signs that the suspect is unconsciously releasing anxiety.

A good interrogator will recognize these signs and use them to lead the interrogation. He'll try to raise the suspect's anxiety so that her body betrays her.

An interrogation will often begin with a series of quick questions about things that a

person will generally be honest about — *Where do you live? Are you married? Do you have a dog?* This will help establish the suspect's "truth face." Then he'll ask a question of relevant to the crime — *Why did you steal the car?*

An innocent person will quickly and vehemently deny involvement. Over time, her denials will get even stronger. A guilty person might stumble as he searches for an answer, and his denials will generally become softer. When a suspect is ready to confess, she'll often ask a "mercy" question. Something like *How much time will I get?* or *What will happen to my family?*

Bishop points out that after that first admission — *Okay, I did it* — it's time to lock it in. One of the most important (and perhaps hardest) parts of effective interrogation is giving the suspect a socially acceptable way to confess. What does this mean, say, when the suspect has raped and murdered a two year old? As heinous as a crime might be, the interrogator has to find a way to

Wrap-up to Pg. 20



The California Crime Writers Conference

By Holly West

Wrap-Up

Over the weekend of June 22-23, a group of more than 250 crime fiction authors, agents, editors and faculty came together for the biennial California Crime Writers Conference at the Pasadena Hilton.

The event is co-hosted by Sisters in Crime Los Angeles and the Southern California chapter of Mystery Writers of America. For the first time ever, the conference sold out at two hundred attendees, a fact that was both exciting and daunting. There were some hitches—for example the breakout rooms were pretty crowded. Thankfully, the conference program was so full of great information and instructors that most attendees forgave us.

Keynote speaker Sue Grafton spoke at lunch on Saturday. I'm sorry, I just have to say this — she's a delight. She inspired us with her own path to authorship, which included more rejection than you might expect. Sue is one of those authors who worked hard to learn her craft and truly believes that there are no shortcuts. When she began writing she "committed to success," and as you can see, it certainly worked.

Sunday's keynote was Elizabeth George (also a delight). After a spirited introduction by Travis Richardson, Elizabeth charmed us with a speech about finding one's process and the importance of perseverance. Elizabeth is inspiring on so many levels, from her wonderful novels to her non-profit foundation dedicated to assisting emerging writers. We all felt fortunate to have her as a part of the conference.



Keynote speaker Sue Grafton advises a rapt audience to, "Commit to success."

Most of the panels were a huge success. I can't tell you how many people stopped by the registration desk to exclaim their appreciation for the vast amount of valuable information they were getting. Let me now offer a huge thank you and congratulations to Tammy Kaehler, who oversaw the programming for the conference, as well as the volunteers who assisted.

Perhaps the biggest thank you goes to Sisters in Crime president Patricia Smiley, whose work on this conference was nothing short of monumental. I worked with her directly for much of the last six months as I coordinated the registrations, and I can say she was always supportive, always cheerful, and always on the ball. Same goes for Sisters in Crime treasurer Gayle Bartos-Pool. What a pleasure they both are.

As the registration coordinator for the conference, I spent most of my time at the registration desk, which was a lot of fun since our president, Jeri Westerson, hung out with me much of the weekend. It was a new experience for me to be part of a conference as an organizer and it turns out, I liked it. Which brings me to my next point — get involved with your local MWA chapter! My own experience as a writer has become so much richer since I've become more involved with the larger community. It's a time commitment that really pays off.

The next California Crime Writers Conference will be in 2015. I hope to see you there!

See pg. 22 for pictures



MWA Literacy Outreach

Nineteen percent of high school graduates cannot read. Each year they leave school and merge with the 14 percent — 32 million — adults in America who can't read. Every year, some of those adults who cannot read add to the 63% of inmates in the US who can't read. Please, help us break the cycle. MWA is a strong advocate of programs that promote books, literacy, libraries and reading. Over the years through our Kids Love A Mystery and MWA Reads programs we have been involved in outreach to encourage the next generation of readers, writers and productive members of our society. Our current focus is twofold: Reader to Reader, a program that connects libraries in need with people who have books to donate, and our Educator's Page, with links to mystery-based reading and writing exercises for all levels from elementary school through university courses. Turn a kid on to reading mysteries — and you can change their future for the better.

Go to <http://www.readertoreader.org/>



Over the Transom

Do you have announcements for your fellow SoCal MWA members? Do you have a new book or story out? Won an award? Is your book-signing coming up and you'd like to see familiar faces? Are you a publisher with a call for content? Do you have an event our members might be interested in? Do you have a mantra that guarantees a bestseller? Let us know! Send your announcements to The March of Crime to TheMarchOfCrime@gmail.com

Former attorney Leon Vickman released his eighth novel, *65 Rue Monsieur Le Prince*, a fast-paced international intrigue thriller that takes readers to Rabat, Morocco and Paris.

65 Rue
Monsieur
Le
Prince

Author Craig Faustus Buck, MWA SoCal VP, is doing good out in the world! He has a short story in Carl Coan's *Abandoned Shoes*, a collection of eleven mystery writers spinning a tale from the same photograph. Available in print or Ebook. All profits go to the Eisner Pediatric & Family Medical Center to support health care for low-income children and families. Craig rocks!

[FB/AbandonedShoesTheBook](https://www.facebook.com/AbandonedShoesTheBook)

Abandoned Shoes



Eleven Mystery Writers Tell Us About This Photo

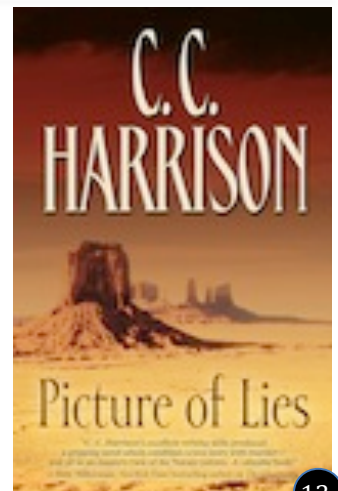
Carl E. Coan



Our very own By Barry H. Wiley received the Christopher Literary Award from the Milbourne Christopher Foundation Award for his book *The Thought Reader Craze* at the annual Convention of the Society of American Magicians in Washington, D.C. William V. Rauscher, Chairman of the Awards Committee, hands him the award. Tom Ewing, on the far right is a member of the Awards Committee and emcee.



Congratulations to our Anthem, Arizona resident C. C. Harrison on her new title *Picture of Lies* (Five Star/Cengage) now receiving rave reviews. Harrison is an award winning author whose short stories, articles, essays and novels have received national recognition. *Picture of Lies* is about investigative journalist Keegan Thomas is living a nightmare of guilt and grief since her little girl, Daisy, was kidnapped practically in front of her eyes. When the police investigation stalled, she turned her grief to anger and buried herself in her work searching for missing children, her own included. Keegan travels to Monument Valley on the Navajo Indian Reservation seeking the whereabouts of people in an old photograph found in her grandfather's belongings after his death. But the Indians do not welcome this nosy stranger carrying a picture of their old people, some of them dead. Nothing can prepare her for the danger she encounters when she becomes the target of a powerful U.S. senator who will do anything to stop her from telling what she knows.



I'll tell you whodunnit — Informants in life & fiction

By John Madinger



In the bar, the Iceman was late, as usual, making a slow night even slower. On the wire, the snitch was killing the time trying to pick up a waitress, country music playing, the girl not having it. In the car, we had the patrol frequency muttering in the background, just loud enough to warn us if someone called other cops. Not likely in this neighborhood; people here were used to strangers waiting on a dope deal.

The BOLO went out for four male suspects who had just tried to rob the drive-thru window at a fast food place. The dispatcher didn't have much, no license plate or even a good car description. It wasn't a lot to go on. I turned to my partner. "Well, that crime's as good as solved," I said.

"Yep," he agreed. "Too bad they can't all be that easy."

How could we be so sure? Because long experience promised that at least one of these people, (and considering the stupidity of the crime, probably all four) would tell someone else, and sooner or later, that person would tell the police all about it. That's how crimes are solved.

If you've watched A&E's *The First 48*, where real homicide investigators try to solve real murders, you've heard something like, "Thirteen hours in, Detective Smith gets a break. Someone calls up and tells him who did it." This happens in almost every episode. Detective Smith's break is an informant, passing the word along. Whether it's one unsolved murder or a couple dozen open burglaries, informants close cases. They're so important that narcotics agents have an unofficial motto — *Good informant, good case. Bad informant, bad case. No informant, no case.* I believed it implicitly, and I wasn't alone.

Cops aren't the only ones who know this — crooks do, too, which is why the punishments for snitching — ostracism at the least and things like Colombian neckties (Google it, but not before breakfast) at the worst — are almost universal and always sincere. After all, betrayal of trust is at the root of informing, which is why he's called snitch, rat, squealer, fink, Judas, stooge and stool pigeon. In England, he's a grass, (as in *snake in the grass*). In Australia, he's a dog.

When everyone's conditioned practically from birth that, *No one likes a tattletale*, who'd want to wear these labels? And yet someone does every day.

What is this person and how did he or she come to betray? I call it *The Big MAC* — Motivation, Access and Control. Scratch one of these and you've got something, but it's not an informant (and it's usually trouble). We'll take these out of order and save the most interesting, for the crime writer, at least, for last.

Access seems pretty obvious. An informant needs something to inform about, usually crime, a criminal, or some kind of illegal activity. I was highly motivated by that price tag on Osama bin Laden's head. Luckily for Osama, I had no access,

There are some crimes of course — those of a solo serial killer, for instance — where no would-be informant will have access, but even here, the criminal is at risk.

because, for \$25 million, I'd have given him up in a hot minute. Fortunately for the police, criminal conspiracies are filled with people who have all sorts of access. Some may have only a small piece of the puzzle, while others can put together the whole thing. Anna Sage, the infamous *Woman in Red* who gave up John Dillinger, supposedly knew little more than where Gentleman Johnny was going to the movie one night. That was all the access the FBI needed. Joe Valachi, who broke open La Cosa Nostra in the 1960s, literally knew where the bodies had been buried for thirty years. He had a lifetime of access.

There are some crimes of course — those of a solo serial killer, for instance — where no would-be informant will have access, but even here, the criminal is at risk. The *jailhouse snitch*, comes to the police with details about an old crime, confessed in the privacy of a shared cell. These informants are highly motivated, usually wanting to trade information for years of prison time. Stephen King successfully worked one into *The Shawshank Redemption*.

Control is another essential element. Officers exert varying degrees of control over their informants. Some informants work for months or even years, wearing wires, supplying intelligence covertly. Others call *crimestoppers* once to report a crime, expecting to get the advertised reward. One way or another, it's imperative that the officer controls the informant and not the other way around. Bad — sometimes *very* bad — things happen when roles are reversed. Boston organized crime figure James "Whitey" Bulger, for example, happened to the FBI. Bulger, a long-time informant for FBI agent John Connolly, was the inspiration for Jack Nicholson's character in the movie *The Departed*. Bulger, arrested in Southern California after years as a fugitive, is awaiting trial for multiple murders, but Connolly's already doing 40 years, no doubt regretting he ever heard of Whitey.

Motivation is the *why* of informants, and it's critical. Nothing happens unless the person is somehow pushed to drop that dime. This motivation varies from person to person and may be transitory, so the officer needs to get them while they're hot. What motivates betrayal? The CIA calls it MICE — money, ideology, compromise and ego. That pretty much covers most of the bases for spies, but we should broaden it a little for the police. There's a lot of tension and emotion here, which is good news for writers, as fear, revenge, perversity, ego, greed and repentance — all terrific story elements — come into play.



Macavity Nominations 2013

Novels/stories were published for the first time in the U.S. in 2012. This award is nominated by and voted on by members and supporters of Mystery Readers International, as well as subscribers to Mystery Readers Journal. Winners will be announced at Bouchercon, the World Mystery Convention, in September, in Albany this year. The Macavity Award is named for the "mystery cat" of T.S. Eliot (Old Possum's Book of Practical Cats). Congratulations to all!

Best Mystery Novel

Gone Girl by Gillian Flynn (Crown)
The Black House by Peter May (Silver Oak)
The Beautiful Mystery by Louise Penny (Minotaur)
The Other Woman by Hank Phillippi Ryan (Forge)
The Art Forger by B.A. Shapiro (Algonquin Books)
The Twenty Year Death by Ariel S. Winter (Hard Case Crime)
The Last Policeman, by Ben H. Winters (Quirk Books)

Best First Mystery Novel

Low Country Boil by Susan M. Boyer (Henery Press)
Don't Ever Get Old by Daniel Friedman (Minotaur Books-Thomas Dunn)
Mr. Churchill's Secretary by Susan Elia MacNeal (Random House -Bantam)

Best Mystery Non-Fiction

Books to Die For: The World's Greatest Mystery Writers on the World's Greatest Mystery Novels, edited by John Connolly and Declan Burke (Simon & Schuster - Atria/Emily Bestler)
Midnight in Peking: How the Murder of a Young Englishwoman Haunted the Last Days of Old China by Paul French (Penguin)
In Pursuit of Spenser: Mystery Writers on Robert B. Parker and the Creation of an American Hero, edited by Otto Penzler (BenBella/Smart Pop)

Best Mystery Short Story

The Lord Is My Shamus by Barb Goffman in *Chesapeake Crimes: This Job Is Murder* (Wildside)

The Unremarkable Heart by Karin Slaughter in *Mystery Writers of America Presents Vengeance* (Little, Brown - Mulholland Books)

Thea's First Husband by B.K. Stevens in *Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine*, June 2012

When Duty Calls by Art Taylor in *Chesapeake Crimes: This Job is Murder* (Wildside Press)
Blind Justice by Jim Fusilli in *Mystery Writers of America Presents Vengeance* (Little, Brown - Mulholland Books)

The Sequel (a novella) by Jeffrey Deaver in *The Strand Magazine*, November-February 2012-2013

Whodunnit from 14

Fear, usually of jail, but sometimes of other criminals, is a major motivator. Anna Sage, the Dillinger informant, was motivated by fear of deportation. Valachi feared he would be murdered in prison. A chance of shortening a lengthy prison term brings in a lot of people. Sammy "The Bull" Gravano ratted out John Gotti to avoid a much longer stretch for himself. Agents call this the "Hammer," and they hold the biggest one they can find over potential informants.

Revenge may taste best cold, but it's often a fleeting compulsion. Still, everybody understands getting even, and ex's (ex-wives, ex-husbands, ex-employees, ex-tenants, ex-friends, ex-anybody-with-a-grievance), have access and some reason to betray a trust. Greed still works, or the government wouldn't have put up a reward for bin Laden. Fewer inform for ego and fewer still out of true repentance (I never bought it), but those, too, are great themes in literature, opportunities for the author.

Finally, the investigator must always look out for the perverse — an informant who's snitching for his own reasons. Maybe he's trying to eliminate the competition or take the heat off his own activity, but the officer isn't supposed to allow the law to be used for these purposes.

Crime writers have real issues with informants. After all, having someone tell the reader whodunit tends to take all the mystery and suspense out of a suspenseful

mystery. One of G.K. Chesterton's (UK, 1874-1936) commands for writers in the genre are that, "...your detectives shall well and truly detect the crimes presented to them using those wits which it may please you to bestow on them and not placing reliance on nor making use of *Divine Revelation, Feminine Intuition, Mumbo Jumbo, Jiggery-Pokery, Coincidence, or Act of God.*" Informants don't exactly break this rule, but somebody calling up and telling the story's hero who did it comes awfully close. That's okay for real detectives, who'll happily take a closed case over an unsolved mystery any day, but it's a problem for an author.

How can the writer include an informant in a way that adds value without giving everything away? First, remember that betrayal is its heart. Here is someone breaking one society's most powerful taboos, a tale — the original Judas' betrayal — that was good enough to be included in *The Greatest Story Ever Told*.

Also consider three assumptions that are almost always true of real informants. Assume that there are social and psychological pressures, sometimes enormous, connected with betrayal, and that these will affect the character and actions of informants. Those tensions yank people back and forth and sometimes tear them apart. Judas, who betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver regretted his deed and hanged himself. That's the extreme reaction, but informants can have a change

of heart and often do. This can put the investigation or even the officer at considerable risk. Informing can be a treacherous business for everyone involved.

Second, assume that the informant will act in what he perceives to be his best interest. That doesn't mean it's the officer's best interest, or the law's, something that creates more potential tension and conflict. This is especially true (and dangerous) when the officer can't positively establish an informant's motivation.

Finally, I always assumed that nobody gives it all up — everybody has secrets they can't be paid or threatened enough to betray. Keeping these secrets in the face of an informant's pressures is another ingredient in a good story.

Informants, they're a trial, but they close cases. Ours was still in the bar, striking out with the girl when the Iceman showed up to sell him an ounce of crystal meth. And the next day, based on another informant's tip, detectives picked up the four would-be drive-thru robbers. It's how crimes are solved.

John Madinger retired after a long career as a criminal investigator and narcotics agent. He currently works as a consultant on money laundering and terrorism financing for the Department of Justice and is the author of Confidential Informant: Law Enforcement's Most Valuable Tool. His first novel, Death on Diamond Head, is set in Honolulu, Hawaii, where he lives.



Over the Transom

Looking for Men of Mystery



Are *you* a man of mystery?
 Do you *know* a man of mystery?
 He writes true crime... thrillers...
 suspense... stand-alones or short
 series.... Is a newbie or a seasoned
 bestseller.
 His writing features PIs or spies...cops
 or amateur sleuths...perhaps an
 archeologist or aviator...or some other
 character in a job that allows him to be
 sleuth...in his spare time.
 If he's not yet one of the Men of
 Mystery, he's invited to contact Joan
 Hansen with his email or phone number
 and she'll be happy to follow up because
 she still has space for a few more writers
 who will have a wonderful time at the
 MWA Raven Award-winning event and
 receive the \$50 discounted rate reserved
 for Men of Mystery.

CONTACT: jhansen36@juno.com
www.MenOfMystery.org

Did You Know?

- According to the CDC's FastStats: Preliminary Data for 2010 (most recent)
- The number of emergency hospital visits for assaults in the US was 2 million
 - There were 16,259 homicides in 2010 in the US
 - Homicide deaths per 100,000 population: 5.3
 - The number of gun-related homicide deaths in 2010 was 11,078

Call for Authors

Call for Articles! *Mystery Readers Journal* looking for Author! Author! essays for 2013 issues. Themes: Chicago; Medical; & Murder in Transit. 500-1500 words, first person, up close and personal, about yourself, your books and the 'theme' connection. **MRJ does not publish fiction.** Short reviews and articles focusing on the theme of the issue are welcome. Reviews of a single book should be 200 words or less, articles around 1000 words. If you are writing an article or essay, please also provide a title. MRJ is a wonderful source fans to find new authors that they might enjoy. Go to the org's page <http://www.mysteryreaders.org/journal.html> to see sample essays from past themed issues. Email Publisher & Editor Janet Rudolph @ janet@mysteryreaders.org.

Over the Transom



Congratulations to Gay Hendricks and Tinker Lindsay on their newly released *The Broken Rules of Ten*! The book is a prequel to their Tenzing Norbu Mystery series. This will be the third Tenzing adventure, and this time readers join young Ten as he navigates his first brush with mysticism, mystery...and maybe even murder. *The Broken Rules of Ten* introduces Ten as a confused 13-year-old boy – years before his life as an ex-Buddhist-monk, ex-LAPD-officer, turned private eye. After a long career as a non-fiction author (35 books in the psychology and personal development field), Gay Hendricks finally realized his longtime dream of writing mystery novels. Co-author Tinker Lindsay is a writer and editor with noted transformational authors, as well as a WGA screenwriter.



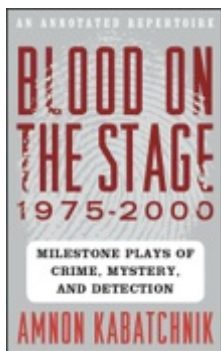
Gay Hendricks



Tinker Lindsay



Douglas Corleone is the author of contemporary crime novels published by St. Martin's Minotaur. His debut novel *One Man's Paradise* was a finalist for the 2010 Shamus Award for Best First Novel and won the 2009 Minotaur Books / Mystery Writers of America First Crime Novel Award. His first international thriller *Good As Gone*, introducing former U.S. Marshal Simon Fisk, will be released on August 20, 2013. A former New York City criminal defense attorney, Doug now resides in the Hawaiian Islands, where he is currently at work on his next novel.



A big Wow! and congratulations to Amnon Kabatchnik on the recent publication of his book *Blood on the Stage, 1975-2000*, the fourth in a series. The book won a Benjamin Franklin Silver Award in the category of nonfiction. The work surveys plays of crime, mystery and detection that were written and produced during the last quarter of the 20th century. Each of the 80 entries provides a synopsis of the plot, production elements, reviews by critics and scholars, and biographical sketches of the respective playwrights. The plays encompass suspenseful melodramas, psychological thrillers, baffling whodunits, and even musicals, including such memorable works as *Deathtrap*, *Death and the Maiden*, *A few Good Men*, *Assassins*, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *Sweeney Todd*, and *The Phantom of the Opera*.



Congratulations to Melodie Johnson Howe, the author of three novels, *The Mother Shadow*, nominated for an Edgar award, *Beauty Dies* and her newly released novel *City of Mirrors*, a novel that brings Melodie Johnson Howe's writing life and acting life together in the character of actress Diana Poole. Howe was twenty-one when she signed a contract with Universal Studios. After appearing in many movies and TV shows, she left Hollywood to become a writer. Her protagonist Diana Poole left Hollywood to marry her husband; after he dies suddenly, and she's running out of money, Diana is forced to go back to the only work she knows — acting. Diana, now forty, lands a role in a new movie, and soon discovers the young female lead's murdered body. When her own life and career are threatened, Diana decides to fight back and find the killer. Unmasking the surprising identity of the murderer isn't so easy, especially as she begins to uncover what's real — and unreal — in her own life and in a *City of Mirrors*.



Calendar

2013



July 14 Noir at the Bar 8pm, Mandrake, 2692 S. La Cienega Culver City

“We book the authors ahead of time, but are always looking for new blood. Our next event on July 14th and we have a full lineup. We sell books through Mysterious Galaxy that comes out and sets up a table — which is great! We feature the night’s authors as well as Noir at the Bar alumni for sale. People can find us at [Facebook.com/NoirAtTheBarLA](https://www.facebook.com/NoirAtTheBarLA) and Twitter [@NoirBarLA](https://twitter.com/NoirBarLA) and get in contact directly if they'd like to read.”

—Eric Beetner

Save The Date! SoCal MWA July Meeting

An Afternoon of True Crime with Former Homicide Detective and Author Thomas Basinski
& Authors Caitlin Rother & Cathy Scott



Noon, July 13 at the La Jolla Library
Event is FREE! Refreshments Available • See Page 8

**Book
Passage**
Mystery
Writers
Conference

Discover All the Clues for a Successful Career as a Mystery or Suspense Writer!

The 20th Annual Book Passage Mystery Writers Conference July 25-28, 2013 Corte Madera, CA

This Conference has a strong tradition of great authors and teachers. Mystery writers learn all the clues to a successful writing career. Editors, agents, and publishers share with participants what they need to know to get published. Authors offer classes on setting, dialogue, suspense and point of view. Panels of detectives, forensic experts, and other crime-fighting professionals provide invaluable information that allows writers to put realism into their work.

For more information or to register, contact Kathryn Petrocelli at 800-999-7909, ext. 239, or email bpconferences@bookpassage.com

Calendar

2013



November 16

9am-5pm
at the
Irvine Marriott Hotel



Alexander
McCall Smith



Scott Turow

www.MenOfMystery.org

The amazing MWA Raven Award-winning event where you'll be able to share your passion for a good mystery with 500 other people attending — and with one of the Men of Mystery right at your table! Featuring Alexander McCall Smith, Scott Turow & 50 other Men of Mystery. You too can attend — just get on the mailing list to receive your brochure. Send your postal address to Joan Hansen at JHansen36@Juno.com to be mailed a form after September 21. \$75 for headliners, lunch & more!

Men of Mystery from Pg. 6

to authors they would one day share with their own children. One can only imagine how many people Hansen has introduced into the book buying public — perhaps even readers of your own mysteries.

“Joan Hansen has made it some of her life’s work to connect readers and authors,” says Tammy Kaehler, member of the Men of Mystery committee, MWA SoCal board member and author of the *Kate Reilly Racing Mysteries*. “She started by founding a children’s author program in Long Beach City schools, and then she founded two wildly successful programs in Orange County (Festival of Women Authors and Men of Mystery). As far as I can see, she’s spent years of her own time on these events solely because she loves books and the people who craft them, and she wants to share her joy with others.”

She’s as persistent and tenacious as anyone you’ve ever met — a tiny, literary bulldog determined to get as many great authors together as possible, and to present the audience with a new gems and old favorites. She’s a book evangelist, and I don’t know a man on the Men of Mystery roster — or any author she’s ever dealt with, male or female — who doesn’t heartily appreciate her for it.”

Speaking of Men of Mystery, Travis Richardson, author of *Lost In Clover*, MWA SoCal member and SinC/LA editor, was one of the select 52 members of the elite club. “I was very fortunate to have been invited to Men of Mystery last year,” says Travis about the experience. “I debuted my novella, *Lost in Clover*, there and had a wonderful time with a table full of mystery readers. Joan is incredibly generous and welcoming to all of the writers from bestselling authors to newbies like me. She is the heart and soul of the event and all of the men can’t help but adore her.”

Held in the ballroom of the Marriott in Irvine, The Men of Mystery event, each author has a



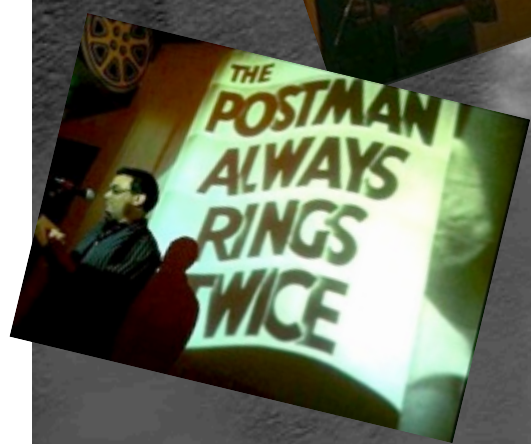
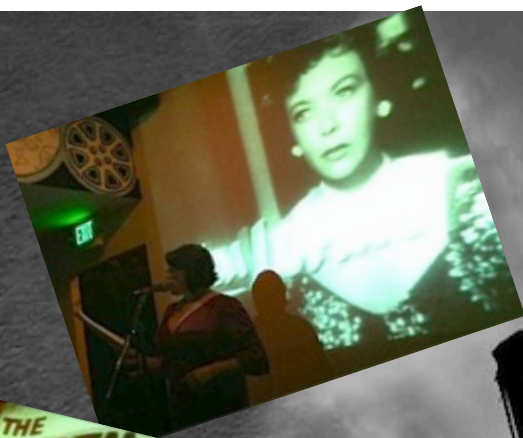
Joan Hansen, Travis Richardson, Joel Fox, Linda Nakamura and Darrell James at last year’s Men of Mystery event.

table and a host at the table who is familiar with their work and can initiate conversation. “My host, Sheri Kurtz, is a school teacher and read an anthology that I was in to brush up for the event,” says Richardson. “At some point in the day, Joan goes from table to table with a wireless microphone and asks the author to explain their book or themselves in a minute,” he says of the process of the day. “At a certain point Joan asks all the authors to answer questions from the guests at the table. I was asked about inspiration for my stories, whether my characters are based on real people I know? How did I get started writing? Where are good places to send stories? I wouldn’t say I was nervous, but I did dread the possibility that nobody would want to sit at the table, but it helped that I knew several authors there such as Gary Phillips, Darrell James, and Stephen Jay Schwartz, who I

talked with before the event and told me it would be a fun ride. I had a great time and I’m honored to be invited back again.”

Another of the authors in attendance for the past six years is our Darrell James, author of the award-winning *Del Shannon* mystery series.

“I’ve participated as an author in Men of Mystery for the past six years,” says James of his own experience as a Man of Mystery. “I count this event, hosted by Joan Hansen, as one of the premier author events offered to fans of mystery. Joan knows how to put on a top-notch event. We’re all grateful for her dedication to her authors, fans and the genre itself.”



With Sara Gran
 Tim Hallinan
 Lisa Brackmann
 Steph Cha &
 Anonymous 9



July 14
 8-11pm
 Mandrake
 2692 S.
 La Cienega
 Culver City

Noir at The Bar

for my protagonist. He or she is walking through uncharted territory and you, the writer, is along for the ride. For my characters, family is very important, probably reflective of my upbringing. So even if I have a sense of who my protagonist may be in the beginning, the secondary characters in his or her life are usually unformed. Interestingly, names are very important to me and changing the name of a sibling or grandchild during the writing process has taken my story into a new and exciting direction. I usually don't have much physical description in the manuscript, but I've tried drawing sometimes as a tool to identify with my character.

JMW: What enables you to be so disciplined and productive as a writer?

NH: Since I usually can't produce more than 1,500 good words during one session, I usually work backwards from deadlines to figure out that year's schedule. I employ playwright Suzan-Lori Parks *lazy Susan* method of writing, in which I work on something for a few consecutive days, weeks or months and then turn the table to work on another project. I actually plan in three-year chunks; it's all subject to change, of course, but if I know that I will have a hole in 2015, I generate some movement now to fill that hole. I also try to eliminate unnecessary drama from my life, whether it be toxic people or bad Internet reviews. And in terms of new ideas, I stay curious and force myself to go out into the world and do something different.

John Morgan Wilson is the author of eight Benjamin Justice mysteries, including Simple Justice, an Edgar winner for Best First Novel. His short stories have appeared in EQMM, AHMM and several anthologies. He is a past board member of MWA SoCal and recipient of its distinguished service award.

downplay it, to compare it to something worse. *It's not like you did X, which is terrible. You did Y, and that's understandable.*

The detective must check her judgments at the door, she must empathize with the suspect. This ability to empathize, according to Mr. Bishop, is the difference between a good interrogator and a great interrogator. The goal is to lead the suspect down a path that will allow him to confess.

Bishop reminds of details to keep in mind when we're writing an interrogation scene — it's a violation of a suspect's Fifth Amendment rights to use intimidation, a suspect in custody must be read his Miranda rights before probing or accusatory questions may be asked, but if he's come in on his own, it's not required. All interrogations should be videotaped. DNA test results optimistically take six to eight weeks to get back. Getting them back sooner is possible, but prohibitively expensive.

This, of course, is only a brief overview of some of the techniques interrogators use to secure confessions. But knowing some of their tricks will spark creativity and help you, as Mr. Bishop says, "Make your fictional detective think outside the interrogation box."

Holly West is a crime fiction writer based in Venice, California. Her short stories appear in several anthologies and her debut novel, a historical mystery set in 1678 London, will be published by Carina Press in early 2014. Find her online at www.hollywest.com.



CDC Investigates Porn Star

The following was ripped from the headlines of a CDC case report. How do you track down someone who may be handing down death sentences through a virus — and how do you find out who he's infected? Here's how the CDC did it.

The adult film industry (AFI) employs 1,500 actors in Los Angeles. A case of human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection in an AFI actor who'd worked in heterosexual and homosexual productions was reported to Los Angeles County Department of Public Health in December 2010. The actor had received a diagnosis of acute HIV infection and pharyngeal gonorrhea in October 2010. The CDC conducted a multistate investigation to characterize the source and transmission of infections.

Methods: They interviewed the actor regarding potential exposures since his last negative HIV test in September 2010. They contacted production companies, talent agencies and testing laboratories to obtain records to complete a contact investigation. Through interviews and review of films, they assessed actor and producer compliance with occupational regulations during occupational exposures.

Results: The actor identified 15 sexual contacts (14 occupational, one non-occupational), including 5 men and 10 women, during the 8 weeks preceding the October diagnosis. Potential occupational exposures involved 12 filming locations and 10 production companies. The actor reported using condoms in productions involving anal exposure, but not during vaginal or oral exposures. Contact was made with 5/15 sexual contacts. Laboratory information revealed 1 non-occupational contact had pharyngeal gonorrhea; 2 occupational contacts were HIV-infected; 2 occupational and 1 personal contact were HIV-uninfected. Nine had unknown status; investigation and testing is ongoing.

Conclusions: Limited cooperation from AFI companies restricted this contact investigation. AFI workers have a high occupational risk for acquiring and transmitting HIV and other sexually transmitted infections; and, production companies need to comply with occupational health recommendations for informed risk reduction to prevent infection. Cal/OSHA is now considering an occupational standard specific to this industry.

California Crime Writers Conference

Courtesy Holly West



Authors Sue Grafton, Hank Philippi Ryan, Patricia Smiley and Elizabeth George gather for a photo.

Board members and conference organizers meet for a pre-conference dinner with keynotes.





Attorneys Jonathan Kirsch (left) and Les Klinger (right) help authors navigate contracts in the Contracts 101 panel moderated by Gayle Bartos-Pool (far right).



Moderator Tammy Kaehler (far left) questions authors (left to right) Daryl Wood Gerber, Shaun Morey and Jeri Westerson about their best manuscript revision techniques.



Attendees learned first hand what agents are looking for. Left to right: moderator Susan Kandel, agents David Hale Smith, Helen Breitweiser and Ann Collette.

The “Author Idol” panel was a great success! Featuring (left to right): Editors Kendel Flaum, Dana Isaacson and Annette Rogers. Agents David Hale Smith, Ann Collette and moderator Harley Jane Kozak.



Auctioneers Gary Phillips and Harley Jane Kozak do their magic at the live auction. The manuscript critique by Sue Grafton went for nearly \$2000!

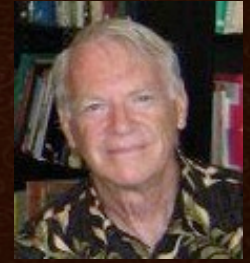
Authors generously donated gift baskets of books and other items for the raffle. Thank you to all the donors for your support!



Art as a Job

Higher Editing

By Dan Pollock



Higher Editing — the title comes from the autobiography of Nobel Laureate Rudyard Kipling, after Shakespeare the second most quoted name in English literature (according to Bartlett's).

"Do you like Kipling?" goes the old joke. Answer: "I don't know, you naughty boy, I've never kiplied."

At the age of 23, Kipling flashed across the London literary firmament like a comet with the delicious short story collection, *Plain Tales From the Hills*, followed a year later by *Barrack-Room Ballads*, the first of his many celebrated verse collections.

His sensational debut was comparable to that of Charles Dickens. "The star of the hour," said Henry James of Rudyard when he was only 25. "Too clever to live," Robert Louis Stevenson described Rudyard.

But the shooting star did not flame out. While he continued to produce stories and poems at a prodigious rate, he never joined his own rabid fan club. His approach to the craft of writing remained ever that of a conscientious workman. He edited himself ruthlessly.

"Higher Editing" he called it, and I'll get to the specifics of his technique in a few moments.

For now, I recall the most famous editor I remember hearing about was the legendary Maxwell Perkins, editor and hand-holder-in-chief of Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald and Thomas Wolfe (whom Maxwell described as, "Whose talent was matched only by his lack of artistic self-discipline").

Wolfe's great big doorstep novels—*Look Homeward, Angel*, *You Can't Go Home Again* and *Of Time and the River*—all landed on Perkins' desk as carton loads of verbal tonnage, all requiring major surgery. From the brilliant but bloated manuscript of *Angel*, for instance, Perkins managed to remove 90,000 words.

I have a similar tale, with far punier statistics. My first thriller, *Lair of the Fox*, was sold on the basis of an outline and the

first 100 pages to a small publisher (Walker & Co). The completed manuscript weighed in at 120,000 words – every one them perfect, I'll have you know.

But my editor informed me that, in order to reduce their printing and binding costs, Walker never published trade books over 80,000 words. Would I mind cutting 40,000 words from my manuscript? I did it—with the help of Kipling's "Higher Editing" method. And the book is much the better for it.

A famous American editor had this advice, "Play 'digester' to your manuscript; imagine that you are an editorial assistant on a digest magazine performing a first squeeze on the article to be digested. Can you squeeze out an unnecessary hundreds words from each thousand in your draft?" (Gorham Munson, *The Written Word*, p. 170)

John D. MacDonald used the reductive process as an intrinsic part of his creative plan. A magazine profile once described him, "Tapping out the 1,000-page drafts that he whittles down to 300-page manuscripts in four months." (*Newsweek*, March 22, 1971, p. 103)

For this reductive process to work, however, you have to put your heart and soul into that first draft, like Tom Wolfe or John MacDonald. Don't edit or second guess yourself the first time through; let yourself be driven forward by the compelling emotion of your story; to switch metaphors, trowel on the raw pigment, which you can shape later at leisure.

To quote Munson again, "Write as a writer, rewrite as a reader."

Elmore Leonard went from a journeyman paperback writer (westerns and detectives) to best-sellerdom and Hollywood fame by taking an opposite tack. He began to edit himself in advance — on his first draft. As he famously put it (his rule No. 10 of good writing), "Try to leave out the part that readers tend to skip."

If you can do that, *bravo!* Most writers have to go back over their work and

painfully cut out the deadwood.

Here is the method used by Belgian mystery master Georges Simenon, whom I mentioned in my previous TMOG article:

Interviewer: "What do you cut out, certain kinds of words?"

Simenon: "Adjectives, adverbs, and every word which is there just to make an effect. Every sentence which is there just for the sentence. You know, you have a beautiful sentence — cut it. Every time I find such a thing in one of my novels it is to be cut." (Quoted in *Writers At Work, The Paris Review Interviews*, p. 146)

To quote Leonard again, "If it sounds like writing, I rewrite it."

So we come, at last, to Kipling's "Higher Editing." He describes how he used it on his debut story collection, *Plain Tales From the Hills*.

"This leads me to the Higher Editing. Take of well-ground Indian Ink as much as suffices and a camel-hair brush proportionate to the interspaces of your lines. In an auspicious hour, read your final draft and consider faithfully every paragraph, sentence and word, blacking out where requisite. Let it lie by to drain as long as possible. At the end of that time, re-read and you should find that it will bear a second shortening. Finally, read it aloud alone and at leisure. Maybe a shade more brushwork will then indicate or impose itself. If not, praise Allah and let it go, and "When thou hast done, repent not.... The magic lies in the Brush and the Ink." (Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself*, p. 224-225).

Dan Pollock is the author of four thriller novels: Lair of the Fox, Duel of Assassins, Orinoco (published by Pocket Books as Pursuit Into Darkness), and a specially commissioned "logistics" thriller, Precipice. He and his wife, Connie, a writer-editor, live in Southern California with their two children.

Impossible from pg. 7
fired lead bullets. The werewolf was driven entirely by wolfish appetites devouring sheep and other animals raw, and attacking any human that threatened it. The werewolf itself, following the supernatural transformation, itself possessed no supernatural or supernormal powers.

Though the werewolf could generally resume its human form at sunup, usually retaining no clear memory of its nocturnal bestial experiences, it was generally believed that those afflicted could only be freed from the curse itself after a period of nine years during which time the beast could not taste any human flesh. If the werewolf consumed any human flesh during that period, then the curse became permanent.

Werewolves were often described as running in packs, engaging in group kills. The earliest drawings almost always show a pack running in the background, or scattered in the near vicinity. Though, on occasion, a drawing would show the werewolf assuming a man-like position, as standing on its hind legs while leaning against a wall, but still clearly wolf, not man.

A werewolf in its human form could be identified by the evil cast of its deep-set eyes; an inability to shed tears; bushy

make-up design. The current tradition draws very little from the actual portrayal of the werewolf in Western folklore.

Man into Wolf

Lycanthropy, the belief in man into wolf with its cannibalistic overtones, dates at least to about 300 B.C. where, according to one of many early Greek legends, Zeus transformed Lycaon, the king of Acadia, into a wolf as punishment for secretly feeding the god human flesh.

The belief in man-into-animal has been common among many cultures throughout the world. The were-animals resulting from a priestly curse, or some other occult process, were naturally dictated by the local experiences, with the stricken, cursed or, on occasion, blessed man or woman becoming an eagle, vulture, tiger, hyena, dog, serpent, cat or wolf as tribal traditions required. In the case of Europe, the predatory shape assumed was predominately that of the wolf.

The original werewolves were always conceived as four-legged creatures, clearly wolf and not man, but endowed with some human-like intelligence with the suggestion of obscene powers and lusts, though vulnerable to being injured or killed by conventional weapons as knives, pitchforks, swords, and guns — which

eyebrows that met over the bridge of the nose; and through repercussion, the appearance on the face, hands and legs of deep scratches from its nocturnal coursings through the brush and woods while in lupine form.

But there were a growing number of physicians, beginning in the late sixteenth century, who denied that any human could physically transform into an animal. Reginald Scot, in his seminal *The Discoverie of Witchcraft*, book v, chapter 1, 1584, expresses his agreement with “such physicians, as saie that *Lycanthropia* is a disease, and not a transformation.” Lycanthropy gradually came to be a medical term while werewolfery itself became a separate study in folklore.

*Barry H. Wiley is a retired high-tech executive, now traveling the world for research for his second career. He has written and lectured on the history of mindreading and Spiritualism at the Magic Castle and other venues. Wiley is currently completing *Shadow of the Tiger*, the second novel of his *Adventures in Second Sight* trilogy (Kindle). His most recent book, *The Thought Reader Craze* (McFarland) is available in print and Kindle.*

LAST WORD



“I wish I could write as mysterious as a cat.”

— Edgar Allen Poe

