

*Sisters
in
Crime*™

HOTSHOTS!

HEART OF TEXAS Chapter
www.hotxsinc.org



"Putting Yourself into Your Book" by Helen Ginger

As writers, we put ourselves into our books -- more than just the blood, sweat and tears it takes to write a book. We put our experiences, knowledge, and beliefs into our books and into our characters. If you're writing fiction, though, you keep it to a minimum. You don't want to go overboard until it reads like a memoir. I can't speak for all writers, but a book all about me would be pretty boring.

The old axiom that you should write what you know still holds true today, but it doesn't mean write about yourself and your experiences only. "What you know" includes what you learn from observation, research or talking to others.

However, in just about any book you read, there are bits and pieces of the writer in it. In most cases, only the writer knows what is auto-biographical and what is not, what is a memory of the author or an emotion the author dredged up from his/her own experiences.

Write what you know and write what you don't know.

In my book, ANGEL SOMETIMES, I wrote about a girl swimming as a mermaid because I knew that job, but more importantly, because it was a perfect job for Angel. Although I swam while I was at Southwest Texas State University (now called Texas State University) while I was working on my B.A. and M.A., swimming as a mermaid doesn't require an education. The primary qualification is that you can't be scared of being underwater. Being able to swim as a mermaid and not having to hold a degree was a good thing since Angel was abandoned to the streets when she was twelve. This is her story. She does

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UPCOMING PROGRAMS

April 14, 2013

Dave Ciambrone, Sc.D., FIOF- *Murder 101: What Really Happens When You Kill Someone*

May 19, 2013

Barbara Burnett Smith *Aspiring Writers Event (Location to be determined)*

Sisters in Crime Heart of Texas Chapter is sponsoring the 2013 Ninth Annual Barbara Burnett Smith Aspiring Writers Project, co-sponsored by the Barbara Burnett Smith Mentoring Authors Foundation.

Aspiring Mystery Writers that are selected will each be matched with a published Mentor Author for one-on-one sessions, and recognition.

Sisters in Crime Heart of Texas Chapter, meets monthly on the second Sunday of the month at 2 p.m. On April 14, 2013, we will meet at Mangia Pizza 8012 Mesa Dr, Austin, TX 78731 Located in the Mesa Plaza Shopping Center at the northwest corner of Mesa Drive and Spicewood Springs Road, between Mopac/Loop 1 and 360/Capital of Texas Highway.

Unwanted

by Kristina Ohlsson

UNWANTED is a taut thriller by Swedish author Kristina Ohlsson which highlights a Stockholm police department.

Inspector Alex Recht and his want-to-be protegee, Peder Rydh. Also in the department is a female civilian investigative analyst, named Fredrika Bergman. The men feel Frederika won't last long because she has never been a police officer and seems unable to relate to people.

The story opens with a young woman, Sara Sebastiansson, and her little daughter, Lilian, traveling on a train heading to Stockholm. The little girl falls asleep and the mother gets off the train when it makes an unexpected stop. Sara is seen on the platform talking on the telephone. The train leaves without Sara. She runs after the train to no avail. Sara calls the train headquarters and is told to take a taxi to Stockholm which she does. Train headquarters also contacts the train conductor who soon reports the little girl is not on the train. It seems no one saw the child wake up or leave or anyone taking her. The train is thoroughly searched and the child isn't found.

During the investigation the police learn that the parents are divorced and immediately comes the idea of a classic custody dispute and child abduction. The father Gabriel Sebastiansson seems to have an airtight alibi. His mother is quite uncooperative and blames the child's mother.

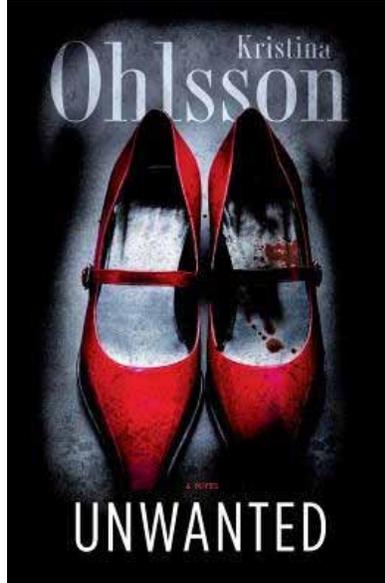
The investigations takes several twist and turns and eventually the little girl is found dead in the north of Sweden with the words UNWANTED scribbled on her forehead. From this point the case becomes more twisted and involved while the police insist that Frederika Bergman's ideas are not helpful as they chase a ruthless and cunning killer.

I highly recommend this book. The Swedish setting is always fascinating to me and the characters are well-drawn, their lives and thoughts lend an authenticity to the story. Frederika's analyzing the crime scene and the people involved give her a different perspective to where the closed minds of the male investigators seem to want to stay. The ending is strong and surprising and I definitely want to read more from Kristina Ohlsson. ❤️

Reviewed by Jan Grape

Anthony and mccavity award-winning author of: Author of AUSTIN BLUE DEATH & DARK BLUE DEATH, the Zoe Barrow police woman series And WHAT DOESN'T KILL YOU, a stand-alone mystery Ms Grape has co-edited the recent American Crime Writers League anthologies, MURDER PAST, MURDER PRESENT, and MURDER HERE MURDER THERE.

She also has had published over 40 short stories and articles; including many in Germany and Japan. She is a Charter Member of Sisters in Crime Heart of Texas Chapter.



One of the most attractive things about writing your autobiography is that you're not dead.

-Joseph Barbera

Anatomy of a Promotion

by Bill Williams II

The opportunities in the e-book markets and the interconnectivity of modern life give writers the chance to get more involved in managing their careers, their brands and their promotions. For those braving the world of self-publishing through Kindle or Smashwords, time spent in promotion is crucial. If you don't do it, who will?

The down-side of the internet can be lumped into a file folder labeled 'time-wasters'. Hours spent on random blog posts are hours away from important tasks like research and rewrites.

If selling serial fiction was a seduction, my books were all dressed up with no place to go on Saturday night.

Like a lot of writers, I'd finished a few books that sat on the very bottom of the sales lists. Ten years ago, they would have spent time gathering dust on the bottom shelf of the bookcase. My series of mystery books had covers linked by a common design so they would be easy to find. The collection of short stories had the first chapter of the next novel.

My books are for sale through Kindle Direct Publishing, the ebook arm of the book-selling colossus called Amazon.com. Under the terms of the deal, every quarter KDP Select allows you to give away your books for five days. The give away was a promotion I had not considered before reading Joe Konrath's blog. He's been a pioneer when it comes to self-publishing.

I decided to give away a short story collection called YOUNG AND FOOLISH from March 1st to March 5th as a stunt designed to get new readers a chance to try my flavor of detective fiction. I e-mailed James Thomson at ebookbooster.com and sent him the \$25 he asked for on his website. The funds provided paid for his efforts in sending the news of the looming book give away to sites run by and for an army of readers with Kindles. Within hours of payment, I started getting email confirmation notes from sites I'd never heard of like

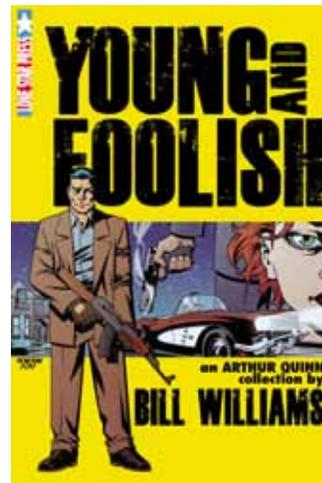
indiebookoftheday.com and the Author Marketing Club to name a few. eBook Booster is so good at the service, there has been a bump in the pricing.

After the planning was done and the dollars spent, there was nothing to do but wait. The Friday morning the giveaway started, I logged in at KDP and checked the numbers. People were downloading my book and I could watch the numbers climb in real time. During the promotion, YOUNG AND FOOLISH reached as high as #42 on the Top 100 FREE mysteries in the Kindle Store. Where books like the Jack Reacher novels were in the paid column on the left, mine was in a FREE slot at eye level on the right.

The day after the promotion, readers slow to the event bought copies of YOUNG AND FOOLISH at the bargain price of 99 cents, my regular price point for the starter book. After charting on the free side, the collection hit #53 in mystery anthologies. It hung around that paid list for a day or so before floating back down the best-sellers list. Another

aspect of the promotion worked when a few copies of SMOKIN' HOT MESS sold in the days that followed.

The total revenue generated by those sales did not pay back the small amount spent with ebookbooster.com. It did give me the most valuable long-term resource out of this kind of promotion: new readers.



Bill Williams is a freelance writer, a member of Sisters in Crime Heart of Texas Chapter, and the editor of HOTSHOTS! the monthly newsletter of Sisters in Crime Heart of Texas Chapter. ❤️

Murder at BookPeople

**Friday 4/5/13 7p - MysteryPeople Presents:
FRANK BILL, TODD ROBINSON,
MATTHEW McBRIDE & JESSE
SUBLETT**

We're moving our celebrated *Noir At The Bar* event to the store for one night only with some some great authors. Frank Bill of CRIMES IN SOUTHERN INDIANA fame will be here with his latest, DONNYBROOK. Thuglit founder, Todd Robinson, will be reading from his debut novel, THE HARD BOUNCE. If that weren't enough, we will also be hosting Matthew McBride, the man who gave us FRANK SINATRA IN A BLENDER. And we'll have Austin musician and writer Jesse Sublett here to play a few of his murder ballads and read from his work-in-progress. Join us to enjoy an adult beverage or two while these guys read from and talk about their books.

**Tuesday 4/9/13 7p - MysteryPeople Presents:
JAMIE MASON speaking & signing
THREE GRAVES FULL**

Jamie Mason has been getting some great buzz with her book "Three Graves Full", a unique take on the concience of a killer tale. Jason Getty has to deal with odd and possible incriminating circumstances when the police dig up two bodies in his back yard, but not the one he buried. This is a chance to meet a great new voice in crime fiction. For fans of the Coen brothers' films or for those who just love their thrillers with a dash of sharp humor—an engaging and offbeat story about a man driven to murder, who then buries the body in his backyard only to discover that there are two other shallow graves on his property.

**Wednesday, 4/10/13 7:30p - The Mystery
Book Discussion Group will discuss
THE LADY IN THE LAKE by
RAYMOND CHANDLER.**

Barnes & Noble Arboretum is located at 10,000 Research Boulevard, Austin, TX 78759. For information on these and other events, call 512-418-8985.

**Sunday 4/21/13 4p - MysteryPeople Presents:
Bestselling Author KATE
ATKINSON speaking & signing
LIFE AFTER LIFE**

On a cold and snowy night in 1910, Ursula Todd is born to an English banker and his wife. She dies before she can draw her first breath. On that same cold and snowy night, Ursula Todd is born, lets out a lusty wail, and embarks upon a life that will be, to say the least, unusual. For as she grows, she also dies, repeatedly, in a variety of ways, while the young century marches on towards its second cataclysmic world war. Does Ursula's apparently infinite number of lives give her the power to save the world from its inevitable destiny? Kate Atkinson won the Whitbread Book of the Year award for her first novel, BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE MUSEUM, and has been an internationally bestselling author ever since. Her most recent books include CASE HISTORIES, ONE GOOD TURN, WHEN WILL THERE BE GOOD NEWS, and STARTED EARLY, TOOK MY DOG

**Thursday 4/25/13 at 7p - MysteryPeople
Presents: Bestselling Author
PHILIP KERR speaking & signing
A MAN WITHOUT BREATH**

From the national bestselling author of PRAGUE FATALE, a powerful new thriller that returns Bernie Gunther, our sardonic Berlin cop, to the Eastern Front. Berlin, March, 1943. A month has passed since the stunning defeat at Stalingrad. Though Hitler insists Germany is winning the war, commanders on the ground know better. Now word has reached Berlin of a Red massacre of Polish officers in the Katyn Forest near Smolensk. For once, both the Wehrmacht and Propaganda Minister Goebbels want the same thing: irrefutable evidence of this Russian atrocity. And so Bernie Gunther is dispatched to Smolensk, where truth is as much a victim of war as those poor dead Polish officers. Philip Kerr is the author of many novels, but perhaps most important are the five featuring Bernie Gunther—A QUIET FLAME, THE ONE FROM THE OTHER, and the Berlin Noir trilogy (MARCH VIOLETS, THE PALE CRIMINAL, and A GERMAN FREEDOM).

For more info, contact BookPeople at 512-472-5050.

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Putting

things I never did -- and vice versa. In this case, it was rather like a lawyer writing a legal thriller or a doctor writing a love story set in a hospital.

There is a lot of me in my book, ANGEL SOMETIMES. There's even more that is not me or is not based on my own experiences. In my next book, DISMEMBERING THE PAST, there are small bits of me, but not nearly as much as is in ANGEL SOMETIMES. And that was deliberate on my part.

Authors also write what they don't know. Actually, that should be re-stated. Authors write what they didn't know, but learned. If you don't know it, research it. If you need to describe it and write a character who knows it, get first-hand experience, if possible. The key to writing authentically is to give the character your knowledge or experience and let them use it as they would, not as you would.

Write what you know is really about emotions: jealousy, love, fear, loss, etc. Take what you know from your life and use small details and remembered emotions and people to rev up your imagination. Fictionalize. Create a new thing, be it a story or a character or a building.

Don't take an action or story from your life or from someone you know and write that. You're restricting yourself. Use that as inspiration to write a new story. One of the greatest things about writing is that you are not restricted to what happens in your life. You can imagine and create new worlds.

Draw from your own emotions. What do you fear? How does that fear feel? How does it feel to walk from a cold room into warm sun? Dig deep.

Write what you know does not mean, necessarily,

to write a memoir or a non-fiction book. It means to take all your experiences and knowledge and imagination and research and write about life, about the lives of your characters. If you know your characters, you'll know their emotions, their experiences, how they would react to trying times. You know their truths and their secrets.

In most characters, you'll find a little of the author, a little from some other person they know or have seen, and maybe even a little of the reader.

Draw on your everyday life, your world. If something you know or do fits a character, you can use it. If it doesn't, don't force it. And always remember, this is their story, not yours. ♥✂

Helen Ginger has been the Executive Director of the Writers' League of Texas, President of Sisters in Crime Heart of Texas Chapter and is a current member, and is the Coordinator of Story Circle Network's Editorial Services. In 2005, she was awarded a four-week fellowship by the Brown Foundation to the Vermont Studio Center.

You can find her on Amazon (<http://amzn.to/KWl2eV>), her website (<http://helenginger.com>),

Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/authorhelenginger>), LinkedIn

(<http://www.linkedin.com/profile/view?id=HelenGinger>),

Twitter (<https://twitter.com/MermaidHel>),

Google+

(<https://plus.google.com/u/0/s/Helen%20Ginger/posts>),

and her blog, Straight From Hel

(<http://straightfromhel.blogspot.com>)

Her writing experience includes three books published with TSTC Publishing (Texas State Technical College) in their TechCareer Series AUTOMOTIVE TECHNICIANS, AVIONICS, and COMPUTER GAMING. Two of her mystery short stories are included in the anthology, THE CORNER CAFE. In addition, her contemporary fiction book, ANGEL SOMETIMES, is available on Amazon or in bookstores. Her next book, the first in the Hallie McAllister, P. I., series, DISMEMBERING THE PAST, is due out in Spring 2013. Helen has a husband, two children, and a house that is always in need of dusting. She's not wild about cooking, but for some reason her family likes to eat.



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