



## CALLING ALL ...

⇒ **ACTIVE MEMBERS** who wish to moderate a panel at the Mid-Manhattan Library. Contact President Jane Cleland at [jane@janecland.com](mailto:jane@janecland.com). Details available in this issue's President's Letter.

⇒ **ANY MEMBER** who wishes to take up the position of Member Coordinator contact VP Jillian Abbott at [jillian\\_abbott@yahoo.com](mailto:jillian_abbott@yahoo.com). Details of the position available in President's Letter.

⇒ **MEMBERS** who wish to participate in the Speakers Bureau for Libraries. Contact Sheila York at [sheila@sheilayork.com](mailto:sheila@sheilayork.com).

⇒ **NON-NYC AREA MEMBERS** The Board is very interested in

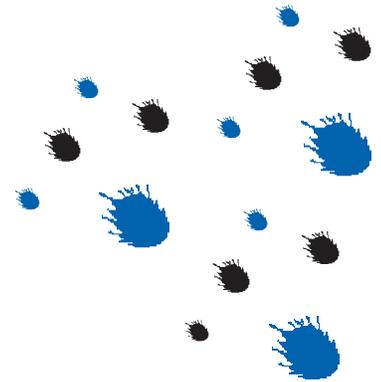
participating in meetings and events around the membership area. Anyone with an idea for an event please contact our President Jane K. Cleland at [jane@janecland.com](mailto:jane@janecland.com).

⇒ **MEMBERS** wishing to set up library activities in their own community. A checklist is available from MWA/NY to help you organize the event.

⇒ **CONTRIBUTORS** Anyone interested in contributing to *The Noose* should pitch ideas to the editor at [mhannanmandel@yahoo.com](mailto:mhannanmandel@yahoo.com), putting "Ideas for Noose" in the subject line.

⇒ **MEMBERS** with legal questions to do with their writing. Send your questions to [mhannanmandel@yahoo.com](mailto:mhannanmandel@yahoo.com), putting "Ask the Lawyer" in the subject line.

*Writers in need of a place to work. The Mercantile Library, 17 East 47th Street has a newly refurbished Writers' Studio with space available for a modest fee. For more information, contact the Library at (212) 755-6710 or [www.mercantilelibrary.org](http://www.mercantilelibrary.org).*



Mystery Writers of America  
New York Chapter  
32 Broadmoor Lane  
Westbury, New York 11590

THE NOOSE  
NEW YORK





## PRESIDENT'S LETTER



Hello MWA-NY members,

Last year, 2007, was a year of change. From losing two of our fabulous volunteers: Noose editor, G. Miki Hayden, and treasurer, Jim Weikart, to gaining many new officers (like me), the face of MWA-NY is largely new.

There's one more personnel change coming our way: David Wood, New York City meeting coordinator and registrar, has announced that his busy work schedule precludes his continuing in his role. I tried to convince him that since his actual title was registrar-for-life, he couldn't quit. He laughed at me, thinking I was joking.

For those of you who aren't able to attend our New York City meetings, you may be unaware of the many years of service David has given the Chapter. It is he who handles the logistics of our monthly meetings, serving as liaison with the National Arts Club and greeting attendees with warmth and enthusiasm. While I wish him all success, I will miss the cheery hello he offers at each meeting. Luckily he's staying on until after the June meeting and has offered to train his replacement.

Jillian Abbott, Vice President of our Chapter, is spearheading the hunt for his replacement. If you're able to attend all or most meetings, are organized, detail-oriented, good in a crisis (i.e., calm when the room set-up is wrong), and friendly – this is a terrific opportunity to become known in the mystery world. You'll meet and greet everyone who attends the meetings including our speakers and guests. If you think this might be your cup of tea, please contact Jill directly at [jillian\\_abbott@yahoo.com](mailto:jillian_abbott@yahoo.com) putting "Meeting Coordinator" – MWA-NY in the subject line.

The good news is that as old friends move on, turning the page to begin other chapters in their lives, other friends step up and take over their responsibilities.

You've met Marie Hannan-Mandel, our new Noose editor, who hasn't merely risen to the occasion, she assumed the reins as our publication schedule increased from four to ten times a year—and as we've made the transition from paper to e-newsletter. Have some technical expertise to share? She wants to know. Have you found some promotional activities that seem to work well? She wants to know that, too. Do you have some great photos of you with another member or two? From legal questions to plotting tips, Marie is eager to work with you to get answers and spread the word. Email her at [mhannanmandel@yahoo.com](mailto:mhannanmandel@yahoo.com).

Our new Treasurer is Sheila York. She's just transitioning into the role, ably supported by our outgoing treasurer, Jim Weikart. Welcome, Sheila!

I'm pleased to announce that one endeavor that was new in 2007 has become routine. The New York City Public Library has invited us back for six additional MWA/NY-sponsored panels—from June through the end of

## IMPORTANT DATES

- Feb. 6:** Art of Ghostwriting. February chapter meeting.
- Feb. 27:** New York Noir: Urban Crime – Mid-Manhattan Library
- Feb. 27:** Mentor Program Panel – Mercantile Library
- Mar. 5:** Character – up close and personal! Gang members, gang cops. March chapter meeting.
- Mar. 18:** New York, New York, It's a Hellava Town to Die In – Mid-Manhattan Library

the year. Want to moderate? Contact me directly. Want to be on the panel? E-mail me at [jane@jkleland.com](mailto:jane@jkleland.com) about your interest. Both opportunities are open to active members. What I'll do is select the moderator and create a spreadsheet of interested panelists for each, then turn the spreadsheet over to the moderators so they can select their panels. The dates and titles are:

**July 15:** Laugh or I'll Kill You: Humorous Mysteries

**August 12:** Fictional Female Detectives: From Hard-Boiled Dames to Gray-haired Ladies With Cats

**September 16:** The Dark Side: Gritty Mysteries Set in New York City

**October 21:** Angry Men Who Kill: Violent Thrillers

**November 18:** Changing Careers: Writing Mysteries Later in Life

**December 16:** Literary Mysteries: Creating Order From Chaos

Three more library panel opportunities: As you may be aware, MWA/NY was a co-sponsor of the Mercantile Library's grant request to the National Endowment for the Arts' BIG READ program. They won the grant! The book the Merc selected to highlight as part of the program is *The Maltese Falcon*.

We're offering three MWA/NY-sponsored panels at the Merc. The moderators for these have been selected, and we're seeking active member panelists. Interested? Email me directly. (It will work the same way; if you're interested, I'll add your name to the spreadsheet and turn it over to the moderator who'll aim to select an eclectic mix based on experience, type of books you write, gender, etc.) The panels are:

**April 3. Moderator: Chris Grabenstein:** Authors Talk: The Influence of *The Maltese Falcon* on Your Writing

**April 8. Moderator, Jane K. Cleland:** Tough Gals: The Influence of Sam Spade on the Contemporary Female Detective

**April 15. Moderator, Jonathan Santlofer:** Letting Go: Books Into Film

And our plans to add benefits continue: Sheila York is busy organizing our new Speaker's Bureau. (Yes, she's taken on two roles: this one and MWA/NY treasurer!) Ken Isaacson is tireless as MWA/NY Web Guru. Rosemary Harrie has done super jobs as Chief Elf of the Winter Revels and Chief Organizer of the ALA Mid-Winter Conference in Philadelphia.

We'll keep you posted as our plans evolve. And as always, I am open to new ideas and would welcome suggestions.

Also, don't forget, whether you can attend our New York City programs or not, all of them are available to members as downloadable podcasts. You'll need to enter your user name and password to access this members-only area. (They're the same: [mwanyc.com](http://mwanyc.com).)

I hope to see you soon.

Jane

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# EDITOR'S LETTER

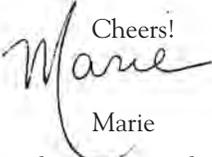


Hi all,

Welcome to the first of the monthly issues of *The Noose*. Now that we've hit our stride I hope that you will continue to offer comments and suggestions. And do please make use of our resident legal expert Bob Stein who is always ready to give comprehensive and terribly useful advice.

Editing *The Noose* has given me the opportunity to work with some wonderful people. Evelyn David has been such a help as proofreader and all the contributors – new and old, have been hard working and tremendously generous with their time and talent. I have also had the opportunity to connect with so many MWA-NY chapter members and I hope to connect with many more of you as 2008 proceeds.

Please let us know what you'd like to see and I'll do what I can to bring it to *The Noose*. Keep in touch at [mhannanmandel@yahoo.com](mailto:mhannanmandel@yahoo.com)

Cheers!  
  
Marie  
(you know, *Marry* rhyming with *Larry*)



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**VICE-PRESIDENT:** Jillian Abbott  
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**TREASURER:** Sheila York

## BLOODLINES EDITOR

Peggy Ehrhart - Send all entries to [pehrhart@sprynet.com](mailto:pehrhart@sprynet.com)  
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## More Surfing for Mystery Writers

Punch in "mystery writer" to Google and you'll get 308,000+ website listings. Each month, I present a tiny selection of the ones that I like.

[http://www.dartmouth.edu/~gjdemko/off\\_beaten\\_track.htm](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~gjdemko/off_beaten_track.htm)  
George J. Demko is Dartmouth College prof and an enthusiastic devotee of mystery fiction. He's especially knowledgeable about mysteries set in international locations including Japan, China, Cuba, Mexico, Russia, Sweden, and more. George is writing a book entitled *Landscapes of Murder: The Locus Operandi of Crime Fiction*.

I devour foreign mysteries and in particular, those of Scandinavian writers like Henning Mankell and Arnaldur Indridason. Demko's intelligent compilation saves lazy people like me from having to search too hard, so we can spend more time reading.

### MysteriousBookshop.com

Otto Penzler's site, where the famous mystery editor, promoter and connoisseur and his team review books that readers may enjoy (and purchase). Penzler eats, dreams and writes about mystery, so you know this is a refined, discerning palate. Staff picks are fun to read and there's a monthly newsletter. Learn about book-collecting clubs and find out about live events at their Tribeca store at 58 Warren St., as you plan to make your homage visit.

### [www.mysteryreaders.org/editor.html](http://www.mysteryreaders.org/editor.html)

Another great organization, this is the online home of the Macavity awards as well as The Mystery Readers Journal, to which you can subscribe. Book reviews, author interviews and info about reading groups. Bookmark the site and be in touch with the universe.

### Cluelass.com

A site with a sense of humor. Erudite Tucson writer/publisher Kate Dene puts this site together, where you'll find good recent reviews in their Bloodstained Bookshelf, by month. Good listing of individual author's websites and biographical info, assembled by Dave Robeson.

### [www.sleuthofbakerstreet.com](http://www.sleuthofbakerstreet.com)

Celebrating its 25th year in business, the bricks and mortar bookstore, "Sleuth of Baker Street" is located in Toronto. J.D. Singh and Marian Misters run the shop and you can feel the love. Their funky, eclectic newsletter, *The Merchant of Menace* has a wonderful homemade thoroughness. They ask you to buy \$100 worth of books a year from them to offset costs. You can read back issues here for free. I would like to pet their cat.

### [www.mysterywriters.org](http://www.mysterywriters.org)

Of course, this is the MWA's site and as you'd expect it contains a tremendous depth of information. I like to go directly to **Resources** and then **Links** and then browse around. They did all the work. Where else would I find this stuff?

### [Courtv.com](http://Courtv.com) is now [cnn.com/crime](http://cnn.com/crime)

One of the characteristics of the web is that things can change overnight. A favorite site has mutated: Court TV's website has been subsumed by CNN Crime and now looks...um...somewhat meager. The new channel, TruTV, hosts nothing but "reality" programming, some of which is crime-related. Let's see what transpires.

Next month: **Blogs** that are consistently strong. As we keep surfing, keep your sex wax handy (gratuitous reference to the non-slip wax that real surfers rub on their boards).

Suggestions/comments to: [PeterWatsonNYC@yahoo.com](mailto:PeterWatsonNYC@yahoo.com).

Peter Watson writes advertising in Manhattan and has just finished his first crime novel, *All the Wrong People*. He's seeking representation.

# True Crime in the Big City

A panel discussion with authors E.W. Count, Paul LaRosa, Mary-Ann Tirone Smith, and E.J. Wagner

Moderated by Jane K. Cleland

by Maggie Schnader

On an inclement Wednesday evening, December 19th, 2007, in front of a packed and enthusiastic audience at the Mid-Manhattan Library, a New York Public Library on 40th Street and 5th Avenue, Jane K. Cleland, MWA/NY President and moderator, introduced the panelists:

- E. (Ellen) W. Count is the author of *Cop Talk: True Detective Stories from the NYPD* and a novel, *The Hundred Percent Squad* as well as numerous articles and columns on cops, crime and related topics.

- Paul LaRosa is an Emmy-award winning television producer and journalist. He covered crime and punishment, meaning Rikers Island, for the New York Daily News for 16 years, and works for CBS News and *48 Hours*. He recently published two true crime books; a third is due out in April 2008.

- Mary-Ann Tirone Smith has written eight novels including the Poppy Rice mysteries, and a true crime/memoir, *Girls of Tender Age. Dirty Water: A Red Sox Mystery*, the first of a new baseball series written in collaboration with her son, is coming in 2008.

- E.J. Wagner, crime historian and storyteller, lectures on the History of Forensic Science and moderates the annual Forensic Forum at Stony Brook University. She is widely published in the field. Her book, *The Science of Sherlock Holmes*, was a 2007 Edgar Award winner.

## Tips for crime fiction and true crime writers:

☞ In the true crime genre, an author may speculate, however, speculation must be labeled as such; the author must state that he/she is speculating.

☞ A true crime author can be amusing, or entertaining, etc., but, at the same time, must always be accurate and honest.

☞ E.J. Wagner pleads for accuracy when writing about forensics. She is especially disturbed because a lot of the public's understanding of forensic science is distorted by TV programs. In fact, she says, some crime labs in this country have untrained staff and use rusty sinks.

☞ Mary-Ann Tirone said that in her novels she makes the forensics up and finds that often reviewers say, "It's so fascinating."

☞ Jane Cleland, author of the fictional Josie Prescott Antiques Mysteries, likes to get the appraisal values correct. She said that readers want that information to be accurate.

☞ It is said that too much forensics turns the reader off.

☞ A well-known editor once said: the way to spoil a good book is research.

☞ It is said that Stephen King never does any research—except for getting the gun right.

☞ E.W. Count says that the detective must be engaging as a character and should "ground" the case.

☞ Paul LaRosa says that stories must be layered. Also, in TV one needs teasers.

How do the panel authors obtain information from individuals?

- E.W. Count uses audio tapes and takes notes.

- Mary-Ann Tirone likes to get people started talking and then just takes notes. She keeps scribbling away. If they trust you, she says, they will deliver. For historical true crime the libraries have a wealth of information.

- Paul LaRosa, an Emmy-award winning television producer, often does interviews of family members and the accused before an actual trial even though the interviews will not be released until afterwards.

The audience Q&A period was particularly interesting for the nature of some of the questions themselves:

- Have you ever been alone with a murderer?

- How do you feel about capital punishment?

- What motivates an author to write this particular kind of book?

- Was OJ guilty?

Finally, in answer to the expressed wishes of members of the audience, Jane Cleland promised that she would try to organize a second panel on this subject at some future time.

Maggie Schnader reports on a very British experience in "The Empress of Blandings Was a Berkshire Sow" in *Plum Lines*, the quarterly journal of The Wodehouse Society, Vol.28, No. 3, Autumn 2007.

# ABOUT THE WRITERS GUILD STRIKE

As a member of both MWA and WGA, I would like to offer some clarification about the current Writers Guild of America strike against the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, an action to which I am deeply committed. There has been much misinformation in the media, and so the Guild is reaching out to tell it like it is. The situation may change from day to day, but as of this writing here are the facts:

The main issue is the **INTERNET** and all other forms of digital transmission that were not foreseen in earlier contracts. Most in the business agree that digital platforms will soon be the primary way we receive our television shows. Even now, producers are “streaming” programs which means that a given TV show is available to all receptors all the time.

The day will come when there is no longer a prime time showing of a TV program with a possible summer rerun. That system will soon be quaint history. **The reruns are happening every minute of every day in every household, school, and place of business that is on line.** And those multiple showings are bringing in increasingly hefty advertising fees and other revenues for the producers.

Writers deserve a piece of that action. The principle of residual payments for reuse has long been established. The average writer does not sell that many scripts per year, and so has come to depend on residuals (which are in lieu of copyright royalties) in order to stay afloat.

The producers have made an offer that would be laughable if it were not so insulting: \$250 for one year’s **unlimited** reuse of a one-hour show, and \$139 for a half-hour show such as a sitcom.

Well don’t knock it—\$139 can buy you a month’s supply of Happy Meals at McDonald’s, toys included.

It gets worse. The producer-calculated year of reuse does not begin until six weeks after the initial transmission has been made. In other words the first six weeks, the period of maximum downloads, are exploited without any reuse fees for the writers at all. And even worse: they can choose to pay the writer nothing for reuse if they decide to call the show “promotional.”

Residuals are only part of the problem. They are refusing to give the Guild jurisdiction over **original shows and movies** created for the internet. That means we can’t establish minimum payments (or other benefits such as pension and health) for internet programs as we have for television and motion pictures—no doubt a lip-smacking coup for producers who would in effect be wiping out all the progress writers have made since the 1950’s. After announcing their take-it-or-leave-it offer, the producers walked out of the negotiations, and remain out at this time, the beginning of 2008.

We in WGA would appreciate your support. Spread the word! Pressure the networks and studios to negotiate a fair contract! A visit to our website [www.wgaeast.org](http://www.wgaeast.org) will give you ideas about how you can help our cause—which may be your cause too.

Jerome Coopersmith

Former Vice President of Writers Guild of America, East  
Council Member for 3 decades



## REMINDEES

- \* Join us on the newsgroup and give the chapter the opportunity to serve you better with e-Noose, email newflashes and a forum to discuss your work with other writers. Join at [MWA-NY@yahoo.com](mailto:MWA-NY@yahoo.com).
- \* February 6th chapter meeting, 6pm at the National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park South – *Art of Ghostwriting* (aka making a living as a writer) NYT bestselling ghost, Donald Bain. No one has greater writerly counsel to share than Donald Bain, author or ghost/author of more than 90 titles, from mysteries to investigative journalism. The distinguished MWA member talks exclusively to us about (for instance) his 33 paperback original series (from new Penguin NAL imprint, Obsidian) written “in collaboration” with TV’s *Murder, She Wrote* mystery scribe, “Jessica Fletcher.” Standing in for the Fletcher character is . . . Bain’s real collaborator, his wife, MWA member, Renee Paley-Bain. Reserve now to hear Donald

Bain—profit from his practical wisdom for years to come.

- \* Mark your calendar for the series of mystery writing panels to be held at the Mid-Manhattan Library, 40th Street and Fifth Avenue at 6:30pm on the sixth floor: **2/27** – *New York Noir: Urban Crime*; **3/18** – *New York, New York, It’s a Hellava Town to Die In*; **4/30** – *Professional Thrillers: Legal and Medical Murder*; **5/20** – *Late Bloomers Dream Big: Publishing a First Mystery in Midlife*; **6/17** – *Murder and Mayhem at Work: Deadly Antiques, Cooks, and Gardens*.
- \* **Feb. 27:** Mentor Program Panel – Mercantile Library, 17 East 47th St, 2nd Floor at 6pm. Advice on writing pitfalls to avoid plus the personal stories of five writers who succeeded in getting published will be featured at the upcoming Mentor Program Panel. Come and get inspired as well-published mystery writers talk about their journeys to publication.

# Blood**LINES** MWA In Print • JANUARY 2008

## BOOKS

L.C. Mohr, *Krumbuckets!*, Blooming Tree Press, 2007.

## SHORT STORIES

Jill Abbott, "Jihad Sucks: or, the Conversion of the Jews," *Queens Noir*, ed. Bob Knightly, Akashic Books, 2008.

William E. Chambers, "If I Quench Thee...", *Intermediate 2 English, Educational Textbook*, Hodder & Gibbons, Scotland, UK, 2008.

Peggy Ehrhart, "Bear," *Mysterical-E*, Winter 2007-08.

Liz Martinez, "Lights Out for Frankie," *Queens Noir*, ed. Bob Knightly, Akashic Books 2007.

Triss Stein, "NYPDaughter," *Murder New York Style*, ed. Randy Kandel, L&L Dreamspell.

## ARTICLES

Liz Martinez, Interview with Mystery Writer Henry Chang (author of the novel *Chinatown Beat*), *Security Director Magazine*, Winter 2008 [print and online].

Submit items for "Bloodlines" to Peggy Ehrhart at [pehrhart@sprynet.com](mailto:pehrhart@sprynet.com).

## MWA/NY Mentor Program Panel: "What the Mentors Said" and "The Next Step"

Mercantile Library • 17 East 47th Street, 2nd Floor  
Wednesday, February 27, 2008, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Advice on writing pitfalls to avoid plus the personal stories of five writers who succeeded in getting published will be featured at the upcoming Mentor Program Panel. Come and get inspired as well-published mystery writers talk about their journeys to publication.

Join us for the culmination of the 2007-2008 Mentor Program, in which published members of the New York chapter volunteered their expertise to critique 50-page submissions from chapter members looking to strengthen their manuscripts. All are welcome for this free event.

Program chair, Peggy Ehrhart, will start the evening with "What the Mentors Said," a summary of the typical problems that the mentors encountered in the manuscripts they critiqued.

Then a panel of distinguished mystery writers will discuss "The Next Step." Whether you're in the draft stages of your first writing project, about to start submitting, or looking at a growing pile of rejection letters, this glimpse at five different journeys from unpublished to published will be helpful.

Understanding how the market works and the wide variety of presses that publish mysteries can help you target your search for an agent—or point you to a press that accepts unagented submissions. Matching your project with the appropriate press can be the key to success—even if the project is still in its early stages.

The panelists will be Meredith Cole, Chris Grabenstein, Roberta Isleib, Jeff Markowitz, and Jonathan Santlofer.

Meredith is the 2007 winner of the St. Martin's/Malice Domestic best traditional mystery award, and her book *Posed*

for *Murder* will be published by St. Martin's Press in the winter of 2009.

Chris did improvisational comedy (with Bruce Willis) in New York before James Patterson discovered his writing talent and hired him at the J. Walter Thompson advertising agency. His debut *Tilt a Whirl* won the Anthony Award for "Best First Mystery." Kirkus called *Mad Mouse*, the second book in the John Ceepak series, one of the ten best mysteries of 2006. *Whack a Mole* came out to rave reviews in 2007 and *Hell Hole* will follow in August 2008.

Roberta's new series starring a Connecticut psychologist/advice columnist debuted in 2007 with *Deadly Advice* and *Preaching to the Corpse*. Roberta is a clinical psychologist and president of Sisters in Crime international.

Jeff is the author of the Cassie O'Malley Mysteries, amateur sleuth stories set deep in the New Jersey Pine Barrens. Jeff's third book, *It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Murder*, is scheduled for release by Five Star in 2009.

Jonathan is the recipient of two National Endowment for the Arts grants, a Rome Prize, and serves on the board of Yaddo, America's oldest arts community. He the author of four novels, *The Death Artist*, *Color Blind*, *The Killing Art*, and *Anatomy of Fear*. His fifth novel, *The Murder Notebook*, will be published by Harper Collins in June, 2008.

Peggy's first mystery, *Sweet Man is Gone*, will appear from Five Star in July 2008.

The panel will be followed by a Q&A session. Come and participate, ask questions, and network.



## A 21ST CENTURY SLEUTH

by Marie Hannan-Mandel

At the first meeting of the year, the chapter had the opportunity to learn some of the secrets of a modern-day sleuth. Interviewed by Program Committee Chair, E.W. Count, Investigative Counsel Charles Eric Gordon, Esq., revealed many inside details of the life of an investigative counsel who specializes in tracking missing persons.

### Did You Know?

- ☞ A lawyer who acts as a private investigator is called an investigative counsel. He cannot call himself a private investigator unless he holds a private investigator license.
- ☞ The work product of an investigative counsel search is considered to come under attorney-client privilege and remains privileged unless exigent circumstances exist. The P.I. has no such privilege.
- ☞ Unlike the P.I., an investigative counsel does not require a process server's license and can write out and serve his own subpoenas.

Charles explained that he uses modern technology (he particularly recommends the use of the search engine Dogpile), but also uses a magnifying glass, and not just to impress his clients – old age and small print make it very useful, he says. In addition, Charles has a collection of 925 telephone books – some as old as 1914 and others from countries as far away as Lithuania, Poland, and the England.

E.W. Count led Charles through his cases. Charles pointed out that, as he told a reporter in 1999, he has frequently dealt with cases where people are not missing in their own minds when he locates them. He particularly loves cases where there is very little information and he loves the challenge of solving very old cases.

Asked if he had ever searched for a non-existent person, Charles told the audience of the drunken man in the US who claimed he had a sister-in-law in Macedonia, thereby holding up a legal proceeding. Charles was asked to find her. No problem, except that the territory of Macedonia has, in the last century, changed ownership more often than a used dollar bill. Add to this the complication of it being the early 1990s with the former Yugoslavia tearing itself apart and you have a difficult problem. Oh yes – and the woman did not exist. This he eventually proved but not until he had done an exhaustive search and enlisted the aid of the Consulate General of Macedonia.

Charles spoke most touchingly of the case he has yet to solve of a young New York City man – Jewish and homosexual – who disappeared in the late seventies. This man's parents are still hoping to find out what happened to their son. Despite help from the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Charles has been unable to find the whereabouts of the young man. The search has led to a morgue in Georgia where autopsy reports were not kept and a Potters field where, since the 1960s, eighteen unidentified bodies have been indiscriminately buried without any records. Charles hopes one day to be allowed to make a public appeal that might bring enough information to make getting permission to exhume those bodies in Georgia a possibility.

The audience questions were very interesting and illuminated further aspects of Charles's work. When asked about the success of the Witness Protection Program, Charles said that a placement was successful if the person and/or family was placed in a location where they blend in. That and never contacting anyone from his/her past are the secrets to success. He added that he had only ever encountered one case where a person in Witness Protection had slipped away.

## Tips for Crime Writers

- ☞ Persons who disappear will often contact those they have left behind – particularly coming up to holidays.
- ☞ People on the run are inclined to do the same job they did in their previous lives and this is one way to track them down. However, lawyers, doctors, etc. find it very difficult to transfer their licenses to assumed names and will therefore, be doing something else – but often within the same field such as a veterinarian who then becomes a vet's assistant.

# ASK THE LAWYER



Dear Mr. Stein,

*I write different types of novels. One is a cozy, one is a historical and I've also written a literary novel. I want to sell all three and wondered if it's ethical or practical to send each novel to a different agent or publisher independently and simultaneously. In other words, is it OK to send my work to different places at the same time? I also wondered if I would need to use a different author's name for each book.*

*Or, should I just find one agent and get him/her to sell everything for me?  
Yours in doubt,  
M.*

Dear M,

You should use only one agent to sell all of your novels (unless the agent specifically agrees that he or she doesn't handle a particular genre or subgenre and that you should use another agent for that genre, and further agrees to communicate with the other agent so that each has the full picture of what you're up to).

Any agent is likely to be greatly offended if you do not disclose your intention to use other agents for other genres, since otherwise the efforts of each agent to sell your books could mutually interfere. In addition, no agent can give you effective career guidance if that agent is only aware of a limited aspect of your career.

Some agents ask their writers to sign agreements specifically stating that the agent will be the writer's sole and exclusive agent during the term of the agency agreement; I believe that most or all agents assume that will be the case, whether or not the agency agreement so states.

In addition, most publishers' contracts have provisions which require that the book covered by their contract will be the next book you write, contract for, or allow to be published, under your own or any other name.

For example, Bantam Dell's contract states, "**18. Next Publication of Author's Work.** The Work will be the Author's next published work (whether under the Author's own name or under a pseudonym or in collaboration with anyone else) and the Author will not, prior to delivery of the complete manuscript of the Work, write or contract with any other publisher to write any other work for publication in book form without the written permission of Bantam Dell."

Among the reasons why publishers often insist on such provisions are concerns that no book you are working on for other publishers:

- (i) should interfere with your ability to deliver their book by the contractually required date.
- (ii) should bomb, and so harm your reputation before their book is published, thus damaging their sales.
- (iii) should satisfy readers' cravings for your writing, so that the readers will be less likely to purchase another book published soon thereafter.

While (ii) and (iii) could be avoided by the use of different pseudonyms for each publisher, (i) would remain a concern to your publisher notwithstanding use of different pseudonyms.

As for not telling each publisher about the existence of multiple pseudonyms, that would be both unethical and a breach of the provision set forth above, which would permit the publisher to cancel publication of your book and to sue you for the return of its advance and for reimbursement of any other sums it had expended towards publication of your book.

Good luck,  
Bob Stein

Bob Stein counsels and represents people at all levels of the entertainment industry from writers to film producers. He has represented David Baldacci and Janet Evanovich and spent 13 years in-house at Random House, Simon and Schuster and Warner Books before entering private practice.

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