

LEFT COAST CRIME



R. Becker '92

FEBRUARY 14-16, 1992
SAN FRANCISCO

*To Naomi
with love
Pete Janis*

Program

Friday, 14 February 1992

EVENTS

- 5:30-7:30 Mix and Mingle
6:00-7:30 LCCII Opening Ceremonies
8:00-9:30 Sherlock Holmes Players

SERVICES

- 12:00-6:00 Dealers Room open
12:00-7:00 Registration open
12:00-5:00,
8:00-Midnight LCCII Hospitality suite open

Saturday, 15 February 1992

EVENTS

- 8:00-9:30 Sisters in Crime Coffee and Rolls
9:30-10:30 Seattle Sleuths-Is the Northwest Territory Big Enough?
10:30-11:00 Autographing
11:00-12:00 Sara Paretsky-KPFA interview
12:00-1:00 Autographing
1:00-2:00 Peter Davidson-Interview with Margery Allingham's Campion
2:00-3:00 Lethal Employment
SF Police Museum and History
3:00-3:30 Autographing
3:30-4:30 The Shingle is Out:New Detectives
Dr. History's Whiz Bang-California's Past
4:30-5:00 Autographing
5:00-5:30 Mix and Mingle
5:30-7:30 Autographing Roundup

SERVICES

- 8:00-5:00,
8:00-Midnight LCCII Hospitality suite open
8:30-5:00 Registration open
10:00-5:00 Dealers Room open

Sunday, 16 February 1992

EVENTS

- 8:30-10:30 Coffee Klatch
9:00-10:30 Trivia Contest
9:30-10:30 Competitive Edge
10:30-11:00 Autographing
11:00-12:00 Calling All Rising Stars
Charity Auction
12:00 -12:30 Autographing
12:30-13:30 Dashiell Hammett Walk-Meet
Don Herron in the lobby
1:30-2:30 Law and Order
Age and Experience Triumph Over Evil
2:30-3:00 Autographing
3:00-4:00 Is There a There There?-Imaginary
Locations
Lettuce Kill You-Somewhere, sometime
when you least expect it
4:00-4:30 Autographing
4:30-5:30 Drums to Beat-Social Issues in Mysteries
5:30-6:00 Autographing
6:00-6:30 Seating for Banquet
6:30-8:00 Banquet

SERVICES

- 8:30 Registration open
8:30-5:30 LCCII Hospitality Suite open
6:30-Midnight
10:00-5:00 Dealers Room open
5:30-8:00 No-Host Bar open

Conference Events

PROGRAMMING:

Union Square North/South
The Savoy 30th Floor

BOOK DEALERS

Sutter II, Sutter III

HOSPITALITY SUITE

The City Suite, Room 2918

READINGS

Sutter I

SAN FRANCISCO POLICE MUSEUM DISPLAY

Cable Car Room

REGISTRATION: RECEPTION AREA

Registration opens noon on Friday:
Pick up your Program Packet and
sign up for the Dashiell Hammett Walk

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Friday

Kickoff: 5:30 pm: opening remarks,
author introductions, and a Sherlock
Holmes play (The Savoy).

Saturday:

Arise early (8-9:30 am), and lift your coffee
cup with the Northern California Sisters in
Crime chapter. \$3.00 (S. Holmes Pub)

Sara Paretsky KPFA interview 11-12 noon
(The Savoy)

Peter Davidson (Margery Allingham's
Campion) interview 1-2:00 pm (The Savoy)

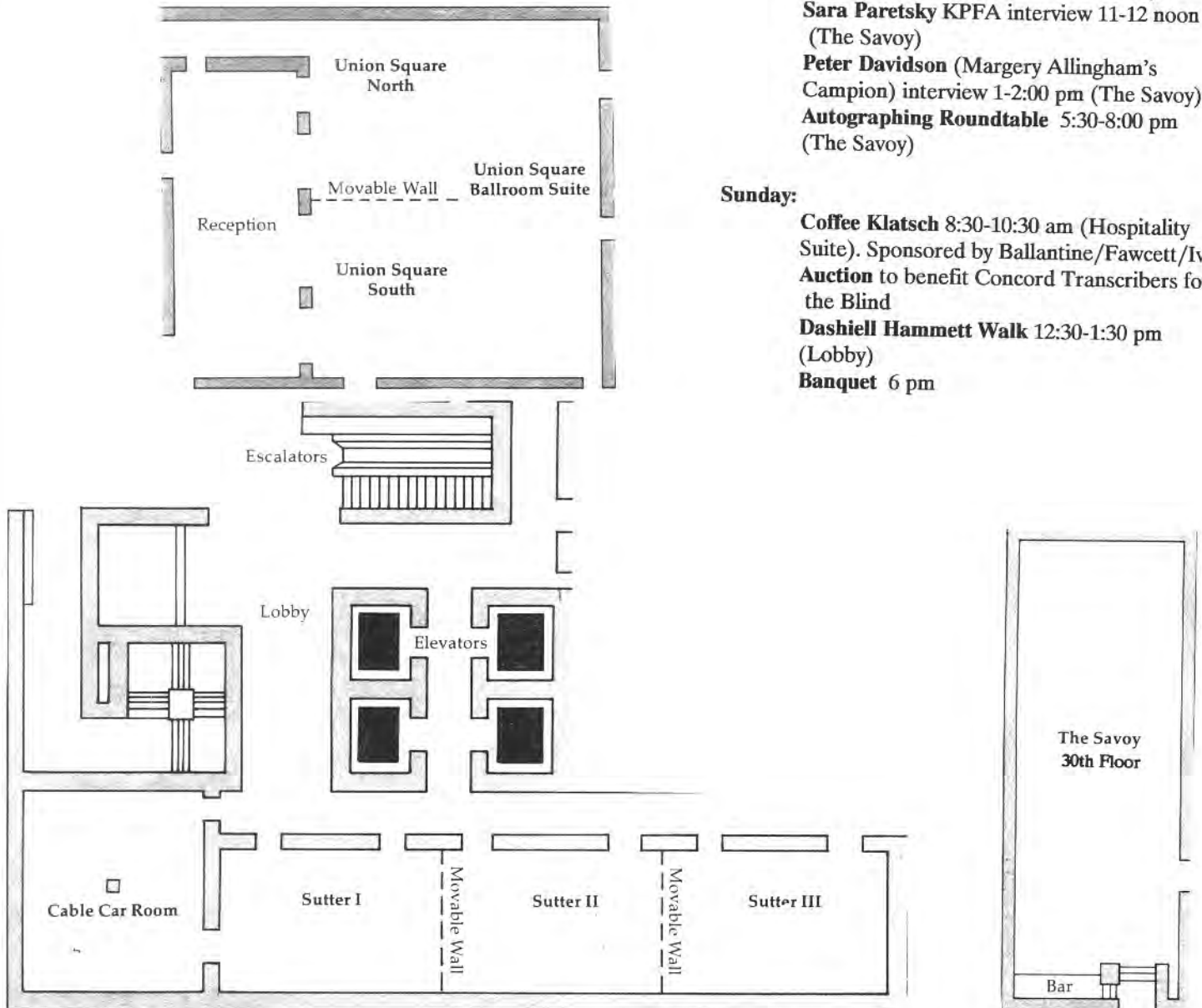
Autographing Roundtable 5:30-8:00 pm
(The Savoy)

Sunday:

Coffee Klatsch 8:30-10:30 am (Hospitality
Suite). Sponsored by Ballantine/Fawcett/Ivy
Auction to benefit Concord Transcribers for
the Blind

Dashiell Hammett Walk 12:30-1:30 pm
(Lobby)

Banquet 6 pm



R. BECKER '91



Our co-guest-of-honor -- call her "Judy" ...

J.A. Jance: The Storyteller

by Cherie Jung

The first book I read in the popular J.P. Beaumont series kept me turning pages until the wee hours of the morning. As I finished the last page, I announced to my husband that I was going to walk down to the all-night bookstore and see if they had any more of Jance's books. Fortunately, for my sake, he prevailed upon me to wait for a few hours and check with the local bookstore only three blocks from our home rather than risk a nearly three-and-half-mile trek through some of the seamier streets of Oakland in the dark. Lest you think me mad, I can assure you that we fans of Ms. Jance are, indeed, ardent.

We may have first discovered her novels while waiting in a grocery store check-out line, at the drug store, or on an airport book rack, but once we found her, we have stayed loyal. You will see us reading her novels on mass transit, at lunch counters and while we wait for our laundry to tumble dry. And the reason that she generates such enthusiastic fans is her ability to capture the essence of a locale and its people and bring them alive for the reader.

Familiar to many, the long running J.P. Beaumont series is set in Seattle featuring a cast of regular characters that have become like friends to loyal readers. J.A. Jance is a storyteller with few equals. She has been captivating readers for nine years. She is also, as she likes to put it, "... a woman with a husband, five kids, three dogs and no fence!"

This past summer I was pleased to interview Ms. Jance in Seattle and, as we sat at an outdoor table at Girvan Bros. On the dock at Pier 55, she pointed out various landmarks that have appeared in the J.P. Beaumont books. An office building here, a freeway there, an apartment building down the street... She even encouraged me to stop in at Beau's favorite watering hole, the Dog House. Yes, folks, it really exists and, as Ms. Jance warned me, "If you go there, it will be exactly as you expect. It is a place where they fry everything *including* the lettuce!" And she wasn't kidding! We arrived after midnight and ordered the truly greasy hamburgers. In the adjoining bar, the organist was leading the patrons in a rousing and might I add, long, serenade of bird calls. The only thing missing was Beaumont himself.

Jance has a knack for capturing the sights, sounds and smells of Seattle in each of the Beaumont books.

The way in which she develops her characters, or the "people connections" as she refers to it, sets her apart from other writers. Her ability to tell a story



J. A. Jance

that is more than just a "whodunnit" keeps her readers clamoring for more.

Aside from her writing ability, her fans appreciate her candor regarding the genre. She has a real respect for mystery readers and states, "I do not feel that mystery fiction is some kind of literary ghetto that I need to escape." She enjoys writing mysteries and further comments that she has "no illusions" that she is "writing the great American novel." She cheerfully admits, "I am writing something that someone who is sitting in a waiting room of a hospital with someone on the other side of the door dying of cancer can pick up and lose themselves in for awhile."

For Ms. Jance, the urge to write first manifested itself in the second grade after reading *The Wizard of Oz* but it wasn't acted upon until she was 38 years old. In the interim she worked as a school teacher, acted as a librarian on an Indian reservation, and for 10 years sold life insurance before spending a year as an "... impoverished, full-time writer with zero income..." and before marrying her second husband.

Her first husband died, a year after their divorce, at age 42, from chronic alcoholism. "When I came to

Seattle," she says, "I drove up here in my 1978 Cutlass pulling a U-Haul trailer with my two little kids in the car. I was moving them from Phoenix, a house with a yard and neighbors--neighborhood kids, a dog and a cat--and I was moving them into a highrise in downtown Seattle and I felt incredibly guilty." She continues, "My life has not been a bed of roses and I know a little about what I'm writing about . . ." Perhaps this tough life experience is what brings her closer to her audience. While technically speaking, the Beaumont series is a police procedural, Jance uses the framework of the mystery to explore problems in our society, including labor union strife, alcoholism and AIDS. Ms. Jance writes about people, not just murders. As she likes to say, "I start with somebody dead and I try to figure out how they got that way. And in the process of sorting that out I learn about the characters . . ." and so do her readers.

And speaking of readers, her books are available in Danish, Norwegian, Finnish, Spanish, Portuguese and French. They are also being translated into Japanese. Quite a difference from the early days when, until book number seven, many readers didn't realize that the "J" in J.A. stood for "Judy" rather than "John," "Jake" or "Jerome." The traditional backpage author photograph was conspicuously absent from the earlier books because her publisher didn't think men would read police procedurals written by a woman.

Not only do her fans continue to read her books, they also provide a means for Jance to give something back to the community that has been so supportive over the years. A dinner cooked by J.A. Jance and her husband Bill Schilbare brings about \$1200 at charity auctions. At a book signing held at the Dog House for *Payment in Kind*, nearly 1700 fans showed up and 800 books were sold with 50 cents from each sale going to benefit a women's shelter in Seattle.

In addition to the series set in Seattle which features homicide detective J.P. Beaumont, Jance has created two new series. The first, in a projected series of three, is *Hour of the Hunter* (Morrow, November 1991), a suspenseful tale which intertwines murder and Native American legends. This series features Diana Ladd and is set on an Indian reservation during the mid-seventies. Jance explains, "It starts at noon on Friday with a convicted killer getting out of prison and going looking for the two women who put him there, one of whom is a 30-year-old widow with a small child. The other is a 65-year-old Native American basket maker. These two women live together. The Anglo woman's husband was implicated in the murder of the Native American woman's granddaughter. So what are these two women doing together and why are they friends? It

starts at noon on Friday and it ends Monday night when those three people finally come together . . ."

The second series will feature Joanna Brady, a teacher who runs for the office of sheriff after her husband, who was running for the office, is murdered. *Cocaine Alley* is set in Southeast Arizona where Jance grew up. She explains, "For years I've been writing detective novels through the eyes of someone who is essentially a housewife and mother and it seems to me, detectives solve crimes the way mothers find out if their kids are lying to them about whether or not they went to school that day. You find out by asking questions and then sorting through the answers to get at the truth. And it seemed to me it would be fun to take someone who was essentially what I am, a housewife and mother, and throw them into the situation where they will be forced to deal with the reality of law enforcement."

But not to worry, Beaumont fans. *Without Due Process*, the next J.P. Beaumont novel will be released in the Spring. Beaumont is "stuck taking the new chief of police, a transplant from Oakland, to the Dog House, and the guy from Oakland is worried about whether or not there are sulfites on his salad. If you worry about sulfites, you shouldn't go to the Dog House . . . the salads are *stiff* with sulfites!"

Cherie Jung, along with her husband Larry, operates Over My Dead Body! The Mystery BBS and publishes "The Coroner's Report."

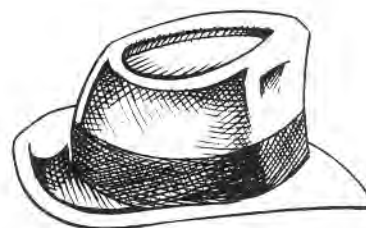
BOOKS BY J.A. JANCE:

J. P. Beaumont series (Avon Books):

Until Proven Guilty (July, 1985)
Injustice for All (May, 1986)
Trial by Fury (December, 1986)
Taking the Fifth (June, 1987)
Improbable Cause (February, 1988)
A More Perfect Union (Nov, 1988)
Dismissed with Prejudice (June, 1989)
Minor in Possession (April, 1990)
Payment in Kind (March, 1991)
Without Due Process (1992)

Diana Ladd series (Morrow):

Hour of the Hunter (November, 1991)



Earl W. Emerson: Hard-Boiled Paradoxes

by Leila Laurence

His protagonists, Thomas Black and Mac Fontana, are paradoxes. They embody the stereotypical characteristics of the traditional hard-boiled investigator. Irreverent, flawed and occasionally sexist, they rarely pass up a good fight. Yet, they are men of the nineties. Physically fit, non-smoking, non-drinking, relatively celibate, wise-cracking and sensitive, their best friends are most often women whom they treat as equals.

In person, Earl Emerson exhibits many of the same characteristics. Maintaining excellent physical fitness is an integral part of his life. Like Thomas Black, he is a skilled bicyclist. When discussing his writing, he is direct and conveys a seriousness of purpose. Humor and metaphor are tools used to illustrate a point.

A native of Washington, his novels convey a strong sense of place. The Thomas Black novels move in and around Seattle. Each scene is carefully etched with attention to the smallest detail. The visuals are there, but the reader also is stimulated to feel the damp, inhale the smells and experience the fleeting joy of a rare sunny day. Mac Fontana lives and works as fire chief and acting sheriff in Staircase. A small town in the Cascade foothills, Staircase closely resembles Emerson's home town, North Bend. The rural atmosphere is an effective contrast to the Seattle big-city culture, particularly in comparisons between the Seattle and Staircase fire departments.

A lieutenant with the Seattle Fire Department, Emerson has years of first hand experience dealing with people in crisis and an expert knowledge of technical detail. His descriptions of crime and disaster scenes ring with authenticity. He does not cheat or talk down to the reader. Not content to capitalize on black humor for dramatic effect, he uses it to convey why the characters act the way they do.

While the plots of the novels are varied and complicated, it is the characters that drive the stories. The years in the fire service, observing and absorbing people's reactions to life's critical situations are evident. Emerson captures human flaws and motives in small, significant details. Each individual is described succinctly but fully, with attention to all the senses. The reader may be provided with a physical description and know what strange or provocative outfit the person is wearing, but he also will be privy to quirky mannerisms, odd vocalizations and body odors.



Earl W. Emerson

The Thomas Black novels are told in the first person and as a result are more personal. Black is a fortyish ex-cop who left the force for personal reasons. As a private investigator, he picks and chooses his cases, often working with his best friend, gorgeous lawyer, Kathy Birchfield. Their relationship is reasonably platonic, with just enough sexual tension to make for some fascinating dialogue and situations. While pursuing his cases in the classic hard-boiled P.I. style, he sometimes exhibits decidedly different characteristics. As is traditional, he often stumbles into bodies and gets beaten up on a regular basis. However, while not necessarily a bleeding heart, he also shows empathy for victims, and cares about children and the homeless. He literally stops and smells the roses, raising them with loving care in his back yard. He is realistically human, vulnerable, and while smart and analytical, makes errors in judgment.

A widower, with a young son, Mac Fontana is looking for a peaceful life, but can't pass up a challenge once it is foisted upon him. Told in the third

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RELEASE

by Julie Robitaille
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character in years."
-Murder ad lib



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PAW,
INC.

by L.L. Thrasher
"Travis McGee reborn
and living in Mackie,
Oregon."
-Dread Review of
Mystery

by Lloyd Biggle, Jr.
"Flippant and funny."
-Publishers Weekly

A
HAZARD
OF
LOSERS

THE
CHINESE
OXYMORON

by Veronica Pierce

THE
FAST
DEATH
FACTOR

by Virginia Crosby

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TWIN
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person, the Fontana books are more action oriented, and Emerson speaks with a different voice. The characters, as weirdly interesting as in the Thomas Black novels, include Satan, a mangy dog Fontana inherits with the mantle of acting sheriff. Emerson manages to create an animal character who is integral to the stories, without being anthropomorphic or cute.

Emerson's world is reality based. The characters stop to eat and sleep and take a shower like real people and he uses these daily life situations to advance the action. While in active pursuit of the current mysterious happening, Thomas Black stops to ride his Miyata racing bicycle and trims his roses. Mac Fontana goes fishing and loves to dance. Neither avoids a confrontation and cases have a satisfying resolution.

Giving "write what you know" a new meaning, Emerson breathes life into ordinary situations and shares his considerable inside knowledge with the reader. Exciting action and thoughtful character development are balanced in well-written, carefully structured plots. Clean prose and imaginative use of metaphor contribute to a body of work that can only be called lovingly hand crafted.

Earl Emerson has published eight well-received novels since 1985, winning the private Eye Writers of America Shamus Award for *Poverty Bay*. Living in North Bend, Washington with his wife, Sandra, and three children, he continues to work for the Seattle Fire Department as Lieutenant in charge of an engine company.

Leila Laurence, fanatic collector, sometime writer, and professionally a police records and communications consultant, describes herself as a major fan of Earl Emerson.

BOOKS BY EARL W. EMERSON

Novels featuring Thomas Black:

The Rainy City (Avon, 1985)
Poverty Bay, Shamus Winner (Avon, 1985)
Nervous Laughter (Avon, 1986)
Fat Tuesday, Edgar Nominee (Morrow, 1987)
Deviant Behavior (Morrow, 1988)
Yellow Dog Party (Morrow, 1991)

Novels featuring Mac Fontana:

Black Hearts and Slow Dancing (Morrow, 1988)
Help Wanted: Orphans Preferred (Morrow, 1990)

James Lee Burke: Toastmaster

by Orietta Hardy-Sayles

We crossed the canyon and began walking down a slope. The roar of the river became louder. "It's just here," Jim said. "Don't forget to close the gate after you."

He began bobbing confidently across the suspension bridge. He was carrying his fishing pole in one hand and his tackle bag in the other.

I wondered if I should wait until he got to the other side before adding my weight to the now-swinging bridge. If I asked him, he would not have been able to hear me above the river noise.

I clung to the waist-high guide wires on either side. I was holding my breath. "Only for you, Jim," I muttered to myself. I, who had had an anxiety attack on the tramway at the San Diego Zoo.

I rushed across the bridge, trying to watch where I put my feet without looking through the wire-mesh base to the white water beneath. Then, down the steep embankment to the river's edge on a path through rocks and boulders designed to twist and break ankles.

Jim plunked his fishing gear down and surveyed the river with satisfaction. "This is a good spot. Those trout are really popping." I sat very carefully. As Jim sat on a big boulder, the thousand spiders collecting heat from the rock scattered. "Let's talk first, then I'll fish."

James Lee Burke's first novel, *Half of Paradise*, was published in 1965. Between 1965 and 1987 he published five other books, including a collection of short stories. He published other short stories in a variety of literary journals. His writing reflects the lives he has encountered and a variety of jobs, often not literary, that have provided the grist of authenticity.

The best job Jim had was when he was a land surveyor on a pipe line. It left him time for writing, but was hard on his young family. Being among oil workers who boozed and womanized off duty and baked on the rigs while on duty provided material for his stories but characters who were unsavory even when they were cleaned up and sanitized.

He once was a newspaper reporter, the hours unpredictable and long. One gets the sense that when he was finally fired from that job because of his politics, he was relieved. He has taught at the University of Montana, Miami-Dade Community College, and Wichita State University. Now, he drives himself very hard at his writing seven days a week.



James Lee Burke

We went through the usual statistics of his life and career, but the interview quickly became a discussion about politics and writing...the process, the purpose, the themes, the feelings.

Jim often talks about writers as artists. The media may differ from that of a sculptor or a painter, but all people who have a creative ability and who are involved in the study of human kind are artists.

Creativity is a gift. The receiver can impair it, but it is more intelligent, bolder, and braver to look at the world with questioning eyes. A writer knows that he has a story to tell. It is his destiny. To ignore it results in unhappiness and failure.

Jim speaks fondly of those who believed in his career enough to stick by him even when he "...was not in tall cotton." His book, *The Lost Get-Back Boogie*, was weighed down by 100 rejections, when Martha Hall, of Louisiana State University Press, resurrected his career with the publication of his first hardcover in 13 years.

His agent, Philip Spitzer, went broke several times. Jim followed his editor, Patricia Mulcahy, to Hyperion Press, where she became a founding edi-

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 36)

+Neil +Alan Adkins+Marlan Babson+Bob Biderman+D.C. Brod+Marten Claridge+James
 Louder+Bill Selzer+J. Marlton Davis+Thomas D. Davis+Albert Di Barcolomeo+Kluby Farrell+Ron
 Goulart+Christine Green+Mary Bowen Hall+Charlaine Harris+Edward D. Hoch+Cathleen
 Jordan+Lee Jordan+Mary Kliridge+Gunnar Landers+Janice Law+Stephen Lewis+Margaret
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What do a journalist, the parent of a teenager, an IRS auditor, and a mystery writer have in common? They all want to know **WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY, and HOW** . . . That's the theme of the following articles -- the 5 W's and an H of Left Coast Crime fiction. And to lead it off . . .

WHO Played The Great Left Coast Film Sleuths?

by Jim Doherty

If there is one sub-genre of crime fiction with which the Left Coast, and particularly California, is identified, it is the hard-boiled private eye story. And if there is one single movie that could be designated as emblematic of the Left Coast private eye story, it would have to be 1941's *The Maltese Falcon* which starred Humphrey Bogart as Dashiell Hammett's tough, crafty Sam Spade. In retrospect, Bogart is so closely identified with the character of Spade that it seems almost impossible to imagine anyone else in the part; yet Bogie was neither the first nor the last to tackle the role.

The first film adaptation of *Falcon* was produced one full decade before director John Huston and star Humphrey Bogart made their definitive version. Also entitled *The Maltese Falcon* (although some local TV stations run it under the title *Dangerous Female* to avoid confusing it with the 1941 remake), it starred Ricardo Cortez as Spade. Not a patch on the Huston-Bogart version, it's still a surprisingly satisfying, surprisingly faithful rendition of Hammett's classic novel.

Unfortunately, fidelity to the source material was not a quality to be found in *Falcon*'s second film adaptation, 1935's *Satan Met a Lady*. Casper Gutman, the villainous Fat Man, was transformed into a Fat Woman. The Falcon became a gold cross. Spade himself, this time played by Barrymore wannabe Warren Williams, had his name changed to Ted Shayne. The general consensus is that *Satan Met a Lady* is pretty terrible, distinguished only by the presence of a very young Bette Davis as the *femme fatale*.

Finally, in 1941, they got it right. Yet they almost missed on that try as well. Humphrey Bogart was actually the second choice to play Spade. The part was originally offered to George Raft, who, finding the Spade character too unsympathetic, turned it down.

After his big screen triumph, Spade moved on to conquer the airwaves as well. Several actors played Spade on the radio, including Edward G. Robinson and Bogart himself, but the actor most identified with the Spade character on the radio was Howard Duff who played the role for many years on the Edgar-winning *Adventures of Sam Spade*. Duff's interpretation was lighter-hearted than earlier ver-



sions, but he still captured the crisp, no-nonsense style of Hammett's tough sleuth. Most of the episodes were original scripts, but a few were adapted from Hammett short stories.

To the general public Spade is Hammett's best remembered creation, but knowledgeable mystery fans know that his major creation was the San Francisco PI known only as the Continental Op, who appeared in three novels to Spade's one, and 26 short stories to Spade's three. One of the original first-person narrators in the private eye lexicon, the Op admitted to being short, fat, and pushing 40. Perhaps this unheroic description made film producers reluctant to use him.

When the Op finally did make it to the screen in a six-hour made-for-TV version of *The Dain Curse*, the filmmakers got around the problem of his unflattering appearance by simply ignoring it. James Coburn, the actor chosen to play the Op, was tall, slim, silver-haired, mustachioed, a dashing figure obviously chosen less for his resemblance to

Locked Room Murders

Crossover Press announces its initial publication: the first U.S. edition of Robert Adey's *Locked Room Murders and Other Impossible Crimes: A Comprehensive Bibliography*. Published in England in 1979, the original edition has been out of print for over a decade. This edition will contain more than 700 titles *not* in the original edition.

Locked Room Murders, revised and expanded, contains:

- An informative Introduction by the author in which he surveys the subgenre from its inception in a short story by J. Sheridan Le Fanu in 1838 and notes the changes and developments since that seminal story;
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- Short-story appearances in anthologies and collections;
- Solutions in a separate section for each of the problems posed;
- A brand-new listing of locked-room anthologies and their contents;
- A brief bibliography of foreign-language books;
- The twenty different ways a locked room can be breached.

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Hammett's character than to Hammett himself. The identification with the character's creator was intensified by stripping him of his anonymity and giving him a name, Hamilton Nash, which sounded sort of like Dashiell Hammett spelled sideways. Aside from the change in the character's appearance, the film was a very faithful adaptation of Hammett's final Op novel, and the mini-series format served Hammett's complex plot well.

Hammett himself, played by Frederic Forrest, turned up to solve a San Francisco mystery in Francis Ford Coppola's production of Joe Gores' novel *Hammett*. Several years in production, with dozens of different scripts written over time, the completed film was a disappointment.

Dashiell Hammett was the innovator who pointed the way to a raw, new style of crime fiction, but it was his successor, Raymond Chandler, who provided generations of PI writers with the archetype. Phil Marlowe, a thirtyish first-person narrator who opened a marginally successful one-man agency in a large American city after serving as a cop for a short time, became the prototypical model for literally hundreds of PI characters who followed.

Marlowe first appeared in 1945 in the person of Dick Powell. First, and still the best, of the movie Marlowes, Powell starred in RKO's *Murder, My Sweet*, an adaptation of *Farewell, My Lovely*. Director Edward Dmytryk's startling use of light and shadow made *Murder, My Sweet* the definitive *film noir*, John Paxton's faithful script won the first Edgar for Best Mystery Screenplay; and Powell, who up to that time had been dismissed as a juvenile tenor in a series of Busby Berkeley musicals, turned in a tough, ironic performance that changed his career. There were, as we'll see, many Marlowes after Powell, but none of them was quite as good.

At least one, however, was very, very close. Humphrey Bogart, more than any other actor, has become identified with the image of the hard-boiled private eye, being the only star who has played both Spade and Marlowe. His appearance in Howard Hawks's *The Big Sleep*, coming just a year after Powell's film, confirmed Marlowe's status as an "A" picture property. Bogart gives one of his best performances, but, saddled by past images like Spade, Rick from *Casablanca*, and his numerous gangster roles, his performance is less Bogart becoming Marlowe than Marlowe becoming Bogart.

Robert Montgomery directed and starred in *The Lady in the Lake* that same year. Memorable for its experimental use of a subjective camera, the audience saw everything through Marlowe's eyes. Montgomery himself appearing only when Marlowe looked in a mirror. An interesting gimmick, but only a gimmick and, on that account, a failure.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 38)

WHAT? -- A Definition By Example

by Noemi Levine

What is a Left Coast Crime? I would have said that it is crime fiction set on the West Coast of these United States, but I have been informed that it includes pretty much everything west of the Rockies, plus, per the Texans, Texas. And let's not forget Alaska and Hawaii. Is there anything that makes these mysteries Left Coast Crimes other than location, location, location?

Most mysteries do not necessarily have to be where they are. The fact that a mystery is set in a specific place is not usually paramount to the story. Yes, there are exceptions, Hollywood mysteries, for instance; but there are gritty streets and honky-tonks in other places. Everywhere there are resorts and college towns, endangered species and over-development, nuclear power plants and natural disasters, big business and local politics and espresso and too many guns. Writers tend to set their stories in the places they know best. Those writers whose environments are intrinsic to their plots and themes could use the same basic plots and themes, with other paraphernalia, if they lived in other parts of the country. Those writers who are able to communicate a strong sense of place do so not through their particular surroundings, but through their own gifts and

talents. Writers are certainly influenced by their surroundings, but this is not unique to the Left Coast.

Also, people are universal; crime, especially murder, is universal (or maybe just national). There are few issues so exclusive to the Left Coast that their counterparts cannot be found elsewhere (well, maybe Berkeley's rent control law). However, there are some books which could not be other than Left Coast. In the hopes that I can figure out what makes these books distinctly Left Coast crimes, herein follows a highly selective and possibly idiosyncratic sample.

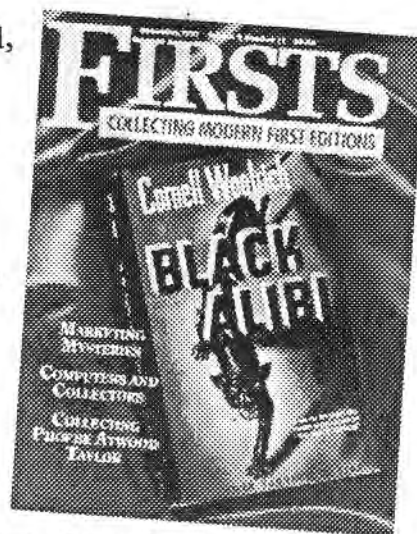
Probably the very first Left Coast mystery, albeit not by a Left Coast writer, was Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet* (1887). To introduce Sherlock Holmes, Conan Doyle, who had yet to see this country, wrote an adventure of the Wild West, a story of pioneers settling "the great alkali plain," a tale of love, terror and murder among the Mormons. The cast of characters includes such all-American types as Enoch J. Drebber, Jefferson Hope (both apparently fictional) and Brigham Young himself. *A Study in Scarlet* is rife with errors, some of them laughable, but no more than in the mysteries today's

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Britishers insist on setting in America (and vice versa). It is obvious that Conan Doyle did not have first-hand knowledge of Salt Lake City, Utah or the LDS, but the ambience and the spirit this work invokes are not to be faulted. These are unmistakably Americans, and this is definitely a story of nowhere but the American West.

After *A Study in Scarlet*, nothing very significant seems to have happened mystery-wise in our neighborhood, unless you count Conan Doyle's brief sojourn in San Francisco, which he didn't. So jump ahead 40 or 50 years, when Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler, the fathers of the California private eye, shifted at least part of the focus of detective fiction some eight thousand miles west and into another era. Sure there were private investigators in mysteries before the Continental Op, Sam Spade and Philip Marlowe, most them men (a pity) of honor, as upright as our three. The main difference, I think, was one of milieu. They were honorable men in a place where honor mattered less than gold, and still matters less than water. They were based in California, but their cases took them to other parts of the Left Coast as well (most notably in Hammett's *Red Harvest*). They worked in new cities with few, if any, rules. More than that, the Left Coast was where people were going. Many of us preceded or followed the Op, Spade and Marlowe to California, while very few would have thought of moving to England. Hammett and Chandler made the former as legitimate a locale as the latter for detective fiction, but England was the past and California the future. Now, of course, nostalgic Californians read mysteries about Brooklyn, but that's neither here nor there.

Skipping a few more decades, we come to Tony Hillerman, unarguably a Left Coast writer. His wonderful books about Navajo police officers Joe Leaphorn and Jim Chee are vehicles for exploring and explaining the Navajo tribe and culture; as such they are inextricably tied to the Navajo reservation and its Arizona and New Mexico environs. If Hill-



erman hadn't ended up in Albuquerque, would he not write the same sort of books about, say, the Mohawks on the New York-Canadian border? I don't think so. The Navajos aren't a landscape; they're a people, and they've got him.

Finally, three Los Angeles writers debuted in the 1980's with what I must offer as fine examples of Left Coast crimes.

Dick Lochte's *Sleeping Dog* (1985) combines first-person accounts by 14-year-old Serendipity Dahlquist and by Leo J. Bloodworth, the hard-bitten private eye whom she asks to find her kidnapped bull terrier, Groucho. This sounds overly cute, but it isn't, mainly because Lochte gets the voices right, especially Serendipity's. If you've ever backtracked from dialogue to figure out which character is talking, you will appreciate this very funny book. What makes it Left Coast? Not just the voices, which are both hardcore Californian, nor the setting, which ranges all over the state, but also the energy that keeps the whole shebang from crashing. Warning: the story gets pretty violent; despite Serendipity, it's for grown-ups.

Faye Kellerman's *The Ritual Bath* (1986) is about an L.A. cop named Peter Decker, and Rina Lazarus, a young Orthodox Jewish widow, who meet when he investigates a rape at a large yeshiva in the foothills. This sets the scene for love, an uneasy conversion and much conflict as the two struggle to reconcile their very different lives and expectations. It would be difficult to set this scene, the self-sufficient community of the yeshiva and its imperfect isolation from the tremendous and violent city to which it belongs, anywhere but Los Angeles.

What I remember about Robert Crais's *The Monkey's Raincoat* (1987) is not so much the plot or the setting, as the detective. Not just another L.A. private eye, Elvis Cole is simply the complete Californian. Elvis probably wouldn't dream of crossing the street against a red light, that is, if he walked anywhere. He feels that it is his responsibility to aid and comfort his clients as much as he can. For all I know, private detectives everywhere provide conjugal services, along with skiptracing and such, but it strikes me as a very California thing to do.

These writers and their books are all paragons of Left Coast Crime, and they are all Left Coast in different ways. What's more, there are certainly other mysteries out there which are as Left Coast in their own ways as the ones I have chosen. Still and all, these are the exceptions. Next time someone asks me what a Left Coast Crime is, I will have one answer: location, location, and location.

Noemi Levine, who thinks a Left Coast Crime is one that is set in Cornwall, writes occasional pieces for the *MRI Journal*.

Where are the West's best Cop Novels?

by Jim Doherty

The obvious answer, if you have an overly literal turn of mind, is your local library or bookstore. But, of course, that's not really what I'm getting at. What I want to examine is the juxtaposition of setting and genre, specifically the Western United States and the police procedural.

Why devote space to such a narrow mystery sub-genre as the police procedural?

Our guests of honor provide two reasons. J.A. Jance, best-known for her superior novels about Seattle homicide ace J.P. Beaumont, is certainly one of the procedural's brighter stars, and her co-honoree, Earl Emerson, while better-known as a PI writer, has ventured into procedural territory with his series about small-town public safety official Mac Fontana, whose position combines the functions of fire chief and police chief.

Moreover, Left Coast Crime is detective fiction's Western Regional Conference, and the West can make a convincing (if not indisputable) claim to being the birthplace of the police procedural. After all, wasn't *Dragnet* the seminal police procedural in any medium? And weren't we informed in every episode that "the story we were about to see" was set in "the city. . . Los Angeles, California"? The Left Coast and the cop story have been a smooth-running combo for over four decades, and this is the perfect place to examine, on a state-by-state basis, the region's best offerings in the field.

ALASKA. *Murder on the Iditarod Trail* by Sue Henry (Atlantic Monthly Press, 1991). In the United States, policing is largely the province of local government.

It's true that almost all of the 50 state governments maintain some sort of state police, and, of course, the Federal Government operates dozens of law enforcement agencies, but these organizations tend to be specialists, handling particular types of crime problems. The nuts-and-bolts of basic police work, patrolling beats, answering calls to service, quelling disturbances, and investigating all crimes, petty and major, is a local responsibility, carried out by municipal police in cities, towns, and villages, and by sheriff's deputies in unincorporated county areas.

The 49th state is an exception to this rule. Incorporated cities take up only a minuscule portion of Alaska's hundreds of thousand of square miles. Moreover, the Last Frontier State is unique in mostly not being divided up into counties or parishes. More than 80 percent of the state is designated as an "unorganized borough" with no real local government of any kind; consequently there are no sheriff's departments. Primary responsibility for policing this region, an area equivalent to one-fifth the size of the rest of the country, falls to the Alaska State Troopers, a force of less than 100 officers. A single trooper's beat may encompass hundreds of square miles of frozen tundra, or a half-dozen of the Aleutian Islands. He may patrol his district by snow-mobile, by aircraft, by boat, or even, like some latter-day Sergeant Preston of the Yukon, by dog-sled. Which brings us to *Murder on the Iditarod Trail*.

Except for a short-lived TV series, *Kodiak*, mystery writers have been slow to exploit the possibilities in Alaskan law en-

forcement, but, in her first novel, Sue Henry combines a sharp examination of Trooper operations with an exciting look at what

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must be the single most grueling athletic competition in sports, the Iditarod Dog Sled Race, an arduous two-week trek across more than 1000 miles of the roughest terrain in the country.

A title like *Murder on the Iditarod Trail* is more suggestive of a cozy whodunit than a hard-bitten cop novel, and, on one level, that's just what it is, a fair-play puzzle. But Sergeant Alex Jensen, the sleuth on the trail of the faceless killer eliminating competitors in the race, is no gifted amateur in the Ellery Queen/Lord Peter vein, but a sharp, professional cop who reaches his solution by methodical, realistic police work more than by brilliant inspiration.

I would say that Ms. Henry's book deserves to be remembered when 1991's first novel awards get handed out, but I'm afraid that might jinx her, so I'll just say that I'm anxiously looking forward to her second Jensen mystery.

ARIZONA. *Listening Woman* by Tony Hillerman (Harper & Row, 1977). The essence of the police procedural is accuracy, not only about police work, but about anything else that's impinges on the plot. Tony Hillerman is a case in point. A police reporter prior to becoming a novelist, he certainly knows his police procedure cold, but his novels and stories about the Navajo Tribal Police are just as accurate in the depiction of archaeology, inter-tribal politics, academia, and, most, of all, the religion, mores, CUST

customs, and culture of the Navajo people. *Listening Woman* is the best single entry in a series that has, for over two decades, been consistently providing the mystery audience with exceptionally fine entertainment.

Lieutenant Joe Leaphorn is ostensibly investigating a cold double homicide for that most cop-like of reasons; he wants to duck a dull assignment. He also wants to use the time to try to track down the hit-and-run driver who almost killed him. Interviewing blind tribal shaman Margaret Cigaret, the titular *Listening Woman*, he develops a slender lead and follows it across the barren mesas and desert countryside, on the trail of a ruthless killer for who murder is just a way of making a point.

The "wilderness pursuit" story, practiced by writers like Steve Frazee in *Running Target* and Brian Garfield in *Relentless*, is a peculiarly Western form of cop story. There is no better example the *Listening Woman*, which is not only Arizona's best police procedural (though, like the Big Reservation itself, it also extends into New Mexico and Utah), but the best police procedural set anywhere in the West.

CALIFORNIA. *Play Like You're Dead* by Whit Masterson (Dodd, Mead, & Company, 1967). California has probably produced more police procedural novels than any other state. In all shapes, sizes,
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 41)



WHEN Is The Time For Crime?

by Margaret Lucke

"Now then, Mrs. McGillicuddy, where were you at the moment when Colonel Horseneck met his untimely demise?"

When? is always a crucial question in mysteries. Take time of death. The investigator needs to know it in order to recreate events and solve the crime. The suspects need to know it so they can polish their alibis. In traditional mysteries the solution often hangs on split-second timing: The jealous Signorina Bimboli spied Mrs. McGillicuddy slipping through the French doors of Cobweb Manor at precisely 9:18 p.m. Could Mrs. McG. possibly have traveled the seven miles to Grimley Green in time to clobber Colonel Horseneck with his hockey stick, an event which occurred, according to his conveniently smashed watch, at exactly 9:32?

In most mysteries, though, when? works in more subtle fashion. Time in a mystery novel is a many-layered thing, in part because there are two stories unfolding: The surface story, which recounts the sleuth's adventures while tracking down who-, what-, why-, how-, where- and when-dunit, and the hidden story, the one that both detective and reader discover when all the clues have clicked into place. The hidden story is not just what happened at the moment the crime occurred. It's all the circumstances that led up to the fatal moment and away from it -- everything that made the crime compelling and necessary from the perpetrator's point of view and everything he or she does to conceal responsibility or misdirect blame. The surface story is the detective's story. The hidden story belongs to the murderer and the victims.

Here are some of the many ways when? figures into mysteries (and, yes, these are generalities; many superb books do it quite differently):

WHEN? does the book takes place?: Part 1

How long will Mrs. McGillicuddy get away with murder? Only as long as it takes for Sherlock Spade to discover that she's the guilty party and to drag her to justice.

The time span of the book tends to parallel the time span of the surface story, or the investigation. The action usually occurs over a matter of days, or at most weeks, rather than sprawling out for years or generations in the way of so much mainstream fiction. A shattering event like a murder or a threat of imminent violence has an urgency that precludes a leisurely approach.

It's possible to lose sight of how tight the time

span is. I belong to a writers group that meets monthly to critique members' work in progress. My fellow group members took three-plus years to read my novel, *A Relative Stranger*, at a rate of a chapter a month (more or less, depending on how much real life was interfering with my writing schedule). It was part of their lives for so long that they were astounded at the end, when I pointed out that the entire book takes place in less than a week.

WHEN? is the crime committed?

The crime -- usually murder -- is pivot point of the book, the hinge that connects the surface story to the hidden one.

It would seem logical, then, that the crime should be up front: Scene One. And sometimes it happens that way. Jaqueline Girdner begins *Adjusted to Death* by introducing us to the victim in a chiropractor's waiting room, mere moments before he is bashed to death while lying on a treatment table. In the opening moments of Gloria White's *Murder on the Run*, detective Ronnie Ventana looks on horrified while a man attacks another and throws his body into the bay. In her Port Silva novels, Janet La Pierre provides a prologue in which we watch, without quite knowing what we're seeing, as the murder takes place.

But often the all-important crime that precipitates the action happens off-stage, or before the book opens. Sometimes way before. Aaron Elkins's "Skeleton Detective," Gideon Oliver, is a forensic anthropologist who examines bones to learn about the person they belonged to -- such basics of identity as sex and age, sometimes clues as to profession or cause of death. Though the crime may be freshly discovered, by the time Gideon is called to the scene years have passed since it was actually committed.

WHEN? were the seeds of the crime sown?

Sudden, random, violence is an unfortunate fact of real life. But it is not easy to turn it into good fiction. In mysteries, with their passion for order and justice, murder tends to have a clear motive or cause (clear, that is, once you've made it to page 250 or so.)

Sometimes the cause immediately precedes the effect. But often it comes out of an event that happened long before. Did Mrs. McGillicuddy whack Colonel Horseneck because he flirted with Signorina Bimboli at teatime? Or was it because he discovered that the staid and respectable Mrs. McG.

is really the notorious Lady Marzipan, who disappeared 20 years ago with the viscount's jewels?

Take the classic Left Coast crime writer Ross MacDonald. The murders Lew Archer solved almost invariably led him to a secret buried deep in someone's past. Someone's hidden passion, betrayal or greed, after festering for two decades, now threaten to burst open for all to see -- if a conveniently timed murder doesn't eliminate the risk.

WHEN? does the book take place?: Part 2

Most mysteries are contemporary works, set in and commenting on the time in which they are written. But popular series detectives include a medieval monk, a Victorian Egyptologist, and a Chinese magistrate from the seventh century, along with other unlikely sleuths who have come shuffling down the corridors of the past. Historical mysteries -- set anywhere from a decade to many centuries ago -- are one of the reported hot trends in the market.

Bill Pronzini and Marcia Muller did it both ways in their collaboration *Beyond the Grave*. The book is both a contemporary tale and a historical one. A murder occurs on a California rancho during the Bear Flag Rebellion of 1846, and a family's treasure disappears. Two interlocked investigations ensue in alternating sections. First Pronzini's detective Quincannon attempts to solve the mystery in 1894. More than 90 years later, Muller's sleuth Elena Oliverez stumbles on an account of the case and, intrigued, finds a way to pick up the long-cold trail.

WHEN? does the book come in the series?

First we had the mystery as intellectual puzzle. Detectives were defined by their eccentricities, and supporting players came from some sort of mystery-novel central casting bureau: The ingenue, the social climber, the wastrel son . . .

Then we walked the mean streets, alongside a detective who was a detached observer of life, a man without a context of his own. What did we learn about Lew Archer's personal history? He was divorced. He fought in World War II. That's it.

But stock sleuths and loner p.i.'s have given way to protagonists who operate in a real world, with homes and families, friends and lovers. And just like real people, their relationships, attitudes and circumstances change over time.

This creates a challenge for the writer -- how do you let your characters grow and develop, yet not leave the reader who doesn't discover you until Book Four feeling frustrated and bewildered. Once I flung a book by a well-known Right Coast author across the room when it became clear, after 50 pages or so, that I had to have read the preceding book if I

was to have any hope of making sense of this one. No, I never did seek out the earlier work.

Science fiction has a tradition of trilogies, quadrilogies, quintilogies -- books which, though each has its own unity, collectively form a larger work. This hasn't been done much in mysteries, although Marcia Muller's three books about art security expert Joanna Stark were intended as a trilogy from the start.

But detective series are evolving in that direction. As just one example, the friend who first recommended J.A. Jance's books to me strongly suggested that I read them in order. In her books about Seattle police detective J.P. Beaumont, Jance has created (so far) an octology -- eight books, eight episodes in Beaumont's personal story, in which he and those near and dear to him undergo major life changes. Each mystery is complete and satisfying on its own, but the pleasure of knowing Beaumont is enhanced by reading them in sequence.

WHEN? does the book take place?: Part 3

The time of day, the season of the year -- these whens? can help establish a suitable mysterious atmosphere for a book. The dark cover of night, the revealing glow of the noonday sun. Heat, rain, snow, fog, storms. They are tools the writer uses to the heighten the sense of danger and to create difficulties for characters.

A reader of my *A Relative Stranger* commented with regard to its *film noirish* jacket, "The cover really works -- after all, most of the book takes place at night." Well, I seem to recall plenty of daylight too, but certain key scenes were set at night, when it's harder to tell who or what might be lurking in the corners.

Often you'd have a different story if the when? was changed. In Susan Dunlap's *Pious Deception* the harsh glare and intense heat of Phoenix in summer become as strong a presence in the book as the characters. In Bill Pronzini's *Shackles* the isolation and menace imposed by snow and ice make Nameless's imprisonment in a remote mountain cabin more chilling than it could be at any other season.

WHEN? do we read mysteries? and WHEN?
do we write them?

Ah, the really crucial questions. With life always so busy, busy, busy, it's hard to find enough spare moments for Mrs. McGillicuddy and friends. So many mysteries, so little time!

Margaret Lucke is the author of *A Relative Stranger*, published last autumn by St. Martin's Press.

WHY Dun It?

by Nancy Roberts

Hearts full of profit, jealousy, and hate--/Woman meets man, and man must kill her mate--/That no one can deny . . . /as crime goes by

I chose to write about the WHY of mysteries, firmly believing that all murderers of the kind found in detective novels would be motivated by one of four basic needs: self-preservation (to prevent oneself from imprisonment or loss of status), money, revenge, or love. Though some hair-splitters think that plain old hate should be included, revenge accurately covers that motivation. I figured it would be a short article.

As I looked at my list again, I had misgivings. The ease of divorce would surely have eliminated love as a viable motive. I have often heard contemporary mystery writers yearn for the good old days when illegitimacy, divorce, and homosexuality were scandalous matters worth killing to conceal.

I decided to do a semi-scientific survey. I would re-read the last 15 pages of 100 mystery novels by Left Coast authors past and present, noting the motive used. Unfortunately, many of the older books were unavailable to me so the survey is decidedly skewed.

My task wasn't easy. In very few books does the murderer, five pages before the end, stand up and shout, "I did it for revenge!" If the motive was spelled out at all, it could play havoc with my statistics, as did this explanation from a 1985 book: "So it was a mixture of revenge, protection, and self-preservation." Frequently there was more than one murder and thus more than one motive, but the last one to be explained was the important one.

It was often difficult to categorize the motive. I was right. People do not die for love. However, occasionally jealousy is a real killer. I changed the

label. Even so, among the original four contenders, jealousy came in dead last.

Three books (all written by female authors) had this scenario: the mother kills so that her adult male child can thrive. I reluctantly added ambition as a category. Interestingly, in only one book did someone kill to advance himself (he probably did not have a mother). Authors, take note; ambition is an untapped resource.

In several books, an old murder had been committed for a pure motive, usually to get rid of a no-good s.o.b. for everyone's benefit. I had no category for such nobility. Luckily (for my statistics, not for the victim), the community's benefactor then killed again so his first crime would not be revealed, a clearcut case of self-preservation.

In only five books did the authors break the 60-year old "rule" that the crime must turn out to be murder. Those turned out to be cases of self-defense, accident (twice), manslaughter, and suicide. No, I did not feel cheated; in those particular books, the process of detection was more interesting to me than the product.

A sub-category of mystery stories exists where the killer has no motive. He's crazy, and he likes killing elderly women (or maybe young women, or children, or prostitutes, or . . .) I eliminated those books from the survey.

The results of my survey, after countless hours of meticulous analysis, supported my instinctive guess: money, revenge, and self-preservation are the Big Three of murder motives. I suspect they always were and always will be, as crime goes by.

Nancy Roberts started reading mysteries with Nancy Drew and hasn't stopped yet.

Year	Money	Jealousy	Revenge	Self-pres	Ambition	Other	Total
-1940	3	1	0	3	0	0	7
1940-60	0	2	1	2	0	0	5
1961-80	5	2	5	0	0	1	13
1981-85	6	1	6	6	0	1	20
1986-89	9	3	9	14	4	2	41
1990-91	4	1	4	4	0	1	14
Total	27	10	25	29	4	5	100

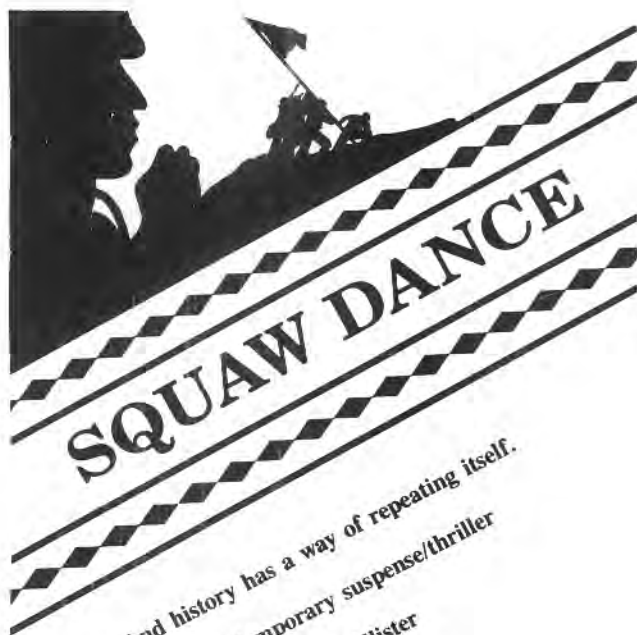
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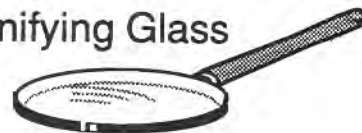


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HOW Do I Kill Thee? Let Me Count The Ways ...

by Bonnie and David Pollard

Of the many ways to kill a foe
Here's an alphabet of 26:
Peruse them at your leisure
Or when you're in a fix.

A is for ants
The meat-eating kind.
Stake your victim in their path
And a corpse you'll find.

B is for bells—
How loud they do ring.
Stay around long enough,
And in heaven you'll sing.

C is for curare,
Put it on your dart.
When it hits your victim
It'll do more than smart.

D is for dagger.
If it catches your heart
As the blood flies upward
From this life you'll part

E is for explosive,
It's usually a bomb.
Be careful with your mail
If it isn't from Mom.

F is for fire,
It hides all the clues.
And the beauty of it all—
It's so easy to use.

G is for gag.
It quiets you down.
Shove too deep
And you're heaven bound.

H is for hands,
The oldest weapon in use.
They're extremely handy
When you can't find a noose.

I is for icepick,
A bloodless way to die
It will finish your victim
In the blink of an eye.

J is for jaguar,
A wondrous beast.
It'll make of your victim
A glorious feast.

K is for knife,
It goes in like butter.
Give it a twist
To make sure you cut her.

L is for laser,
A beam gone awry.
Direct it the wrong way
And I say you'll die.

M is for mutton,
Hitchcock showed the way,
To dispose of the weapon
At the end of the day.

N is for noose,
It shuts off the air.
Be sure you pull it tight,
And leave him hanging there.

O is for oven,
It gets the body toasty.
Leave it in too long
And it really gets roasty.

P is for pistol,
So easy to use.
The biggest problem
It's easy to abuse.

Q is for quicksand,
A very quiet place.
Watch her expression
As the slime covers her face.

R is for roscoe,
It spits out the pills.
If you don't duck quickly,
It definitely kills.

S is for scimitar,
A very shapely knife.
When wielded with spite
It can snuff out a life.

T is for tophat
It's an odd weapon to lob
But in James Bond's stories,
It does an excellent job.

U is for umbrella,
That's where a sword is stored.
It's considered very good,
For holding off the horde.

V is for virus,
It kills off the brain.
Either human or computer,
The results are the same.

W is for water,
A pool full of which
Will drown a lot more
Than your little goldfish.

X is for xylophone.
It's mallet is one
Weapon which will kill
As good as a gun.

Y is for yuppies.
In all the latest thrillers,
If they're not the victims
They're surely the killers.

Z is for zipgun,
Made from a lighter.
It's the favorite weapon
Of the urban streetfighter.

Put them all together
What do they spell?
Death by murder,
A sure path to Hell.

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computers, two cars, and two
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"San Francisco has Dashiell Hammett,
Boston has Robert B. Parker, Fort
Lauderdale boasts John D. MacDonald
. . . Seattle has J.A. Jance!"

—*Seattle Times*

"(Earl Emerson) is destined to rank
among the best of the new generation of
American private-eye writers."

—*Chicago Sun Times*



photo: Beverly G. Howe



photo: Fred Milke, Jr.

By J. A. Jance:

Hour of the Hunter
Dismissed with Prejudice
Improbable Cause
Injustice for All
Minor in Possession
More Perfect Union
Payment in Kind
Taking the Fifth
Trial by Fury
Until Proven Guilty

By Earl Emerson:

Yellow Dog Party
Help Wanted
Deviant Behavior
Help Wanted: Orphans Preferred
Nervous Laughter
Poverty Bay
Rainy City

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A Clean Well-Lighted Place for Books

invites you to meet



Sara Paretsky

at a booksigning and reading of her new book


Guardian Angel

Saturday, February 15th at 2:00 p.m.

Please join us as we welcome Sara Paretsky and celebrate the release of the seventh V.I. Warshawski novel. And don't forget to drop by our mystery section. We have San Francisco's largest selection of mysteries in print, carrying over 4000 hardcover and paperback mystery titles. For the aficionado, we have special sections including critical works, biographies, essays, photo books, and true crime. Especially for writers, we stock a variety of mystery writing guides and crime reference works. We emphasize and strongly support books by the Northern California mystery writing community. Please make time for a long visit with us while you're in San Francisco.

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You Be The Detective

You must have been a beautiful baby . . . but, baby, look at you now! Which of these Left Coast Crime participants can you identify? They'll be wandering around our meeting rooms and the Pub but in somewhat later versions. Give up? Solutions on page 43.



The Probabilities Interviews

by Richard Wolinsky and Richard A. Lupoff

We found James Ellroy's hotel without difficulty, took the elevator upstairs and stood outside Ellroy's doorway. Somehow our presence was detected, for we were greeted by a panting, a scratching, and then--the howling of a giant hound.

Before we could react, the door swung open and Ellroy loomed, mustache twitching, eyeglasses askew. He barked once more. Then he said, "You must be from the radio station. Come on in. Call me Dawg."

* * *

Not all *Probabilities* interviews start that strangely, but then not all *Probabilities* guests are as strange as James Ellroy. P.D. James, a more than proper British lady (she'd met the Queen!), seemed to wince with every step she took on the ragged and dust-saturated carpeting at the old KPFA studios on Shattuck Avenue in Berkeley. Accompanied by a small entourage, she sat gingerly before a microphone and answered our questions, then fled. Ah well, next time we hope she will visit our spiffy new studios on Martin Luther King Way. It took KPFA 42 years to get its own building, and we're more than a little proud of having presentable quarters at last.

This weekend we look forward to a return visit with Sara Paretsky in a *Probabilities* interview to be conducted here at the Left Coast Crime Convention. She was in our studio less than a year ago, when *Warsawski* was being filmed. Alas. The movie has come and gone but Sara Paretsky and her tough heroine survived against all odds. Saturday we hope to hear the painful details--and the pleasanter ones of Paretsky's ongoing career.

Probabilities is a weekly show devoted to books and authors, mainly in the popular fiction categories. It began in March, 1977, the brainchild of Lawrence Davidson, and was concerned mainly with science fiction and fantasy. Richard Wolinsky was studio engineer for that first broadcast, and the very first studio guest was Richard Lupoff. In later years there were a good many changes. Subject matter was broadened to include everything from horror fiction to westerns, but the mystery field has become *Probabilities*' strongest suit. There have been personnel changes, too. Wolinsky moved to the other side of the control room glass almost at once. Lupoff returned so often that he became a partner in the enterprise.

Guest interviewers and reviewers have turned up from time to time, including TV host and news-



SARA PARETSKY will be interviewed by Dick Lupoff Saturday here for radio station KPFA. Iowaborn and holder of degrees from the University of Kansas and the University of Chicago, she's a longtime Chicago resident and has used that city with its complex problems as the background for her *V.I. Warsawski* novels. The first, *Indemnity Only*, was published in 1982. *Guardian Angel*, the seventh, was published in 1992. Paretsky's work has been praised by critics ranging from *Newsweek* and *Cosmopolitan* to *People*. Regarded by some as major social documents, the novels nonetheless remain top-ranked mystery entertainment.

paperman John Stanley and novelists Lisa Goldstein and Bill Pronzini. Most recently, mystery writer Shelley Singer has joined *Probabilities* as a regular book reviewer and occasional interviewer, while Davidson's career interests have moved on to other fields.

* * *

Brian Garfield's home was posted with a frightening cautionary placard: *Animal Response Beyond this Point*. We made it into the Garfield livingroom and

set up our taping equipment, starting nervously at every sound. Finally the oldest dog in the world swayed into the room, looking for love in all the right places, followed by his mother.

The first mystery writers interviewed for *Probabilities* were John D. MacDonald (in his Florida home) and Robert B. Parker, then in Northern California to promote a book. MacDonald died shortly after our show was taped--it was one of the last and one of the best interviews he ever gave, replete with reminiscences of the legendary Joseph "Cap" Shaw and MacDonald's early days writing for *FBI Detective* and similar intellectual journals.

Parker agreed to return for a second interview that would update his career since the first. The second show was to be taped in October, 1989, and was canceled due to earthquake. We're still waiting to reschedule.

We get the best sound quality when we can get a subject to visit the KPFA studios, but we'll do what we need to. We went to Tony Hillerman's hotel room to tape an outstanding show in which Hillerman spoke of his combat experiences in World War II, something he seldom does. We went to Sister Carol Anne O'Marie's convent to tape an interview with the only nun-mystery-writer in the known world. We went to Sedona, Arizona, to interview Richard prat

Prather about the Shell Scott novels, and to the Marin County house that Martin Cruz Smith rents as an office. It's a wonderful little house, with the emphasis on *little*. It was built as a playhouse for a onetime millionaire's children, and a visit there is like a visit to Munchkinland.

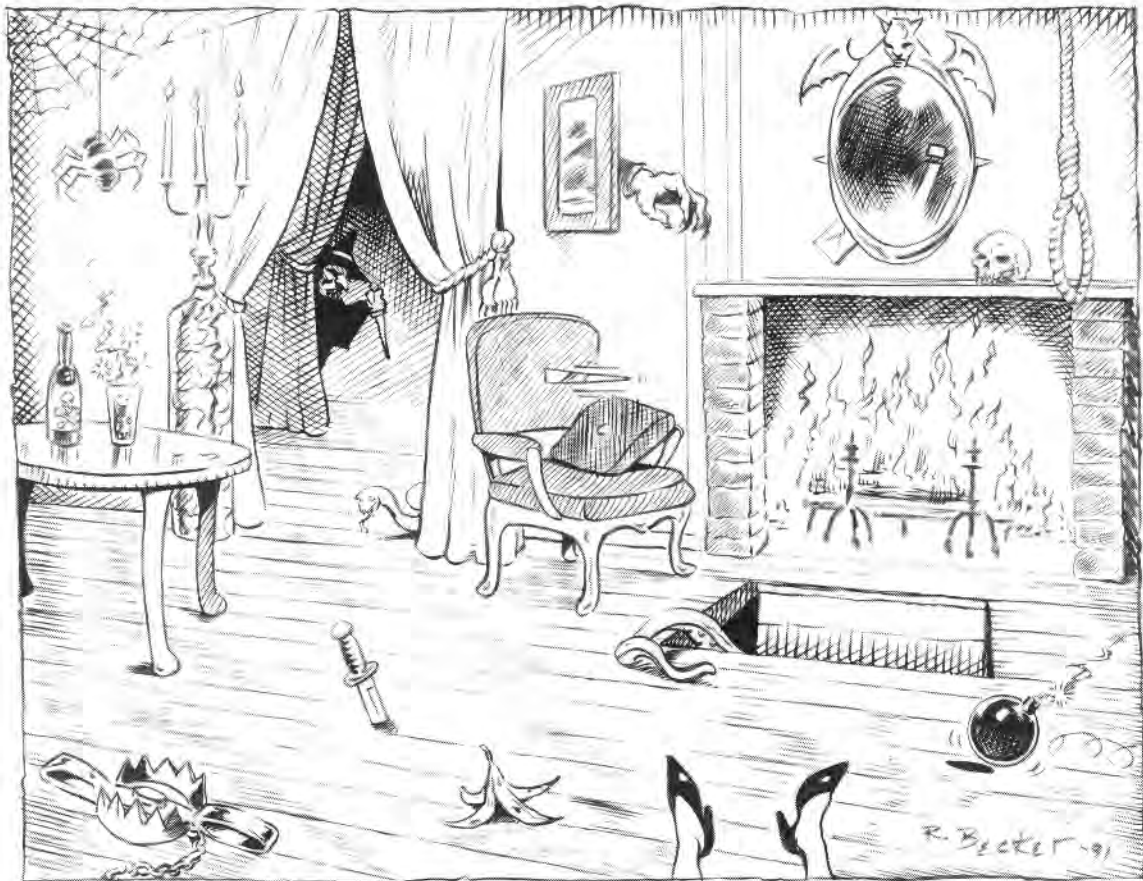
Mary Higgins Clark did one of our finest shows. She had a career in radio before she began writing her marvelous novels, and she was perfectly at home facing a microphone.

Donald E. Westlake strolled into the studio, recognized a *very* long-lost friend, and resumed a 20-year-old conversation as if he'd never missed a beat.

We've interviewed hundreds of authors in the past 15 years, as well as an occasional editor, illustrator, or actor. Some interviews have been conducted in public and taped for later broadcast--Robert Bloch at a Kansas convention some years ago, and Stephen Greenleaf at the Left Coast Crime Convention in 1990.

Probabilities is broadcast Thursdays at 11:30 a.m. on KPFA, 94.1 FM.

And yes, there is a tape archive. And yes, we do hope that a volume of *Probabilities* interviews will be published sometime soon. We'll let you know the details when we sign our contract.



Write To The Heart

In honor of St. Valentine's Day, can you match the Left Coast sleuth in Column A with his or her beloved in Column B and the author who created both of them in Column C? Left Coast Crime makes no guarantees regarding the endurance of the relationship. In most cases, though, it lasted for more than one book.

Column A

1. Joanna Stark
2. Catherine Saylor
3. Howard Rickover
4. Kate Murphy
5. Gideon Oliver
6. Alex Delaware
7. Jess Falkenstein
8. Peter Decker
9. Meg Halloran
10. Philip Marlowe
11. Nameless
12. Moroni Traveller
13. Kinsey Milhone
14. Laura diPalma
15. Jesse James
16. Calico Jack Walker
17. Luis Mendoza
18. Nick Polo
19. Amanda Pepper
20. Kate Byrd

Column B

- a. Nell
- b. Vince Gutierrez
- c. Linda Loring
- d. Rina Lazarus
- e. Sarah Nelson
- f. Alison Weir
- g. Julie Tandler
- h. Kerry
- i. Robin
- j. Jonah Robb
- k. Jack Bassetti
- l. Hal
- m. Peter Harman
- n. Claire Bennion
- o. Tina Tamiko
- p. Adam Hawthorne
- q. Marcus Andrelli
- r. Roger Tejada
- s. Jane Tobin
- t. C.K. MacKenzie

Column C

31. Aaron Elkins
32. Sue Grafton
33. Faye Kellerman
34. Bill Pronzini
35. Janet LaPierre
36. Linda Grant
37. Chandler/Parker
38. Lia Matera
39. Sister Carol Ann O'Marie
40. Jonathan Kellerman
41. Susan Wolfe
42. Marcia Muller
43. Lesley Egan
44. Paul Bishop
45. Dell Shannon
46. Meg O'Brien
47. Robert Irvine
48. Gillian Roberts
49. Wendy Hornsby
50. Jerry Kennealy

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Bill Farley, Prop.

J. B. Dickey

You need to finger the authors, editors, collectors, and fans taking part in the program? Well, just come down to the local precinct and view . . .

The Line-Up

NOTE: Photos of participants have been provided when available; presence or absence of a photo is not an editorial value judgment. We apologize to those whose information arrived too late for inclusion or has been garbled somewhat in the translation.

GARY ALEXANDER has sold over 70 short stories to publications like *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*. His best known protagonist is Bamsan Kiet, police chief of the capital city of Luong, a mythical Southeast Asian country. His latest Kiet book is *Deadly Drought*.



Gary Alexander

K.K. BECK was born in Seattle and grew up in various places as her Norwegian-American family followed jobs in Canada, Holland, and California. Now she's back in Seattle with her three children in the neighborhood inhabited by her family for five generations. She published two romances before her first mystery, *Death in a Deck Chair* (1984).

WILLIAM BERNHARDT's first mystery, *Primary Justice*, is a legal thriller wherein "Ben Kincaid discovers being moral and being a lawyer can be mutually exclusive."

JAN BURKE's first novel, *Goodnight, Irene* will be published by Simon & Schuster in 1993. Set in Southern California, the story introduces reporter Irene Kelly, whose best friend and mentor is killed by a package bomb.

EMMA CHIZZIT is in real life Eleanaor Sait, salvage operator and detective, and inspiration for Mary Bowen Hall's mysteries.

MICHAEL COLLINS is the creator of New York City/Santa Barbara detective Dan Fortune.

The Fortune novels, published in 13 countries, are the longest-running continuous detective series. *The Irishman's Horse*, is the 16th; the 17th, *Cassandra in Red*, is scheduled for March 1992.

PETER DAVIDSON is currently playing Margery Allingham's detective Campion in *Mystery*, British series now showing on American public TV. In other series he has played Dr. Who and, on *All Creatures Great and Small*, the role of Tristan.

THOMAS D. DAVIS's debut novel, *Suffer Little Children*, is "a morality play about faith and despair, wrapped around the story of a kidnapping . . . simple stark, and dramatically effective" (Kirkus). He was an insurance claims investigator before getting his Ph.D in philosophy.

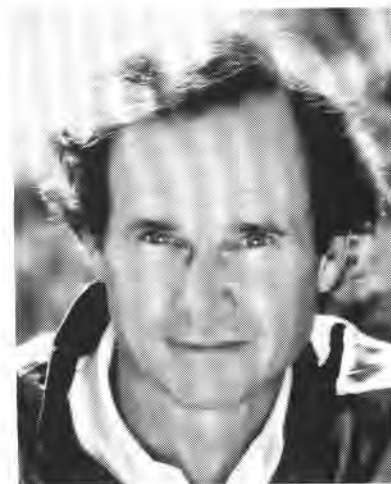
JANET DAWSON's first novel, *Kindred Crimes*, was nominated for a Anthony award. Her second novel, *Till the Old Men Die*, is due out soon from Fawcett. Both feature P.I. Jeri Howard and Bay Area hot-spots from Daly City to



K. K. Beck



Michael Collins



Thomas D. Davis

Oakland.

SUSAN DUNLAP writes novels about P.I. Kiernan O'Shaughnessy, homicide detective Jill Smith, and meter reader Vejay Haskell. Her latest novel is *Rogue Wave*, featuring O'Shaughnessy. The most recent Smith story is *Diamond in the Buff*, and another, the seventh, *Death in Taxes*, is due in March.

STEVE ENGLEHART was the lead author for both Marvel and DC comics in the 1970s and 1980s. More recently he's written the thriller *The Point Man*, a children's book, and the first of a mystery series.

DAVID EVERSON is the author of five P.I. novels featuring Robert Miles, who specializes in political intrigue. The latest is *Suicide Squeeze*, which is set in a baseball fantasy camp. In number six, *False Profits*, due out in July, Miles must safeguard Lincoln's reputation.

ROBERT FITZER joined the SFPD in 1970 where he spent nine years in patrol work before transferring to the police crime lab where he has served since. An expert in many fields, he has investigated over 7000 crime scenes. In 1984 he organized the S.F. Police Museum committee and created the museum, currently in the Civic Auditorium.

JUDITH GARWOOD, aka Cath-

erine Dain, is the author of *Make Friends with Murder*, which takes place in Santa Clarissa, a town in California where wines are made. "Freelance writer and feminist Morgan Reeves is the appealing narrator of this atmospheric, well-written mystery debut" (Publishers Weekly).

NICOLAE GERSTNER has two books in production as movies of the week: *Dark Veil* and *Finders Keepers*. Capitalizing on her background as a writer, editor, and writing teacher, she enjoys conducting workshops for both veteran and novice writers, stressing plotting and characterization in her fiction classes.

JAQUELINE GIRDNER is the creator of Kate Jasper, Marin County's finest organically grown amateur sleuth and heroine of *Adjusted to Death*, *The Last Resort*, and the forthcoming *Murder Most Mellow*. Jaqueline is a vegetarian, does tai chi, and once owned a greeting card company called Jest Cards.

LINDA GRANT is the penname of Linda Williams, whose first book, the hi-tech Silicon Valley action shodunit, *Random Access Murder* (1988), was nominated for an Anthony Award. Her second, *Blind Trust* (1990) was published in both hardcover and paperback.

MARY BOWEN HALL came late to mysteries after extensive writ-

ing experience in public relations, journalism, nonfiction, and children's books. Then she created Emma Chizzit, a ruggedly independent older woman who has appeared so far in *Emma Chizzit and the Queen Anne Killer*, *Emma Chizzit and the Sacramento Stalker*, and the newest, *Emma Chizzit and the Napa Nemesis*.

ORIETTA HARDY-SAYLES is the editor and publisher of *The Magnifying Glass*, a monthly newsletter devoted to informing mystery aficionados of news, upcoming events, and activities. Her "day jobs" have included the United States Air Force and law enforcement. She now spends most of her time writing and producing industrial and marketing videos for a computer company.

JEREMIAH HEALY is a professor at the New England School of Law in Boston and the creator of the mystery series featuring John Francis Cuddy, Boston private investigator. A five-time Shamus nominee, his most recent book, *Right to Die*, shows Cuddy investigating death threats against a law professor who crusades for the right to die.

DON HERRON has led the Dashiell Hammett Tour up and down San Francisco's mean streets for 16 years.

SUSAN HOLTZER was a nonfic-



Janet Dawson



Susan Dunlap



Steve Englehart



David Everson



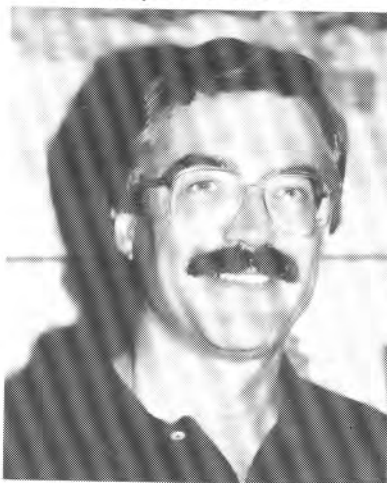
Jaqueline Girdner



Mary Bowen Hall



Orietta Hardy-Sayles



Jeremiah Healy



Wendy Hornsby



Nancy Jacobs



Jerry Kennealy



Ronnie Klaskin

tion writer before turning to mysteries. She has spent most of her life in Ann Arbor, Michigan, the setting of her current novel-in-manuscript.

JANE HORNING is the author of *The Mystery Lover's Book of Quotations*.

WENDY HORNSBY's detecting couple, Lt. Roger Tejada and Kate Byrd, have delighted readers through two adventures, *No Harm* and its sequel, *Half a Mind*. A new series featuring filmmaker Maggie MacGowen arrives during the spring of 1992 with *Telling Lies*.

NANCY JACOBS, once a private investigator, wrote *The Turquoise Tattoo*, the first in the Devon MacDonald series. In it, Minnesota P.I. MacDonald is hired to find a missing child--who may not even exist. The second in the series, *A Slash of Scarlet*, is due out in June. A Carmel resident, Nancy has published nonfiction books and novels.

JERRY KENNEALY, a native San Franciscan, has been a licensed P.I. for 20 years and is vice president of the Private Eye Writers of America. So he knows whereof he writes when he sends his creation, Nick Polo, down the mean steets. The sixth Polo book is *Green with Envy* (1991), and the 1992 entry in the series is *Special Delivery*.

KAREN KIJEWski created Kat Colorado in *Katwalk*, *Katapult*, and *Kat's Cradle*. Try saying that fast. She leads the Nor/Cal chapter of Mystery Writers of America.

RONNIE KLASKIN writes published stories and as yet unpublished novels. She has worked as a teacher, a speech therapist, and a stand-up comic. She is president of the Midlantic chapter of Sisters in Crime.

ROCHELLE MAJER KRICH's book *Where's Mommy Now?* tied for the Anthony for Best Paperback Original Novel of 1990. Upcoming novels include *Till Death Do Us Part* (Avon) and *Fair Game* (Mysterious Press). Rochelle teaches high school English in Los Angeles, where she lives with her husband and six children.

KEN KUHLEN won the St. Martin's Press Best First Private Eye Novel in 1990 for his novel *The Loud Adios*, which features 38-year-old Tom Hickey in 1942 San Diego. His first mainstream novel *Midheaven* (1980) was a runner-up for a PEN award for best first-published fiction book.

JOHN T. LESCROART has written two Sherlock Holmes continuations, *Son of Holmes* (1986) and *Rasputin's Revenge* (1987) and two modern mysteries, *Dead Irish*, which received a

Shamus award nomination, and *The Vig*, both featuring bartender sleuth Busmis Hardy.

JANET LAPIERRE has been fortunate enough to make a second career from two things she loves: mystery novels and northern California. *Grandmother's House* is her fourth book to be set in the fictitious small town of Port Silva, on the California North Coast.

MARGARET LUCKE is the author of *A Relative Stranger*, in which P.I. Jess Randolph tries to solve a San Francisco murder involving her own past. In writing *A Relative Stranger*, Margaret drew on her experiences in community theater and in growing up in a family with several artists.

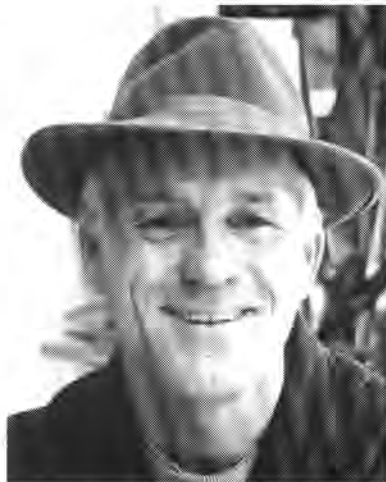
DICK LUPOFF has written more than 30 books, the latest being *The Classic Car Killer* (Offspring Press). He hosts a weekly talk show on radio station KPFA-FM.

LEE McALLISTER is the author of *Squaw Dance*, the first in a San Francisco-based series of suspense thrillers featuring Lindy Hansen, homicide inspector and Native American. Lee lives in Reno, Nevada, and is polishing her next novel in this series, *The Trickster*, to be followed by *Before Evil Comes*.

JAMES McCAHERY was honored at Bouchercon 22 when his



Rochelle Majer Krich



Janet LaPierre



Margaret Lucke



Lee McAllister



James McCahery



Lia Matera



Annette Meyers



Martin Meyers



Phyllis Zimbler Miller



Rayanne Moore



Meg O'Brien

book, *Grave Undertaking*, tied for the Anthony Award for Best Paperback Original. His creation is Lavina London, a widowed septuagenarian and former radio actress now residing in the Catskills. James teaches French at a high school in New York City.

PATRICIA MCFALL's first novel, a female-driven thriller set in Japan is due out in Spring 1992.

LIA MATERA is the author of seven mysteries featuring either tough litigator Laura di Palma or former radical Willa Jansson, called by *The New York Times* the wittiest of women sleuths at large. Lia received a law degree in 1981 and worked as a Teaching Fellow at Stanford Law School. She's now a full-time writer living in Santa Cruz with her son.

ANNETTE MEYERS is the author of three mysteries featuring Smith and Wetzon, two female amateur sleuths who run their own head-hunting business. As a senior vice-president in a recruiting firm, Annette has experience in this world of greed and fraud. *The Deadliest Option* is her latest book; another, *Blood on the Street* is due in June.

MARTIN MEYERS and his wife, Annette Meyers, have authored *The Dutchman*, the first novel in a projected historical mystery trilogy. The book will be published in

1992 by Bantam under the pen-name, "Maan Meyers." Martin has also written five detective novels featuring P.I. Patrick Hardy.

PHYLLIS ZIMBLER MILLER is the president of the Los Angeles Chapter of Sisters in Crime and the film liaison representative on the national board of Sisters in Crime. Her nonfiction book, *The Jewish Holiday Companion*, written with Rabbi Karen Fox, is due out from Perigree in August 1992.

RAYANNE MOORE, together with Serita Stevens, wrote *Red Sea, Dead Sea*. A suspenseful first mystery with a comic twist, it introduces 65-year-old Fanny Zindel, who goes to Israel to uncover the truth behind her brother's mysterious death. They plan a second and third entry in the series.

MARCIA MULLER published *Edwin of the Iron Shoes* in 1977 and breathed new life into the female P.I. genre. Since then she's written more than a dozen novels, collaborated on three novels and 10 anthologies with Bill Pronzini, and served as a critic and reviewer. Marcia and Bill were Left Coast Crime's first guests of honor.

MEG O'BRIEN is the author of a mainstream thriller, *The Keeper*, (due in October) and the creator of journalist-detective Jessica

(Jesse) James. Jesse's third case is *Hare Today, Gone Tomorrow*; the fourth will be *Eagles Die Too*. Meg cried when John D. MacDonald died.

MAXINE O'CALLAGHAN created Orange County P.I. Delilah West, heroine of four books, the latest of which is *Set-Up*. "Delilah makes an agreeable sleuth: a tough, determined woman whose life seems destined to go from bad to worse." (Booklist)

A.C. PENISTON is author of *Search for Sybil*. As Anna Carter, she recently finished *Mishap or Murder?*, the first of the Dotty Carson mystery series. She will be writing the biography of Carl "Bobo" Olson, World Middleweight Champion boxer from 1953-5. An executive sales manager for a jewelry company, Anna lives in Sacramento but loves to travel.

AUDREY PETERSON spent a lot of time in England doing research when she was a professor of English literature. So it was easy to set her first mystery novel, *The Nocturne Murder*, in London. Sleuths are Americans Jane Winfield and Prof. Andrew Quentin. Five more Jane-and-Andrew capers followed the first, the latest being *Lament for Christabel*.

ELIZABETH PINCUS is an ex-P.I. who lives and works in San Francisco. Her short fiction and



Audrey Peterson



Elizabeth Pincus



P. I. Plante

articles have appeared in a number of publications, including *Gay Community News*, the *Boston Phoenix*, and the *Crossing Press Woman Sleuth Anthology* series. Her first novel, *The Two-Bit Tango*, will be published in May by Spinsters Book Company.

P.L. PLANTE. Pele lives on the north coast of California where she writes in the morning and works as an alcohol treatment professional the rest of the day. *Getting Away with Murder*, her first book, features CC Scott, semi-retired therapist, and her partner, teacher Barbara Betten-court, as they investigate a scam on the elderly. Pele's second book, *Dirty Money*, is scheduled for Spring 1992 publication.

BILL PRONZINI has won two Shamus awards, the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Private Eye Writers of America, and five Edgar nominations. A published author for more than 20 years, he has written and edited numerous anthologies and mystery novels, the latest being *Quarry*. He was co-guest-of-honor at the first Left Coast Crime in 1991.

ROBERT RANDISI has authored over 200 books and is the founder of the Private Eye Writers of America.

JIM RAWLS teaches at Diablo Valley College and appears twice-

weekly as Dr. History on KNBR 68 radio in San Francisco. His most recent book is *Dr. History's Whizz-Bang: Favorite Stories of California's Past*.

NANCY ROBERTS creates mystery parties for children and reviews children's mysteries for several publications.

REBECCA ROTHENBERG's first book, *The Bulrush Murders* merited this review from Kirkus: "a convincing look at racism in southern California, agricultural hardships, and the difficulties that arise when opposites fall in love. A judicious balance of science and emotion." Unlike her heroine Claire Sharples, Rebecca loves country music.

JANET RUDOLPH is the director of Mystery Readers International and Murder on the Menu.

STEVE SCHERMERHORN is one-half of the Jake Tanner pseudonym (Laura Museo is the other) who created B.F. Hopper, who operates just this side of the law. *Old Black Magic* chronicles Hopper's latest adventure. Steve works for the foreign service and is a jazz musician in his spare time.

MICHAEL SEIDMAN is a mystery editor at Walker.

SHEILA SIMONSON, author of *Larkspur* and *Skylark*, was born in Montana, raised in Oregon, and educated at the University of

Washington. She teaches English and history at Clark College in Vancouver, Washington, where she lives with her husband and three annoying cats. Her hobbies include cookery and travelling. She has also published four Regency romances.

JANET L. SMITH would like to consider herself a Seattle native, but she actually is a fourth-generation Californian. A former trial attorney and judge, Janet now practices law part time. Her primary hobby is ocean kayaking, a sport described in her first mystery, *Sea of Troubles*. Its sequel, *Practice to Deceive*, is due out in June.

JULIE SMITH's *New Orleans Mourning* won the 1991 Edgar for best novel, the first American woman to receive that honor since 1956. Her newest, *The Axeman's Jazz*, again features Officer Skip Langdon. Smith also writes about lawyer Rebecca Schwartz and Paul McDonald, like Smith an ex-*Chronicle* reporter. A new Schwartz novel, *Dead in the Water*, was published in December.

HARRIET STAY, along with her husband Larry, publishes the fanzine *Mystery News* in Port Townsend, Washington.

SERITA STEVENS collaborated with Rayanne Moore to create in *Red Sea, Dead Sea*, a female,



Jim Rawls



Rebecca Rothenberg



Sheila Simonson

Jewish, elderly version of James Bond: Fanny Zindel, complete with arthritis and everything-bag. The novel is Serita's 16th. Her *Deadly Doses: A Writer's Guide to Poisons*, was nominated for an Anthony award.

STEVE STILWELL is the owner of Murder for Pleasure Mystery Books in Minneapolis and the co-publisher of the first U.S. edition of Robert Adey's *Locked Room Murders*. As the scorekeeper in Left Coast Crime's trivia contest, he puts Vanna White to shame.

GAYLE STONE has written seven espionage novels under such pseudonyms as Nick Carter. Her most recent novels are the young-adult mysteries *Rough Stuff*, *Reel Trouble* and *Fatal Error*. A former journalist and magazine editor, she lives in Santa Barbara with her husband, Michael Collins.

BRUCE TAYLOR owns The San Francisco Mystery Bookstore, which recently won the "Mystery Bookstore With The Cutest Name" Award. As a partner in Crossover Press, he's co-publisher of Robert Adey's *Locked Room Murders*.

MARILYN WALLACE had a banner year in 1991 with the publication of *Sisters in Crime 4* and *A Single Stone*. 1992 will be even better with *Deadly Allies*, an anthology co-edited with Robert

Randisi, *Sisters in Crime 5*, and the novel, *So Shall Ye Reap*. Marilyn now serves on the National Board of Mystery Writers of America.

RICHARD WOLINSKY, along with Richard Lupoff, discusses books and interviews authors on radio station KPFA.

GLORIA WHITE's first novel *Murder on the Run* received rave reviews from Publishers Weekly: "The satisfying momentum never flags . . . Readers will want more of P.I. Ronnie Ventana, an appealing protagonist who engages in intelligent, stylish sleuthing."

DONALD A. YATES was a friend of Cornell Woolrich and the Ellery Queens. He's a collector, scholar, reader, active fan, author of *Latin Blood*, and Baker Street Irregulars member.



Janet Smith



Julie Smith



Dick Lupoff/Richard Wolinsky



Serita Stevens



Gayle Stone



Gloria White

tor, because in addition to being a fine editor, "She's the most loyal person I've ever met." Jim credits her with making him an independent writer, and in the past has put her job on the line for his work. "She's always the writer's advocate."

Jim credits Charles Willeford with encouraging him to write crime novels. Jim cannibalized two unpublished novels to write *The Neon Rain* and, with its publication in 1987, introduced his "everyman," Dave Robicheaux. He has since gathered a groundswell following of fans, cheered on by early rave reviews signed only "CW."

Dave Robicheaux reveals himself to Jim, who believes him to be the best character that he has created. "Dave is a moral man living in an amoral environment . . . He possesses the value system that we all admire in the best people among us. He's kind, brave, stoic, and at the same time, he's humble."

In the Dave Robicheaux series, the crimes are tangled and the questions raised are never simple even if the issues seem black and white. The solutions never seem clean or permanent. The political themes are omnipresent. Dave often encounters government representatives who are indifferent or actively compromise ethics and morality for expediency, personal gain, or policy.

In *The Neon Rain*, the reader along with Dave hears a story about murdered Central American Indians, whose bodies are thrown from an American helicopter to terrorize other Indians. The missionary from that village is also murdered. Though the story is based on historical and biographical fact, Jim says that no one has been able to identify the information.

Alafair, introduced in *Heaven's Prisoner* as a young innocent escaping with her mother from Salvador, is named after Jim's grandmother and represents the suffering of innocent people in Central America caused by American weapons. Alafair survives and provides Dave a focus and a future after the death of his lover, Annie, and the destruction of his friendship with his ex-police partner, Cletus.

In 1989, he was able to take a year off to write full-time, and produced the Edgar-winning *Black Cherry Blues* and its sequel, *A Morning for Flamingos*. *Black Cherry Blues* takes place mostly in Montana, Jim Burke's home away from Louisiana. The story, about oil-lease fraud and the Mafia, is but a backdrop to the reconciliation between Dave and Clete and the final setting to rest of the restless memories of Annie and of Dave's dead father.

A Morning for Flamingos seemed, to me, to be the final chapter in the published life of Dave Robicheaux. A summing up; the return to order; a quiet settling down for some fishing.

But Dave knocked on Jim's door, and had him

take down at least two more stories. Jim recently finished *In the Electric Mist with Confederate Dead*, and *A Stained White Radiance* is to be released soon. *Radiance* is about a family built on the wreckage of child abuse. In this age of excess and explicit descriptions, one might be pleased that the story does not dwell so much on what happened but on the results as acted out by the now grown-up children.

Their fragile balance is destroyed by the arrival of a man, frightfully deformed by burns. No one will ask, and no one will say, but all assume that he is their father. As the itinerant man insinuates himself deeper into their lives and takes advantage of them, Dave Robicheaux investigates a series of murder attempts and threats that appear to originate in the past. *A Stained White Radiance* stays with you a long time.

James Lee Burke has attained a measure of success. He writes full-time now and seems obsessed to waste no time. Some of his books are being recorded for cassette publication. He has written his first screenplay based on *A Morning for Flamingos* and would like to write more. Four of his books have been optioned for film by Meadowbrook Productions with the expectation that Alec Baldwin will play Dave Robicheaux. Jim thinks that John Goodman would be good as Clete, since he has the perfect accent.

Jim laughs about sending to the producers a record of himself playing Cajun music on his guitar so that they would get the feel of his stories. They let him know that they were not quite ready to do the music.

It was time to fish. We left shortly, after two trout willingly sacrificed themselves on his fishing hook.

And yes, I did go back over the suspension bridge.

BOOKS BY JAMES LEE BURKE

- Half of Paradise* (Houghton Mifflin 1965)
- To the Bright and Shining Sun* (Scribners 1970)
- Lay Down My Sword and Shield* (Crowell 1971)
- Two for Texas* (Pocket Books 1983), as *Sabine Spring* (Watermark Press 1989)
- The Convict* (Louisiana State Univ Press 1985)
- The Lost Get-Back Boogie* (LSU Press 1986)
- The Neon Rain* (Holt 1987, Mysterious Press 1989)
- Heaven's Prisoners* (Holt 1988, Mysterious 1989)
- Black Cherry Blues* (Little, Brown 1989)
- A Morning for Flamingos* (Little, Brown 1990)
- A Stained White Radiance* (Hyperion 1992)
- In the Electric Mist with Confederate Dead* (Hyperion, forthcoming)

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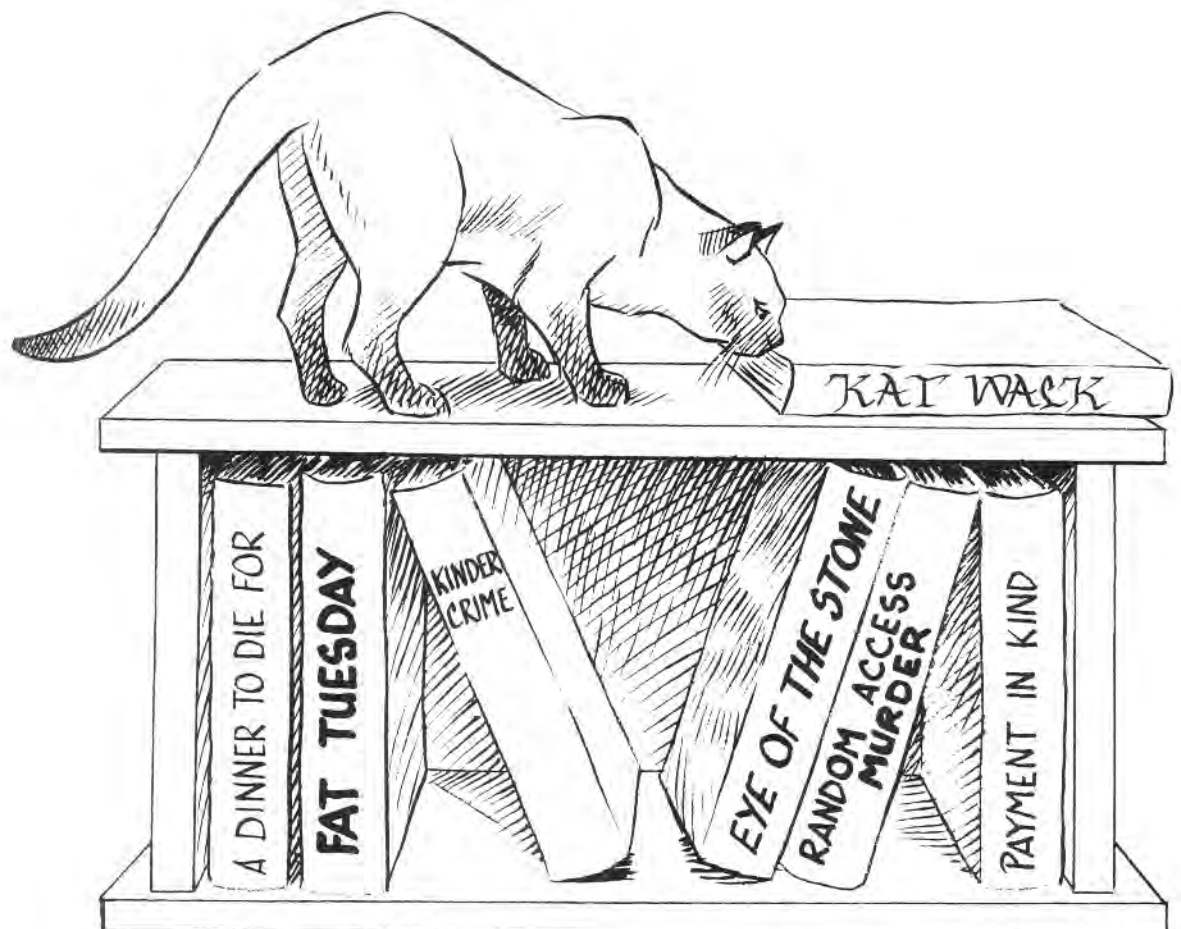
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WHO (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12)

George Montgomery played a youthful, mustachioed Marlowe in *The Brasher Doubloon*, a 1947 film version of Chandler's *The High Window*. A gritty, competently noir-ish effort, it failed to make the impact of the earlier films due to Montgomery's inappropriately boyish interpretation.

After *The Brasher Doubloon* there were no new Marlowe movies for over 20 years. A radio series was successful for a few seasons, first with Van Heflin as Marlowe, then later with Gerald Mohr. Dick Powell returned to the role in a early TV version of *The Long Goodbye* for the anthology series *Climax*, and Phil Carey, best remembered as Granny Goose in a series of commercials, followed up with a short-lived *Philip Marlowe* TV show. But, by Chandler's death in 1959, there were still three Marlowe books that had never made it to the big screen.

Chandler's 1949 novel, *The Little Sister*, finally made it into theaters in 1969. Retitled *Marlowe* it starred former *Maverick* and future *Rockford* James Garner. Appearing a little out of place in the Vietnam era, Garner is still able to capture the quirky combination of two-fisted toughness and wry, ironic humor that made the character so memorable. He wins a respectable bronze medal behind Bogart's silver and Powell's gold.

If Garner seemed a little uncomfortable in the late '60s, Elliot Gould seemed downright out-of-place in the early '70s. In director Robert Altman's 1973 version of *The Long Goodbye*, Gould is forced to play Marlowe-as-nebbish, an ineffectual loser who fails at everything he tries.

Robert Mitchum played Marlowe in 1975's *Farewell, My Lovely* a remake of the Powell film. Set carefully in period, it's a satisfying version of Chandler's novel, in some ways more faithful to its source than the original film. Mitchum is perhaps 10 or 15 years too old for the part, but one is struck by what an awesome Marlowe he'd have made in his prime. He returned in another remake, *The Big Sleep*, set, inexplicably, in contemporary London. Even Mitchum's performance wasn't enough to save it.

The most recent Marlowe, Powers Boothe, played the detective in a cable TV series. Produced for HBO, *Philip Marlowe - Private Eye* ran for 12 episodes over two seasons, each script adapted from a Chandler short story. One episode, "The Pencil," won an Edgar for Best Mystery Teleplay from a Series, continuing a tradition begun by the film *Murder, My Sweet*, and continued by Chandler himself with the novel *The Long Goodbye*.

If Hammett built the skeletal structure of the PI story and Chandler molded sinews and skin around that structure, the third member of the hard-boiled triumvirate, Ross Macdonald, may be said to have supplied the heart of the private eye. The Op and

Spade were distinguished by their commitment to professionalism, Marlowe by his chivalric, if slightly tarnished, nobility. Lew Archer's distinguishing characteristic was his compassion.

Paul Newman starred as Macdonald's sleuth in a film version of the first Archer novel, *The Moving Target*. To tie in with Newman's string of lucky "H" films (*The Hustler*, *Hud*, *Hombre*, etc.) the character's name was changed from Archer to Harper, which also became the title of the film. Director Jack Smight wasn't close to being the kind of filmmaker Huston, Dmytryk, or Hawks was, but he was blessed with a top-notch script by William Goldman and a cast that could read the phone book out loud and make it sound interesting. *Harper* was both a critical and a commercial hit, almost single-handedly revitalizing the detective genre in film. Nearly a decade later, Newman returned to the role of Harper in *The Drowning Pool*, a decent enough picture, but one that seemed awfully routine coming on the heels of *Chinatown* and *Farewell, My Lovely*.

In between the release of *Harper* and *The Drowning Pool*, Macdonald's character, with his original name restored, made a short-lived stab at TV success. Peter Graves portrayed Archer in a TV-movie version of *The Underground Man*, the pilot for a possible series. The series sold, but by the time it got on the air Graves had been replaced by Brian Keith. Not that it mattered much. *Archer* lasted a mere six ratings-poor weeks before NBC canceled it.

Neither Marlowe nor Archer have been blessed with any sort of long-term success on the tube. In fact, the most successful transition from books to box was made by a much lesser star in the PI firmament. Roy Huggins's Stu Bailey made his debut in a 1946 novel called *The Double Take*. This was followed by a handful of short stories published in various slick magazines like *Esquire* and *The Saturday Evening Post*. Though well-written, they failed to make much of an impact. A film version of *The Double Take*, called *Love Trouble*, starring Franchot Tone as the tough-but-polished Bailey, likewise missed hitting the public nerve.

When Huggins adapted the character for television in a series called *77 Sunset Strip* he struck paydirt. Efrem Zimbalist, Jr., as Bailey, was joined by partners Roger Smith and Edd Byrnes for a satisfyingly long run, during which the series made the cover of *Time*, spawned a hit record ("Kookie, Kookie, Lend Me Your Comb"), and spun off three more series (*Hawaiian Eye*, *Bourbon Street Beat*, and *Surfside Six*). Huggins, meanwhile, had found, in television, his true medium as a PI writer, going on to create such well-regarded shows as *The Outsider* with Darren McGavin, *City of Angels* with Wayne Rogers, and, alongside collaborator Stephen J. Cannell, *The Rockford Files* with former Marlowe

James Garner.

One frequent *Sunset Strip* script writer was Robert Leslie Bellem, the creator of popular Hollywood operative Dan Turner. Appearing in hundreds of stories during the pulp era, Turner made it on-screen twice, first in a 1947 "B" entitled *Blackmail* starring William Marshall, then in a 1991 TV-movie with Marc Singer, syndicated as *Dan Turner - Hollywood Detective* and retitled *The Raven Red Kiss-Off* for video.

Not a private eye, but certainly growing out of the *Black Mask* tradition was Erle Stanley Gardner's hard-charging trial attorney Perry Mason. Mason jumped to the big screen in a series of Warner Brothers programmers starring, in turn, Warren Williams, Ricardo Cortez, and Donald Woods. In some respects, these films did a good job of capturing the energetic pace of the early Mason novels, but wildly diverged on many of the familiar details. Stressing humor in an effort to duplicate the success of MGM's "Thin Man" series, competent, reliable PI Paul Drake was transformed into a muscle-bound comic relief character named "Spudsy" Drake; and in the film version of *The Case of the Velvet Claws* Mason and secretary Della Street get married!

Disappointed though he was in the film series, Gardner reportedly liked the *Perry Mason* radio series even less. A five-days-a-week 15-minute serial, rather than the weekly half-hour show he had hoped for, it emphasized soap opera aspects over crime-solving. Still the series was very popular and eventually led, indirectly, to TV's mystery soap *The Edge of Night*.

When Mason himself moved to television, Gardner was determined that it be done his way, so he formed his own company, Paisano Productions, personally hired the line producer, Gail Patrick Jackson, and personally chose the star, Raymond Burr. Burr was originally called to audition for the part of DA Hamilton Burger, but promised to lose weight if he could try out for Mason as well. Reportedly, Gardner took one look at Burr's audition film, pointed at the screen, and said, "That's Perry Mason!" Millions of viewers agreed with him.

So complete was audience identification with Burr, that when a revival series starring Monte Markham as Mason debuted in 1973 it was a ratings flop. *The New Perry Mason* lasted less than half a season and is remembered by but a tiny few.

More recently, producer Fred Silverman has tried a second revival series. Believing that the key to a successful *Perry Mason* show is having Raymond Burr in the title role, he hired the veteran star to return in a new series of two-hour episodes. Unwilling, after nine years of *Mason* and eight years of *Ironside*, to go back to the grind of a weekly series, Burr only stars in four or five *Mason* episodes a

season, which are then scheduled whenever NBC's ratings need some extra vitamins.

Gardner's other two-fisted lawyer-sleuth, DA Doug Selby of Madison County, California, has not had nearly the TV success of Mason. He was featured on one made-for-television movie, *They Call It Murder*, which was not successful enough to warrant a series. Future Ellery Queen Jim Hutton played the smalltown prosecutor.

Tough, hard-bitten operatives are not the only kind of detective to be found in the Left Coast. The Western states also have their share of more genteel crime-solvers. One such cerebral sleuth was Asian-American James Lee Wong. A San Francisco resident created by Hugh Wiley for a series of short stories in *Collier's*, Mr. Wong was a gifted amateur investigator with some semi-official connection to the U.S. State Department. Monogram Pictures, the most poverty-stricken of the "Poverty Row" studios, released six Mr. Wong films in the late '30s and early '40s. Boris Karloff, taking a break from his villainous roles, played the character in five films, beginning with 1938's *Mr. Wong, Detective*. The last Wong film, 1941's *Phantom of Chinatown* starred Chinese-American actor Keye Luke as a younger, more energetic, less formal "Jimmy" Wong.

Another of the Left Coast's ethnic policemen is John Ball's Southern California homicide expert Virgil Tibbs. Though firmly in the procedural tradition, Tibbs seems to spend an inordinate amount of time outside of his jurisdiction. In Ball's books he has visited the Deep South once and the Far East twice.

In his first film appearance, the Oscar-winning *In the Heat of the Night*, Tibbs, as portrayed by Sidney Poitier, was identified as being from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, rather than Pasadena, California, as in the book. In two sequels, *They Call Me Mr. Tibbs* and *The Organization*, both filmed from original scripts not based on any of Ball's books, Tibbs inexplicably became a lieutenant in the San Francisco Police, complete with a wife and two kids.

Ball once told me that, while he was pleased with Poitier's characterization, the actor didn't quite fit with Ball's image of his character. At the time, Howard Rollins had just portrayed a very Tibbs-like Army cop in the military crime drama, *A Soldier's Story*. Ball mentioned that after seeing Rollins's performance, he thought he'd be "perfect" as Tibbs.

A few years later, he got to see how Rollins would handle the part when the Tibbs character was adapted for television. A very popular series, *In the Heat of the Night* is set up as a direct sequel to the movie (and not the book) with which it shares a title. Consequently, it has none of the Left Coast orientation of its original source material. The televised Tibbs, like his film counterpart, is a Philadelphia

detective who resigns from his big-city job to accept a position as chief investigator for the small-town police force of Sparta, Mississippi, the site of his first recorded case.

American Indians are another ethnic group to which a fairly large proportion of the Left Coast's fictional law enforcers belong. As of this writing, there have been no film or television adaptations of Tony Hillerman's best-selling Navajo Tribal Police novels, although *La Bamba* star Lou Diamond Phillips has been mentioned as a possible Jim Chee.

However, the "other" Navajo cop series, Brian Garfield's novels about Arizona State Trooper Sam Watchman, have made it to the screen. The 1977 TV-movie *Relentless* starred Will Sampson, familiar to audiences from *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, as the culturally conflicted Watchman tracking a gang of murderous bank robbers through the mountainous wilderness of the Southwest. This was the very first Hollywood-produced film, whether theatrical or TV, in which an Indian lead role was played by an Indian actor.

Much more of a white-bread character was FBI Agent John "Rip" Ripley, the hero of five novels by Gordon Gordon, a former FBI man himself, and his wife Mildred. Though based in Chicago in the first two books, later entries found Rip stationed in the Southwest and Southern California. He first made it to the big screen in 1954's *Down Three Dark Streets* starring Broderick Crawford. In 1962 Glenn Ford, a far more appropriate choice than Crawford, assumed the role in the San Francisco-set *Experiment in Terror*. Ford played Ripley as quietly competent, gently reassuring, but tough as nails when he had to be, in sharp contrast to the hard-charging bull of a character Crawford portrayed.

There are dozens of Left Coast sleuths that have made it onto either the big or small screen whom I haven't mentioned. Private eyes such as William Campbell Gault's Brock "the Rock" Callahan, Wade Miller's Max Thursday, L.A. Morse's Jake Tanner, and Roger L. Simon's Moses Wine, for example, have all made the trip to celluloid at least once. Nan Hamilton's Japanese-American Police Lieutenant Sam Ohara, Leonard Holton's Father David Bredder, and Rex Burns's Gabe Wager were all adapted for movies or TV, but they were all but unrecognizable by the time the producers got done with them. Then there are detectives from other parts of the country who, for inexplicable reasons, were, through the magic of movies, *transformed* into Left Coast sleuths. Manhattan PIs Mike Hammer and Matt Scudder, New York City Policewoman Christie Opara, Midwestern cop Dick Tracy, and Miami detective Mike Shayne, all ended up as Californians once their adventures were translated into film. Even Sherlock Holmes wound up in contempo-

rary California in at least one fanciful film.

I've tried to hit the highlights, but any article trying to cover such a broad topic is bound to be woefully incomplete. And, in the final analysis, it doesn't really matter who some Hollywood producer casts in the role of the Left Coast Detective. What matters is who *you* see in your mind's eye when you pick up a western-set mystery and are transported to a Left Coast seen nowhere else but in your imagination.

Jim Doherty writes for the Mystery Readers International Journal and for whatever other publications need knowledgeable and authoritative comments. Born and raised in the Bay Area, he recently moved to the Midwest where he lives in a building that, according to legend, was once a hideout for the notorious John Dillinger.



WHERE (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16)

colors, and sexes, hundred of fictional California cops have kept crime at bay ever since Joe Friday first took us "step-by-step on the side of the law through an actual case transcribed from official police files," and whether or not *Dragnet* really was the first to tell us "the authentic story of your police force in action," there is no doubt that Jack Webb set the standard that any cop writer who followed, no matter what the medium, would have to live up to. Pioneering procedural writers like Evan "Ed McBain" Hunter and John "J.J. Marric" Creasey have credited *Dragnet's* influence on their own work. Anthony Boucher specifically cited the series when he first coined the term "police procedural" in the mid-50s. California, not only through *Dragnet*, but through dozens of writers like John Ball, Collin Wilcox, Elizabeth Linnington, Joseph Wambaugh, Dallas Barnes, and Paul Bishop, has had a major influence of the development of this sub-genre. Clearly, the book I selected as the Golden State's representative had to be special.

I had a very difficult time deciding, finally narrowing it down to an excellent, but unreservedly obscure novel by Whit Masterson. "Whit Masterson" was originally one of several pseudonyms used by Robert Wade and William Miller. Under this name the produced such first-rate California police novels as *All Through the Night*, *Badge of Evil*, which Orson Welles filmed as *Touch of Evil*, and *A Hammer in His Hand*, perhaps the first procedural to feature a policewoman as the protagonist. After Miller's premature death in 1961, Wade carried on by himself as Masterson. *Play Like You're Dead* is a particularly fine example of Wade's solo work.

Obviously set in Wade's native San Diego (though this is never spelled out), it is, to some degree, a remake of the first Masterson cop novel, *All Through the Night*. Like its predecessor, *Play Like You're Dead* takes place during a few short, intense hours, and deals with police efforts to rescue a kidnapped child. But, where the victim in *Night* was a teen-aged girl in the hands of a sex criminal, the victim in *Dead* is a seven-year-old boy in the hands of his non-custodial parent.

Detective Sergeant Constantine Delos, temporarily in command of Homicide and on track to become the youngest lieutenant in the Department's history, reacts with irritation rather than concern when young divorcee Trenna Burdick walks into his squad room to complain about her missing son and ex-husband. As far as Delos is concerned, Burdick's only crime is "that he wants to spend a day with his kid . . . what's really grinding her is . . . (that) he had the gall to do it without asking her permission." But subsequent events, including a murder, prove Mrs. Burdick's fears well-justified, and, some 200 breathlessly paced

pages later, they culminated in a suspenseful hostage situation which, in those pre-SWAT days, Delos must handle personally.

Solidly professional in every respect, *Play Like You're Dead* is a first-rate example of the California police novel.

NEVADA. *Shakedown* by Gerald Petievitch (Simon & Schuster, 1988). When Eliot Ness went after Chicago's top criminal some 60 years ago, he had no trouble identifying that individual. The whole country knew that Al Capone controlled every dirty racket in the Windy City. The trick was getting enough evidence to convict him of something. Anything. Which is why a multiple murderer ultimately went to jail for not paying his taxes.

If you're a cop working organized crime cases, what was true then, is true now. Figuring out whodunit is no problem. Proving it in court is. That's the legalistic quagmire FBI Agent John Novak has been stuck in during his pursuit of Las Vegas's top mobster, Tony Parisi. And when a car bomb kills Novak's most reliable informant, it becomes clear to him that one of his colleagues in the Organized Crime Strike Force is a Judas on Parisi's payroll. Now he has to find another way to get at Parisi, while identifying, and neutralizing, the traitor in his midst.

Petievitch, a former Treasury Agent who, like Novak, spent several years as a Strike Force investigator, has a gritty, diamond-hard, yet understated style that suits this excellent novel to a T. He is also the author of a four-novel series featuring LA-based Secret Service Agent Charles Car, and *Earth Angels*, a no-holds-barred look at juvenile gang violence and the cops who must try to contain it. His most recent book, *Paramour*, is an effective combination police procedural and international intrigue novel.

OREGON. *Death and the Good Life* by Richard Hugo (St. Martin's Press, 1982). The only mystery novel by the late Richard Hugo features Deputy Sheriff Al "Mush Heart" Barnes as its protagonist. Once a big city cop, Barnes finds the rigors of metropolitan police work to difficult to bear and transfers to a rural jurisdiction in Montana. When he arrests a serial murderer early in the novel, he discovers that one of the killer's alleged crimes was actually committed by a copy-cat, seeking to hide a "leaf" in the "forest" created by the ax-wielding maniac Barnes now has in custody. Following up on that one open case takes him into suburban Portland, where the bulk of the novel is set.

Despite Hugo's grateful acknowledgment, at the beginning of the book, of the assistance provided by a police technical advisor, it's clear that his knowledge of law enforcement is sketchy at best. In fact, in the Oregon sequences, Barnes, who also narrates,

seems less like a cop than a standard-issue private eye, and in altogether too many places, he makes procedural errors no minimally experienced policeman would ever make, from confiding in suspects to not giving, and announcing his intention not to give, a Miranda warning.

Despite these lapses, *Death and the Good Life* is a worthwhile read, solidly written, and fast-moving. Considered during his lifetime to be one of America's finest contemporary poets, Hugo proved himself equally adept at prose.

WASHINGTON. *Possession* by Ann Rule (W.W. Norton & Company, 1983). Ann Rule spent several years serving, with distinction, as a Seattle police officer before becoming one of the country's premier crime journalists. Her articles have appeared in publications as diverse as *Ladies Home Journal*, *USA Today*, and the dean of fact-crime magazines, *True Detective*. Her nonfiction books include *The Stranger Beside Me* and *If You Really Loved Me*. A civilian consultant to the FBI's Violent Criminal Apprehension Program (VICAP), she knows police work, she knows writing, and she knows sociopathic personalities.

All that expertise is put to good use in her first, and to date only, novel, *Possession*. by working new wrinkles into such familiar, even moribund, copy story themes as the wilderness pursuit, the hunt for the serial killer, and the cop-hero obsessed with avenging his murdered partner, Ms. Rule, with the assurance of a veteran novelist, makes them seem fresh and vibrant.

Duane Demich is fixated on locating and capturing the Perfect Woman. So far he's considered six candidates, leaving them all in unmarked graves across the country when they failed to measure up. No he's certain he's finally found Miss Right in Natchitat County, Washington. But there is an impediment to his winning the desirable Joanne Lindstrom. She's married, and her husband is a local sheriff's deputy. When the young couple go on a camping vacation in nearby Chelan County, however, he sees a golden opportunity to eliminate Danny Lindstrom and take his widow captive.

Sam Clinton, Danny's partner, knows something is wrong when the Lindstroms don't return as scheduled, and when he finds Danny's mutilated body at the campsite he knows he's got no business investigating. Aside from the fact that he's too personally involved, the body's not in his jurisdiction. But the local cop in charge is an incompetent who writes off Danny's death as an animal attack, and decides Joanne must have met the same fate, so Clinton has no choice. Besides, as another crime-solving Sam once put it, "when a man's partner is killed, he's supposed to do something about it."

Doing something about it won't be easy. Though he's now a rural deputy, Sam was once a hot ticket on Seattle's homicide squad, and he's still basically a city boy. A city boy on the trail of a quarry who's an expert at fieldcraft.

Most writers, given these elements, would wind things up once the dragon was slain and the fair maiden rescued. For Ann Rule, the culmination of the manhunt is only the beginning of the story, and her sensitive presentation of the aftermath of Clinton's investigation is what makes *Possession* really special.

Different kinds of cops. Different kinds of criminals. No sub-genre of detective fiction allows for as much variety as the police procedural, and no region provides a broader canvas for cop writers to develop their individual styles than the American West. From the gritty, urban gangland of Gerald Petievitch to the wide open spaces of Tony Hillerman, from the classic-style puzzler of Sue Henry to the fast-paced suspense thriller of Whit Masterson, the West has copy novels to suit every taste.

Due to space limitations, Mr. Doherty's article has been edited for presentation here. His qualifications include "a lifetime of reading and watching police procedurals and actual practice of law enforcement."

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ANSWERS TO VALENTINE QUIZ (page 27):

- 1/p/42 Joanna Stark / Adam Hawthorne / Marcia Muller
2/m/36 Catherine Saylor / Peter Harman / Linda Grant
3/e/41 Howard Rickover / Sarah Nelson / Susan Wolfe
4/k/39 Kate Murphy / Jack Bassetti / Sister Carol Ann O'Marie
5/g/31 Gideon Oliver / Julie Tandler / Aaron Elkins
6/i/40 Alex Delaware / Robin / Jonathan Kellerman
7/a/43 Jesse Falkenstein / Nell / Lesley Egan
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9/b/35 Meg Halloran / Vince Gutierrez / Janet LaPierre
10/c/37 Philip Marlowe / Linda Loring / Chandler-Parker
11/h/34 Nameless / Kerry / Bill Pronzini
12/n/47 Moroni Traveller / Claire Bennion / Robert Irvine
13/j/32 Kinsey Milhone / Jonah Robb / Sue Grafton
14/l/38 Laura diPalma / Hal / Lia Matera
15/q/46 Jesse James / Marcus Andrelli / Meg O'Brien
16/a/44 Calico Jack Walker / Tina Tamiko / Paul Bishop
17/t/45 Luis Mendoza / Alison Weir / Dell Shannon
18/s/50 Nick Polo / Jane Tobin / Jerry Kennealy
19/t/48 Amanda Pepper / C.K. MacKenzie / Gillian Roberts
20/r/49 Kate Byrd / Roger Tejada / Wendy Hornsby

BABY-FACED: THE SOLUTIONS:

Here are the identities of the youngsters pictured on page 24:

1. K. K. Beck 2. Earl Emerson 3. Ronnie Klaskin
4. Gary Alexander 5. Margaret Lucke 6. Ken Kuhlken
7. Jaqueline Girdner 8. Janet L. Smith 9. Bill Pronzini



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WE THANK YOU . . .

Left Coast Crime would like to acknowledge the generous assistance of our volunteer staff. We thank our Guests of Honor and attending panelists for their generous contributions of time and expertise. And we hope you enjoy yourself most mysteriously at this, the second of what is planned to be many annual conventions here on the Left Coast.

Instigators And Agitators

THE BUCK STOPS HERE:

Donna Rankin

PROGRAM COMMITTEE:

Orietta Hardy-Sayles
Bill Gottfried
Toby Gottfried
Leila Dobscha



RICHARD BECKER is this issue's featured cover and interiors artist and was also the featured graphic artist for the 1991 LCC program book. He has been working professionally for 17 years in the Bay Area, both as a commercial artist and as an instructor. Early on, he was awarded a scholarship and studied at the San Francisco Academy of Art. He is an admirer of Raymond Chandler and pulp era mystery fiction.

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DONNA RANKIN. The driving force behind Left Coast Crime is a woman of uncounted interests and seeming unlimited energy. Starting with her own collection of mysteries (and other books) she has become an important bookseller, the guiding light of *Tall Stories*, a San Francisco booksellers' collective. She is proprietor of Offspring Press, an independent publisher whose second book is Richard A. Lupoff's *The Classic Car Killer*. Donna's interest in mystery fiction began with *The Boy's Book of Sherlock Holmes*. After reading every "boy's book" at the library, she worked through the Nancy Drews, then every book with *mystery* in the title. Still an avid reader, Donna devours everything by Tony Hillerman and Faye Kellerman. She likes all: hardboiled, cozy, procedural, and classic detection, but insists on strong characterization and a satisfying solution.

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