

# BOOKMARK



*Fiction and Nonfiction News from Janet Litherland*

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## Potpourri

With this issue, *Bookmark* enters its third year, which means that two full years have passed since I placed my writing-editing company, Write-Choice Services, Inc., into the capable hands of Dr. Tim Morrison of Atlanta. Tim has “grown” the business a great deal in that short time and I am proud and happy for him. I miss working with aspiring writers, but I truly enjoy being a full-time writer and setting my own goals and deadlines. For more about Tim and Write-Choice, please visit:

[www.write-choiceservices.com](http://www.write-choiceservices.com)

*The Locket* (working title) is progressing nicely. I’ve completed the first draft and started revisions. That will take time, because whole sections of material need to be moved so the story will “flow” properly. I want to eliminate any gaps that might tempt you to put the book down!

My thanks to all of you who continue to share my “writing life.” I appreciate your support and kind messages. It means a lot to know that readers enjoy my work.

This issue of *Bookmark* has more reviews than usual. (I had more time to read during the holidays.) Hope you enjoy exploring!

**All of Janet’s books  
are available at:**

Amazon.com  
BarnesAndNoble.com  
BooksAMillion.com

## Reviews

Three readers of *Bookmark* have recommended their favorite authors. A Pennsylvania reader chose **Steve Hockensmith**; a Georgia reader suggested **Lee Child**; and a reader from Arizona recommended **Kate Wilhelm**. All three authors were new to me. They are very different from one another, and I enjoyed each one in its own way. Here are my observations:

*Holmes on the Range* (Hockensmith 2005) is a slapstick western set in the 1890s. Two cowboys, inspired by the “deducifyin’” skills of Sherlock Holmes, solve a mystery on a Montana ranch. The pace is relaxed, the dialog witty, and Hockensmith does know how to craft a descriptive phrase: “(Clara’s) proud, perfect posture had drooped, causing her to sag like a dying flower bent by the weight of its own beautiful petals.”

*One Shot* (Child 2006) opens as five people in a small Indiana town are killed by a sniper who is quickly caught. Or so it seems. Actually, *nothing* is what it seems in this fast-paced, absolutely riveting novel. The hero is Jack Reacher, an ex-Army cop who is smart, honest, likeable, and *mean* when he needs to be! The author wastes no time or words in this cut-to-the-chase thriller.

*The Price of Silence* (Wilhelm 2005) is a psychological mystery-suspense novel. After a tedious start, the story (searching for a serial kidnapper) emerged and was quite engaging. Unfortunately for me, I identified the villain at the beginning, which took away the fun of figuring it out!

Two nonfiction books captured my attention over the past several months:

*Shattered: My Life As A Polygamist’s Wife* (2007). I’ve known for a long time that fundamentalist Mormons believe in polygamy, but I didn’t know *why* until I read this absorbing memoir. Even with the practice outlawed by our government and banned by mainstream Mormons, polygamist groups continue to survive in hiding. This book is well written, its story told by a woman who, at the age of 16, “married” a man who eventually had 10 wives. In 1972 she escaped, after 28 years of virtual slavery. She had given birth to 13 of her husband’s 58 children and adopted a newborn girl. Today she has 118 grandchildren and 37 great-grandchildren. The author, Irene Spencer, was herself a child of polygamy, indoctrinated from childhood that those practicing “plural marriage” were the only ones who would “attain Godhood and avoid Hell.” If you have even the slightest interest in this subject, this is the book to buy!

*The 50 Greatest Love Letters of All Time* (2002). Edited by David H. Lowenherz, this is a superb collection. The letters are reproduced as originally written, including spelling and grammatical imperfections. Included are the sentiments of a wide variety of lovers such as Robert Browning, Oscar Wilde, Mary Todd Lincoln, Harry Truman, Michelangelo, Ronald Reagan, Mozart, and even one from Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn. Great book for those who enjoy history.

## More Reviews

FICTION AND NONFICTION NEWS FROM  
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***The Reincarnationist*** (2007). I was fascinated by M.J. Rose's new novel; however, I must caution those of you who like "quick reads." This book is long (451 pages, hardcover), often confusing, and big chunks of it can be skipped over. This one takes time; and, yes, unlike most books I recommend, you CAN put this one down, often. To enjoy it, you *must* be interested in its subject—reincarnation. Three stories hold this plot together—one in 391 A.D., one in 1894, and one in the present. They meet, mix, and meld, which is both confusing and fascinating. If reincarnation interests you, as it does me (in a future *Bookmark* I may tell you why), there are other books you might want to read first—books that are less complex, yet equally interesting, such as:

Fiction:

- *The Reincarnation of Peter Proud*, Max Erlich (1974)
- *Reincarnation in Venice*, Max Erlich (1979)
- *Lady of Hay*, Barbara Erskine (1986)

Nonfiction (beginning with a classic and ending with an enigma):

- *The Search for Bridey Murphy*, Morey Bernstein (1956)
- *Only Love Is Real*, Brian L. Weiss, M.D. (1996)
- *Reincarnation for the Christian*, Quincy Howe, Jr. (1987)

***The Circle*** (2005). I'm a fan of British author, Peter Lovesey, and have a nice collection of his books. This one—"The Circle" refers to a writers' "circle," or club—would be of more interest to those of you who like to write and can relate to such a group. It's funny, yet suspenseful.

***Her Royal Spyness*** (2007). Over the years, I have thoroughly enjoyed Rhys Bowen's two light mystery series—the Constable Evans books set in Wales, and the Molly Murphy series set in early 20<sup>th</sup> century New York. I especially like the "Molly" books. Bowen's new series begins with *Her Royal Spyness* set in 1930s Britain, featuring Lady Georgianna, a dirt-poor royal relation. It's cute (which tells you something right there) and chatty. I enjoyed the breezy chit-chat for a while but soon tired of it. I won't be collecting this new series.

***What's So Funny?*** (2007). This is a comic "caper" novel. John Dortmunder and his crew of quirky friends are about the unluckiest Robin Hood-type crooks you'll ever find between the pages of a book. And, like me, you'll be laughing and cheering them on! Donald E. Westlake writes his characters' dialog exactly like they talk: "Fuggedabodit. [Forget about it.] See, what it is I gotta do, I gotta stop thinking about getting into the vault because I *can't* get into the vault." Westlake's "serious" books are too harsh for me; I only like the Dortmunder series. His description of abstract paintings: "What they mostly resemble is the bowl after you've finished the ice cream." In my opinion, right on target!

***Snow Blind*** (2006). P.J. Tracy is the pseudonym of a mother-daughter writing team. This is their fourth book, a thriller, and it kept me turning pages ... until the end, literally. Then, I wanted to turn more pages, but there weren't any. The ending let me down and left me hanging. Though the premise is promising—two police officers found entombed in a pair of snowmen—I don't recommend this one.

### Some Good "Reads" (the can't-put-it-down kind):



Tess Gerritsen, *The Bone Garden*; T. Jefferson Parker, *Silent Joe*; Sandra Brown, *Envy*; James Grippando, *Lying With Strangers*; Harlen Coben, *The Innocent*; John Lescroart, *The First Law*; Ridley Pearson, *No Witnesses*.

**Bookmark**  
Janet's Book News

Janet Litherland, author of 10 nonfiction books and three novels, also is editor emeritus and former owner of Write-Choice Services, Inc., a book-development company that aspiring authors can find at: [www.write-choiceservices.com](http://www.write-choiceservices.com).