

CONVERSATION WITH THE AUTHOR

David Bishop

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO WRITE YOUR NOVEL?

I have read novels all my life and desired to write fiction. In the mid-1980s, I began writing a great deal of nonfiction with respect to my professional work as a business appraisers: several training texts for seminars and continuing education courses, dozens of professional articles for legal, accounting, valuation and financial journal. In 2001, I co-authored Valuation for M&A: Building Value in Private Companies with Frank Evans. This book, published by Wiley was later re-published in Russian and Chinese. There is now a second edition, however, I was not a co-author of the second edition as I had retired.

HOW DID YOU USE YOUR LIFE EXPERIENCE OR PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND TO ENRICH YOUR STORY?

The writing skills I developed in nonfiction writing was of help, also the research skills developed in my professional career. As for my life experiences, I would add several things: My very diverse business background gave me substantial insight into a great variety of business types and industries. My various activities that gave me some exposure to political workings. My basic attributes of being analytical and detail oriented. And last, but certainly not least, my voracious appetite for reading fiction. Also, my involvement in legal matters having been an arbiter and also an expert witness in perhaps a hundred legal cases.

WOULD YOU SAY THAT YOUR NOVEL IS MORE PLOT DRIVEN OR CHARACTER DRIVEN?

Even answer. Both, I think. I'd like to think the plot drives the overall story while the characters inspire the reader to care about them and what comes of them.

WHO IS YOUR FAVORITE OR MOST SYMPATHETIC CHARACTER? AND WHY?

Jack McCall, the main protagonist . Rachel Johnstone, the lead female, love interest, and also a major protagonist. Also Millet Yorke, an eccentric antisocial character who is a member of McCall's squad. Yorke behavior is strange, even disgusting at times, yet endearing.

WHO IS YOUR LEAST SYMPATHETIC CHARACTER? AND WHY?

Isaac Dalton, the antagonist, because he is evil. However, it is worth noting that his core views of certain things about the current structure of America are concerns held by many Americans.

WHAT PART OF WRITING YOUR BOOK DID YOU FIND THE MOST CHALLENGING?

No part any more so than any other.

WHAT DO YOU HOPE THAT READERS WILL TAKE AWAY FROM YOUR BOOK?

A better understanding in some preliminary ways of the roles of the various branches of government as well as the Federal Reserve Banking system, the federal judiciary, and the law enforcement professionals. None of this is presented in a boring, test-like manner, but woven into the story at points and to only the extent it is relevant to the story.

HOW DO YOU DIAL UP THE TENSION TO KEEP YOUR READERS ON THE EDGE OF THEIR SEATS?

Generally by crafting the words and images within sentences that varied in length, but more short sentences than elsewhere within the story. By keeping the writing of these scenes lean and crisp. This quicker pace was used in those scenes where I intended to heighten tension.

WHAT WRITERS HAVE INSPIRED YOU?

Baldacci, Clancy, Flynn, Raymond Chandler, Dashiell Hammett, Lee Child, Coulter, Scottoline, Connelly, MacDonald, Koontz, L'Amour, Garretson, Patterson, Morrell, James Cain (lesser known but the author of Double Indemnity, The Postman Always Rings Twice, and I think, Dial M for Murder. These are often in random order.

WHAT IS THE WRITING PROCESS LIKE FOR YOU?

I don't know. I just sit down and write. No outline. I usually begin with the crime. Then the villain. Then the hero. Then I write the last scene. I develop a very detailed profile of the main characters. After that I just pick a place to begin the story and start, letting the characters and the plot take me along, always with an eye on where I need to end up. (Pick where you're going on vacation before you get in the car and drive away type thinking.) I often change the beginning point, several times, but never the last scene except to rewrite it.

WHAT IS THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE ABOUT WRITING THAT YOU'VE EVER RECEIVED?

Read, analyze, and write. Then rewrite. Then rewrite . . .

WHAT IS THE WORST PIECE OF ADVICE ABOUT WRITING THAT YOU'VE EVER RECEIVED?

Ignore the stuff about write what you know. For too many authors that would be how to make peanut butter sandwiches and crumple up pages that didn't work. This thinking carried to its full extent means that one could not write a murder without committing one. Etc. Study and research and general reading will augment what you know from your life experiences. I think aging to a certain point allows an aspiring author to learn a bit more about people, events, and history.

ANY FINAL WORDS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SAY ABOUT YOURSELF, YOUR NOVEL, OR LIFE IN GENERAL?

Why is there always so much one desires to learn and to do and so little time in which to do it?

