

June 2017



The
MARCH

of CRIME

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Holy Jumpin' Genres!



presents

MISCAST

Authors You Know and Love, Reading the Opposite of What They Write



Daryl Wood Gerber



Elaine Ash



Glen Erik Hamilton



Jeri Westerson

2nd Annual BBQ Bookswap

July 16

Noon–3 p.m.

[More info](#)



SW Lauden



Kate Carlisle



Matt Coyle

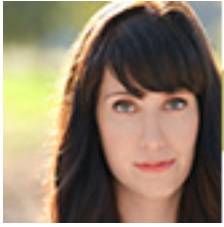


Harley Jane Kozak

Friday, June 9

8–10 p.m.

Culver's Club at DoubleTree by Hilton–Westside
6161 W. Centinela Ave, Culver City, CA



The President's Rap Sheet

Elizabeth Little

Motherhood, for me, is in large part an exercise in controlling my overactive and catastrophizing imagination. But I'm happy to say that, seven years in, I can lay at least one fear to rest: My son does, in fact, like to read.

And he doesn't just like it—he loves it. Now that he's able to read on his own, he's churning through books at a speed that has given me an even greater appreciation for public libraries. He carries a book with him wherever he goes; he pores over the monthly Scholastic flyer; each night, he sneaks out of bed and huddles next to his nightlight to get a few more chapters in before his little body insists on falling asleep.

“Reading,” he told me yesterday, very seriously, “is my middle name.”

As a mother, I'm thrilled: I've actually done something right for once. As a reader, though, I find I'm jealous—and abashed. Because I've realized it's been ages since I've taken such unadulterated pleasure in reading.

This is a natural consequence, of course, of being in the business of books: Even when we're not reading for work, we're still so often working while we're reading. Evaluating plots, picking apart prose, identifying tropes and extrapolating trends. At times this can be a satisfying and productive exercise, but for me there's nothing in this experience that compares to my son's joyful preoccupation. If I stay up late to finish a book these days it's because I'm on deadline. It's no wonder I've been reading fewer and fewer novels over the past several years.

Were it not for my son, I might have forgotten it could be any other way.

But if I can't remember what it's like to lose myself in a book, I'm hardly going to be able to inspire a reader to lose themselves in my books, so I've decided to challenge myself to be a little less professional about my reading—a little less analytical, a little less cynical, a little less ... grown-up. And I would challenge you to do the same, because in an uncertain and frustrating industry, it's crucial to keep in mind why we got into this business to begin with. So don't just read widely and frequently this summer. Read lovingly, generously, and gratefully, as if you too were pressed up against a nightlight, stealing time, praying your mother doesn't come in to tell you to get back into bed.

Elizabeth

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The EDITOR'S CORNER

Holly West

As your editor, I know I'm supposed to be professional, but I just have to say how happy I was when I put the newsletter together this month and posted the ad for the MISCAST event happening on Friday, June 9 in Culver City. It's full of some of my favorite faces! Yeah, I know they write good stuff, too, but I'm just excited I get to see them all this month.

Can you tell I'm a little bit giddy?

And even though MISCAST serves as an opening for the [California Crime Writer's Conference](#) that weekend, the event is open to all and free of charge. So do stop by if you're able so I can add you to my list of people I'll be happy to see.

Okay, now that I've got that off my chest, let's get back to business. If you haven't already, check out Elizabeth's [Prez Rap](#) this month. If nothing else, it'll convince you her son is not only smart, but adorable, too. This month's issue also includes an [excellent write-up of May's Tam O'Shanter luncheon](#) written by **Jessica Kaye**. The luncheon featured a panel of authors, experts, and exonerees discussing ANATOMY OF INNOCENCE: TESTIMONIES OF THE WRONGLY CONVICTED, edited by **Les Klinger** and Laura Caldwell. Authors' proceeds from the sale of the book will benefit [Life After Innocence](#).

Holly

The March of Crime is the newsletter of the Southern California Chapter of the Mystery Writers of America.

Editor: [Holly West](#)

Opinions expressed herein are those of the respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Mystery Writers of America Southern California Chapter.

Contact us at:
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**Join our SoCalMWA
Yahoo! Group**

Email SoCalMWA-subscribe@yahoo.com to join
(members only)

FRESH BLOOD

SoCalMWA welcomes its new and returning members:

Melinda Loomis
Chris McCombs
Gina Star Pollack



OVER the TRANSOM

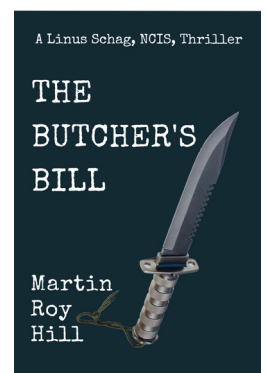
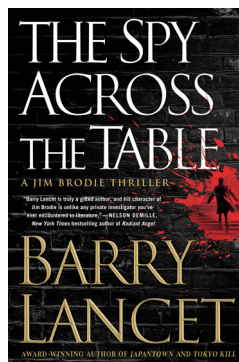
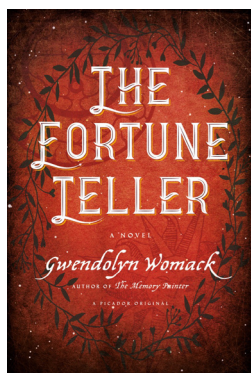
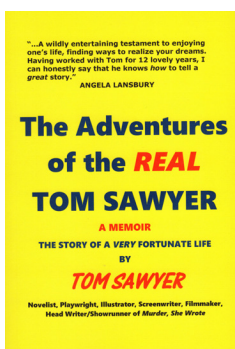
Tom Sawyer's memoir *THE ADVENTURES OF THE REAL TOM SAWYER* and its companion-book/success-manual *9 BADASS SECRETS FOR PUTTING YOURSELF IN LUCK'S WAY* (co-authored with Tama Ryder) have just been published by BearManor Media. Tom's memoir chronicles his very fortunate life, through his multiple successful—and fun—careers as comic book artist, advertising illustrator, novelist, playwright, screenwriter, filmmaker and head writer/showrunner of *Murder, She Wrote* and other TV series. “Witty, surprisingly honest and impossible to put down. Hell, the guy's had more adventures than the fictional Tom Sawyer.” — Dennis Palumbo, screenwriter (*My Favorite Year*), psychotherapist, best-selling author of the Daniel Rinaldi Mysteries

Gwendolyn Womack, author of *THE MEMORY PAINTER*, has a second novel coming out June 6 with Picador/Macmillan. *THE FORTUNE TELLER* is a romantic thriller spanning two thousand years that follows Semele Cavnaw, an ancient manuscripts appraiser, as she tries to unravel the mystery behind the world's first tarot cards.

THE SPY ACROSS THE TABLE, the much-anticipated fourth installment in **Barry Lancet's** award-winning Jim Brodie thriller series, is out June 20. Lancet first introduced readers to antiques dealer and sometimes-PI Jim Brodie in *JAPANTOWN*, which won the Barry Award for Best First Novel. Brodie “is in top form” (Kirkus Reviews) in this fourth installment, which first finds him called to the White House, then dealing with a mysterious spy known only as Zhou. Seeking justice for his murdered friend, Brodie is soon forced into a dangerous game of espionage, caught in the crosshairs of the Chinese, North Korean, and American governments as a battle erupts for NSA secrets so damaging that North Korea and China will stop at nothing to get them. With a starred review from Booklist and four stars from RT, this series is already generating buzz.

Sarah M. Chen's debut with All Due Respect Books, *CLEANING UP FINN*, is nominated for an Anthony Award for Best Novella.

Martin Roy Hill's latest Linus Schag, NCIS, thriller, *THE BUTCHER'S BILL*, will be released June 30 by 32-32 North. Nine billion dollars in cash goes missing in Iraq. In Southern California, a mercenary's murder, a severed head, and a bloody hand-written message spark a massive manhunt. The man connecting these two events is Bill Butcher, aka The Butcher. Those who stole the money want him dead. The cops want him for murder. Butcher's only hope is his former NCIS colleague and closest friend, Linus Schag. With a plot torn from today's headlines, *THE BUTCHER'S BILL* will keep readers on edge until its final, explosive climax.



OVER the TRANSOM

John Morgan Wilson was featured in a recent [WEHOville article](#) in conjunction with his May 30 appearance at the West Hollywood Library to discuss his Edgar-winning first novel, *SIMPLE JUSTICE*, selected for a month-long reading series. *SIMPLE JUSTICE* (1996), now in reprint from Bold Strokes Books, launched the eight-book Benjamin Justice series, which is set in West Hollywood and won three Lambda Literary Awards for Best Gay Men's Mystery.

Lee Goldberg has signed a two-book deal with Amazon Publishing/Thomas & Mercer that kicks off with his new thriller *TRUE FICTION* in April 2018, followed by the sequel in the fall.

Craig Faustus Buck's latest short story "Liar's Poker," a tale of Creole murder, betrayal, and mashed emotions, was featured in the May issue of *Spinetingler Magazine*. In addition, his Macavity Award-winning noir story "Honeymoon Sweet," about a couple of grifters in love who break into a Santa Monica beach house for their honeymoon, will be reprinted in [TriggerWarningShortFiction.com](#) (issue #10) at the beginning of June. It includes an original illustration by the inimitable John Skewes.

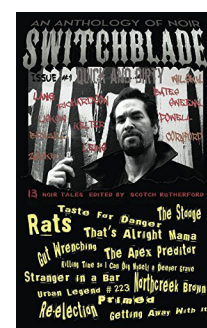
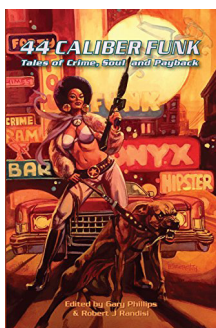
Holly West's story, "Queen of the Dogs," which appears in *44 CALIBER FUNK: TALES OF CRIME, SOUL, AND PAYBACK* (Moonstone), edited by **Gary Phillips** and Robert Randisi, is nominated for an Anthony Award for Best Short Story.

Leave the cannoli, take the shoes: *CEMENT STILETTOS*, the seventh in **Diane Vallere's** popular Samantha Kidd mystery series, comes out June 13. Samantha vows to avoid trouble, but when the mafia puts the squeeze on her fiancé, shoe designer Nick Taylor, all bets are off.

Robert S. Levinson has been advised *Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine* will be acquiring another short story from him, entitled "Nine Years Later." It's about a kid who travels from Brooklyn to Hollywood to exact revenge on the ex-mobster who killed his father nine years ago. Publication details to come...

The spring issue of *Mystery Readers Journal: Midwestern Mysteries* includes **Georgia Jeffries'** article, "Heiress Slain...Body Found in Road After Drinking Party...Married Man Held."

Travis Richardson's violent rural short story "Stranger In a Bar" appears in the first issue *Switchblade Magazine*. Also, Travis's political satire "Hipster Pantisin" will be in the next issue of *Crime Syndicate Magazine* coming out in June.



Member APPEARANCES

Gwendolyn Womack will be reading and discussing *THE FORTUNE TELLER* at Book Soup in Los Angeles on Tuesday, June 6 at 7 p.m. and at Mysterious Galaxy Bookstore in San Diego, Saturday, June 10 at 2 p.m. She'll also be at the El Segundo and Redondo Beach libraries in June. All dates & times are listed at www.gwendolynwomack.com.

Tour dates for **Barry Lancet's** *THE SPY ACROSS THE TABLE* in California have been announced:

Tuesday, June 20	Mountain View, CA	Books Inc.
Thursday, June 22	San Francisco, CA	Japan Society
Wednesday, June 21	Berkeley, CA	Mystery Readers Literary Salon***
Friday, June 23	Calistoga, CA	Copperfield's Books
Saturday, June 24	Davis, CA	Avid Reader
Tuesday, June 27	San Francisco, CA	Bookshop West Portal
Thursday, June 29	Orange, CA	Book Carnival
Saturday, July 8	San Diego, CA	Mysterious Galaxy
Thursday, August 10	Pasadena, CA	Vroman's Bookstore

*** Attendees must RSVP to janet@mysteryreaders.org

Jeri Westerson will be at the following locations: Friday, June 9, 8 to 10 p.m., [MISCAST](#). The night before the California Crime Writers Conference, they'll be kicking it off with a bunch of cozy authors and a bunch of noir authors, and in a twist, they'll will be reading *EACH OTHER'S WORK*. Jeri will actually be a cozy author with her Skyler Foxe LGBT Mysteries books, though they aren't as cozy as normal because of the...ahem...erotica. Please come to enjoy the FREE fun. In the Culver Room at the California DoubleTree Hilton Hotel Los Angeles – Westside, 6161 West Centinela Avenue, Culver City, CA. / Saturday and Sunday, June 10 & 11 — California Crime Writers Conference in Culver City, California DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Los Angeles – Westside, 6161 West Centinela Avenue, Culver City, California. Jeri will be on a panel on Sunday, June 11, 2 to 3:10 p.m., “Obi Wan Kenobi: Author Veterans Share Their Strategies to Survive the Force of Publishing” panel with **Sue Ann Jaffarian**, **Patricia Smiley**, and moderator Kathy Aarons. / Saturday, June 24 — 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., Diamond Valley Writer's Guild, Hemet Library. Speaking on the writing industry and research. Hemet Main Library, 300 E. Latham, Hemet, CA. Free!

Mike Befeler will be giving a book talk about his international thriller, *THE TESLA LEGACY*, at the Iacoboni Library, 4990 Clark Street, Lakewood, CA, on Monday, June 5 at 6:30 p.m. In this novel, conspiracy nut Elmore Kranz bombards the police with his predictions of disaster until one actually happens. He teams with rookie cop Brittney Chase to solve a hundred year-old puzzle while trying to escape a secret government operative and an Afghani terrorist who seek to get their hands on a weapon of mass destruction invented by Nikola Tesla.

Member APPEARANCES



Ellen Byron, along with **Nancy Cole Silverman** and other authors, will appear at The Real Authors of Studio City on June 14 from 7 to 9 p.m. The event will take place at the Artisan Cheese Gallery, 12023 Ventura Blvd Studio City, CA 91604.

At the California Crime Writers Conference, **Ellen Byron** will moderate “Writing for the Screen or the Page: Techniques and Differences,” Saturday June 10th at 9 a.m. On Sunday June 11, she’ll be a panelist on “Thinking Outside the Box: Videos, Podcasts, Giveaways, and More.”

Join **Diane Vallere** in celebrating the five-year anniversary of the Samantha Kidd Style & Error Mysteries at Book Carnival on June 4 at 2 p.m., with a pretzel tasting, champagne, and lively discussion. Commemorative hardcover edition of the first in the series will be available (as will CEMENT STILETTOS, one week early!).

Georgia Jeffries will be reading from her short story “Little Egypt” at The Last Bookstore on June 17 at 6:00 p.m., when Sisters in Crime/Los Angeles Presents: Ten Authors Check In at the LAST RESORT. Michael Connelly wrote the LAST RESORT anthology introduction: “Here is a collection of tremors; stories where the ground in some way is shifting. This is a collection of stories that sit on the unsteady ground of the last resort. In the zone where anything can happen.”

2nd Annual BBQ Book Swap

Sunday,
July 16, 2017
Noon–3 p.m.

Start clearing your bookshelves for
SoCalMWA’s BBQ Book Swap!

RSVPs will open soon



PRIVATE EYE WRITERS OF AMERICA SHAMUS AWARD NOMINEES 2017
The winners will be announced at the PWA Banquet at Bouchercon in Toronto, Canada.

Best Original Private Eye Paperback

Michael Craven, *THE DETECTIVE AND THE CHINESE HIGH-FIN*, HarperCollins
 O'Neil De Noux, *HOLD ME, BABE*, Big Kiss Productions
 Erle Stanley Gardner, *THE KNIFE SLIPPED*, Hard Case Crime
 Vaseem Khan, *THE PERPLEXING THEFT OF THE JEWEL IN THE CROWN*, Red Hook Books
 Manuel Ramos, *MY BAD*, Arte Publico Press

Best First Private Eye Novel

Tim Baker, *FEVER CITY*, Europa Editions

Joe Ide, *IQ*, Little, Brown

D. P. Lyle, *DEEP SIX*, Oceanview Publishing

David Swinson, *THE SECOND GIRL*, Little, Brown

Richard Vine, *SOHO SINS*, Hard Case Crime

Best Private Eye Short Story

Lawrence Block, "Keller's Fedora" (e-publication)

Brendan DuBois, "A Battlefield Reunion" in *Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine*, June

Ake Edwardson, "Stairway From Heaven" in *Stockholm Noir*, Akashic

Mickey Spillane and Max Allan Collins, "A Dangerous Cat" in *The Strand*, Feb/May

Dave Zeltserman, "Archie On Loan" in *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine*, Sep/Oct

Best Private Eye Novel

Reed Farrel Coleman, *WHERE IT HURTS*, Putnam

Lindsey Davis, *THE GRAVEYARD OF THE HESPERIDES*, Minotaur

Timothy Hallinan, *FIELDS WHERE THEY LAY*, Soho Crime

Al Lamanda, *WITH 6 YOU GET WALLY*, Gale Cengage

Robert S. Levinson, *THE STARDOM AFFAIR*, Five Star

Submitted by **Gay Toltl Kinman**, Chair, Private Eye Writers of America Shamus Awards

ANATOMY OF INNOCENCE Panel Rivets Attendees

by **Jessica Kaye**

The May 21 SoCalMWA luncheon at the Tam O'Shanter was spellbinding, holding the rapt attention of everyone present. The panel was moderated by **Les Klinger** and consisted of Laura Caldwell, an attorney and author from Chicago and the director and founder of Chicago's Loyola Law School Law After Innocence clinic, which helps exonerees re-enter society after incarceration; Paula Mitchell and Adam Grant of Los Angeles Loyola Law School's Project for the Innocent, who lead law students in the research of cases of wrongfully convicted individuals in efforts to free them from incarceration; William Dillon, an exoneree from Florida who spent over twenty-seven years in prison for a murder he didn't commit who founded the William Dillon Freedom Foundation to help exonerees obtain compensation; Gwen Wilson, whose brother Andrew was incarcerated for thirty-two years before being released recently with the help of Project for the Innocent. Also on the panel were **Jan Burke** and **Gary Phillips**, two of the contributing writers to the new anthology ANATOMY OF INNOCENCE: TESTIMONIES OF THE WRONGFULLY CONVICTED, co-edited by Laura Caldwell and **Les Klinger** and with introductions by Scott Turow and Barry Scheck.

Each panelist shed light on the process and problems of exoneration efforts. Mr. Dillon is one of fifteen exonerees in Florida, only three of whom have received compensation for their time behind bars. He fought for more than three years for compensation. Twenty states have no system for compensation, he told us. Despite all that he has endured, he isn't bitter because, he said, "They took a lot of years from my life. If I let them have one more, it's on me."

Gwen Wilson said her brother feels the same way. Paula and Adam, as well as Laura, found this to be a prevalent attitude. A challenge for her brother, though, Ms. Wilson said, is to find something to do with his time. Exonerees are sometimes re-entering society after decades in prison, and society has changed in many ways.

Jan Burke and Gary Phillips shared a bit about the stories of the exonerees they wrote of in the ANATOMY OF INNOCENCE anthology. The injustice these wrongfully convicted people have suffered is sobering. Causes of exoneration include the overturning of false confessions; police or prosecutor misconduct, bad science, and faulty eyewitness identification. Les added that those who are innocent will not be eligible for parole because they are unrepentant in the eyes of the parole board. They don't apologize for the crime because they didn't commit it. According to Jan, most forensic labs are not independent; rather, they work for the police and are subject to pressure to deliver certain results rather than risk their jobs.

There are several takeaways from the panel:

* Mystery writers can incorporate information from The Innocence Project into their writing to help spread knowledge of wrongful convictions and the harm they do. Go to the [Innocence Project website](#) to read some of the stories to help inform your writing in the future.

* Estimates are that 5% of the current prison population is factually innocent. That doesn't even include those who are innocent but enter into a plea bargain to plead guilty in order to avoid a longer sentence that they might otherwise receive if found guilty at trial.

* There have been approximately two thousand exonerees over the last thirty years.

Copies of ANATOMY OF INNOCENCE were available for purchase after the program concluded thanks to Debbie Mitsch of Mystery Ink Bookstore, and the book sold out quickly. Authors' Proceeds of sales of the book go to Life After Innocence. The book's website is www.anatomyofinnocence.com.

SoCalMWA Tam Luncheon Photos
ANATOMY OF INNOCENCE



ANATOMY OF INNOCENCE panel, L-R: William Dillon, Jan Burke, Gary Phillips, Adam Grant, Gwen Wilson, Paula Mitchell, Laura Caldwell, and Les Klinger



Crime CALENDAR

June 10–11 – [California Crime Writers Conference, Culver City, CA](#)
July 11–15 – [ThrillerFest XII, New York, NY](#)
July 16 – [2nd Annual BBQ Bookswap, Los Angeles, CA](#)
July 23 – [Joint SoCalMWA/Sisters in Crime OC Meeting, Irvine, CA](#)
October 7 – [SoCalMWA Gumbo Party, Los Angeles, CA](#)
October 12 – 15 – [Bouchercon World Mystery Conference, Toronto, Canada](#)
November 4 – [Murder and Mayhem Milwaukee, Milwaukee, WI](#)
December 10 – [SoCalMWA Holiday Party, Los Angeles, CA](#)

The LAST WORD

“I picked up my purse with Quincy’s gun still in it, and walked out into the June gloom.
I always thought that sounded like a depressed strippers’s name.”

—Melodie Johnson Howe, HOLD A SCORPION