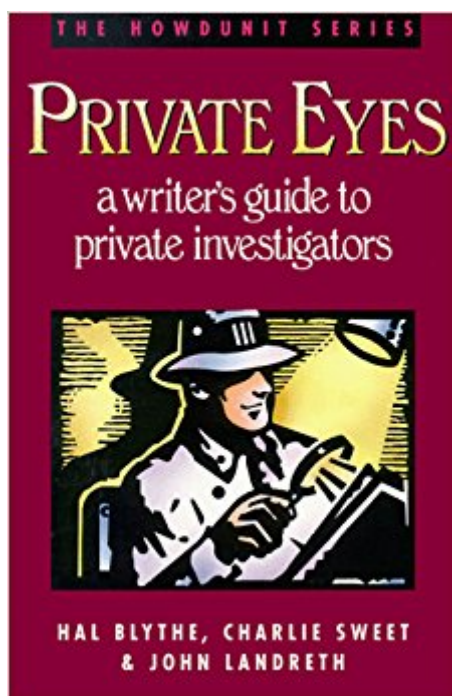


The book was found

Private Eyes: A Writer's Guide To Private Investigating (Howdunit Writing)



Synopsis

Never before has such specialized information been so thoroughly compiled and easily accessible to writers! Each book is written by a professional in their respective field, providing the inside details that writers need to weave a credible -- and salable -- story.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Bintliff, who has worked with the Arkansas State Police, the criminal investigations division of the Army, and the CIA, brings together an incredible amount of information on how police and other law enforcement agencies work. This latest addition to the "Howdunit" series from Writer's Digest Books gives writers authentic and detailed information to sift through and use in their work. Readers learn how police are trained, how they move through the ranks, what kind of equipment they use, and how they prepare for court. This is not a how-to-write-police-fiction book; rather, it is for writers who want help in making their police and law enforcement characters realistic. It also has possibilities as a reference source, providing such information as what the groups of numbers mean in a social security number. A good choice for most libraries. Blythe's book for writers of detective fiction gives detailed information about how real private investigators work. Some of the areas covered are how detectives get their licenses, acquire cases, gather evidence, and lead their personal lives. Included are many examples from real-life PIs. Scattered throughout the text are addresses, sample forms, and telephone numbers that writers can pursue for authentic detail in their writing. Each chapter

ends with hints to help make the writer's detective credible. Both this book and its companion volume would be valuable additions to writing collections.- Lisa J. Cochenet, Rhinelander Dist. Lib., Wis.Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc.

This series of books is superb for mystery/thriller/crime writers. I recommend all of them wholeheartedly. Even after two decades, it sustains - all the series lacks is a real handle on the Internet in crime fighting and crime noveling, but that's understandable ... wish WD would update these books - i'd buy them all over again. I'm writing a private eye novel, and this book has become dog-eared and highlighted to within an inch of its life.

Hal Blythe and others' PRIVATE EYES for the Howdonit Series is a general overview of the profession. It is bland reading, but does give the writer some insight for further research. It is not a book to follow blindly when construction a mystery built around a PI protagonist. At this date of fifteen years after publication it is due a major rewrite to update technology and techniques. If the time period fits your work it can help, because nothing is more frustrating for a reader than to find new methods in a period work. Writing as a Small Business Sins of the Fathers: A Brewster County Novel

Looks interesting.

Unless you just have to own every single book in the Howdunit Series, I'd really recommend skipping this one. It did help me out a little but, for the most part, I found the information contained in this book to be useless. The authors spend way too much time talking about real PIs and their experiences. It's as if the writers are saying that you should base your fictional PI and his experiences on the real ones in this book. Do the authors not realize that a person can be sued for that? The authors even waste several pages of the book to do nothing but give physical descriptions of real PIs. The book actually takes the time to state that the average height of PIs is 5'10" and the average weight is 175. Why exactly is that important? A PI can look like whatever a writer wants him or her to look like. The PI can be a little green man from Mars if the writer wants him to be. Although if the PI is a Martian, then the writer obviously isn't shooting for realism and doesn't need a book to help them be more realistic in the first place. The authors also spend too much time stating that what we see on TV isn't completely realistic. Like anybody with half a brain can't figure that one out on their own. The book contains very little about laws and regulations, which was what I was looking

for. A few accounts of personal experience are fine, but I feel that the book would have been much better if there had been a lot less of that and more about each state's regulations and other things such as that. I just found this book to be a complete waste of money and time. I wouldn't recommend it.

This is another nice addition to the "Howdunit" series of writer's guides to creating a novel. It is not the most detailed book ever, but then its not intended to be a study manual for a criminology student either. It is a good start for research into creating a great detective story. There is another installment in this series that accompanies this book very well. It is called, "Just the Facts Ma'am". You might consider buying that one also. If you fancy yourself an aspiring mystery novelist, this book should be on your shelf.

As a licensed and practicing private investigator, I can tell you that this book does not describe the experiences shared by 90% of real life PIs. Much of what is written appears to have been embellished by either the authors or the consultant to be more dramatic and exciting. For example, Mr. Blythe describes how local law enforcement would encourage private citizens with problems to go directly to his home, no matter what time of day or night. Come on! No officer whom I have ever met would do such a thing! Mr. Blythe describes how easily PIs can obtain a full credit report on someone. Very illegal in 99% of the cases!!! This is a great book if you are looking for ideas of how to get your PI in legal hot water. Other than that, check out Greg Fallis' book in this same series for reliable info.

Very few of us get the opportunity to experience the actual day to day environment of the "cops and robbers" world. "Private Eyes" does a very good job of showing us what goes on in the everyday life of the private investigator, as well as the police detective. Written jointly by two professors of creative writing and an ex-policeman turned private investigator, this book offers an interesting and helpful insight into the profession of crime investigation. Writers need to be factual in their descriptions. After reading this book I found myself editing some of the relevant data I had erroneously included in my novel. It pays to do good research, and this book worked well for me.

I have to say that I was really disappointed with this book. For the most part, the book is nothing more than stories of the personal experiences of a real PI. While real life stories can certainly help a writer, I would have preferred a little more facts regarding the legal aspects of private investigating

and a little more information on private investigating in general instead of just mostly reading about one PI. I came away from this book not knowing much more than before I read it. I really wouldn't recommend buying it. I'd suggest purchasing JUST THE FACTS, MA'AM instead. I found it to be much more informative than this one.

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