

*Contemporary
Authors*

volume 165

Contemporary Authors[®]

A Bio-Bibliographical Guide to
Current Writers in Fiction, General Nonfiction,
Poetry, Journalism, Drama, Motion Pictures,
Television, and Other Fields

SCOT PEACOCK
Editor

volume 165



DETROIT • LONDON

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Preface

Contemporary Authors (CA) provides information on approximately 100,000 writers in a wide range of media, including:

- Current writers of fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and drama whose works have been issued by commercial publishers, risk publishers, or university presses (authors whose books have been published only by known vanity or author-subsidized firms are ordinarily not included)
- Prominent print and broadcast journalists, editors, photojournalists, syndicated cartoonists, graphic novelists, screenwriters, television scriptwriters, and other media people
- Authors who write in languages other than English, provided their works have been published in the United States or translated into English
- Literary greats of the early twentieth century whose works are popular in today's high school and college curriculums and continue to elicit critical attention

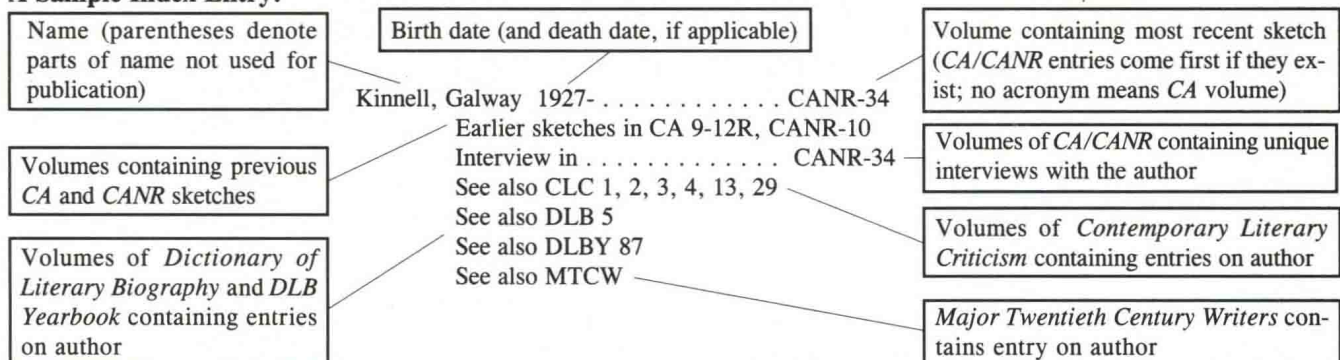
A CA listing entails no charge or obligation. Authors are included on the basis of the above criteria and their interest to CA users. Sources of potential listees include trade periodicals, publishers' catalogs, librarians, and other users.

How to Get the Most out of CA: Use the Index

The key to locating an author's most recent entry is the CA cumulative index, which is published separately and distributed with even-numbered original volumes and odd-numbered revision volumes. It provides access to *all* entries in CA and *Contemporary Authors New Revision Series* (CANR). Always consult the latest index to find an author's most recent entry.

For the convenience of users, the CA cumulative index also includes references to all entries in these Gale literary series: *Authors and Artists for Young Adults*, *Authors in the News*, *Bestsellers*, *Black Literature Criticism*, *Black Writers*, *Children's Literature Review*, *Concise Dictionary of American Literary Biography*, *Concise Dictionary of British Literary Biography*, *Contemporary Authors Autobiography Series*, *Contemporary Authors Bibliographical Series*, *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, *Dictionary of Literary Biography Documentary Series*, *Dictionary of Literary Biography Yearbook*, *DISCovering Authors*, *DISCovering Authors: British*, *DISCovering Authors: Canadian*, *DISCovering Authors: Modules* (including modules for Dramatists, Most-Studied Authors, Multicultural Authors, Novelists, Poets, and Popular/Genre Authors), *Drama Criticism*, *Hispanic Literature Criticism*, *Hispanic Writers*, *Junior DISCovering Authors*, *Major Authors and Illustrators for Children and Young Adults*, *Major 20th-Century Writers*, *Native North American Literature*, *Poetry Criticism*, *Short Story Criticism*, *Something about the Author*, *Something about the Author Autobiography Series*, *Twentieth-Century Literary Criticism*, *World Literature Criticism*, *World Literature Criticism Supplement*, and *Yesterday's Authors of Books for Children*.

A Sample Index Entry:



How Are Entries Compiled?

The editors make every effort to secure new information directly from the authors; listees' responses to our questionnaires and query letters provide most of the information featured in *CA*. For deceased writers, or those who fail to reply to requests for data, we consult other reliable biographical sources, such as those indexed in Gale's *Biography and Genealogy Master Index*, and bibliographical sources, including *National Union Catalog*, *LC MARC*, and *British National Bibliography*. Further details come from published interviews, feature stories, and book reviews, as well as information supplied by the authors' publishers and agents.

An asterisk () at the end of a sketch indicates that the listing has been compiled from secondary sources believed to be reliable but has not been personally verified for this edition by the author sketched.*

What Kinds of Information Does an Entry Provide?

Sketches in *CA* contain the following biographical and bibliographical information:

- **Entry heading:** the most complete form of author's name, plus any pseudonyms or name variations used for writing
- **Personal information:** author's date and place of birth, family data, ethnicity, educational background, political and religious affiliations, and hobbies and leisure interests
- **Addresses:** author's home, office, or agent's addresses, plus e-mail and fax numbers, as available
- **Career summary:** name of employer, position, and dates held for each career post; resume of other vocational achievements; military service
- **Membership information:** professional, civic, and other association memberships and any official posts held
- **Awards and honors:** military and civic citations, major prizes and nominations, fellowships, grants, and honorary degrees
- **Writings:** a comprehensive, chronological list of titles, publishers, dates of original publication and revised editions, and production information for plays, television scripts, and screenplays
- **Adaptations:** a list of films, plays, and other media which have been adapted from the author's work
- **Work in progress:** current or planned projects, with dates of completion and/or publication, and expected publisher, when known
- **Sidelights:** a biographical portrait of the author's development; information about the critical reception of the author's works; revealing comments, often by the author, on personal interests, aspirations, motivations, and thoughts on writing
- **Biographical and critical sources:** a list of books and periodicals in which additional information on an author's life and/or writings appears

Obituary Notices in *CA* provide date and place of birth as well as death information about authors whose full-length sketches appeared in the series before their deaths. These entries also summarize the authors' careers and writings and list other sources of biographical and death information.

Related Titles in the *CA* Series

Contemporary Authors Autobiography Series complements *CA* original and revised volumes with specially commissioned autobiographical essays by important current authors, illustrated with personal photographs they provide. Common topics include their motivations for writing, the people and experiences that shaped their careers, the rewards they derive from their work, and their impressions of the current literary scene.

Contemporary Authors Bibliographical Series surveys writings by and about important American authors since World War II. Each volume concentrates on a specific genre and features approximately ten writers; entries list works written by and about the author and contain a bibliographical essay discussing the merits and deficiencies of major critical and scholarly studies in detail.

Available in Electronic Formats

CD-ROM. Full-text bio-bibliographic entries from the entire *CA* series, covering approximately 100,000 writers, are available on CD-ROM through lease and purchase plans. The disc combines entries from the *CA*, *CANR*, and *Contemporary Authors Permanent Series (CAP)* print series to provide the most recent author listing. The *CA CD-ROM* is searchable by name, title, subject/genre, nationality/ethnicity, and personal data, as well as by using Boolean logic. The disc is updated every six months. For more information, call 1-248-699-4253.

Contemporary Authors is also available on CD-ROM from SilverPlatter Information, Inc.

Online. The *Contemporary Authors* database is made available online to libraries and their patrons through online public access catalog (OPAC) vendors. Currently, *CA* is offered through Ameritech Library Services' Vista Online (formerly Dynix).

GaleNet. *CA* is available on a subscription basis through GaleNet, an online information resource that features an easy-to-use end-user interface, the powerful search capabilities of the BRS/Search retrieval software, and ease of access through the World-Wide Web. For more information, call 1-248-699-4253.

Magnetic Tape. *CA* is available for licensing on magnetic tape in a fielded format. The database is available for internal data processing and nonpublishing purposes only. For more information, call 1-248-699-4253.

Suggestions Are Welcome

The editors welcome comments and suggestions from users on any aspects of the *CA* series. If readers would like to recommend authors for inclusion in future volumes of the series, they are cordially invited to write the Editors; or call at 1-248-699-4253; or fax at 1-248-699-8054.

CA Numbering System and Volume Update Chart

Occasionally questions arise about the *CA* numbering system and which volumes, if any, can be discarded. Despite numbers like “29-32R,” “97-100” and “164,” the entire *CA* print series consists of only 159 physical volumes with the publication of *CA* Volume 165. The following charts note changes in the numbering system and cover design, and indicate which volumes are essential for the most complete, up-to-date coverage.

CA First Revision

- 1-4R through 41-44R (11 books)

Cover: Brown with black and gold trim.

There will be no further First Revision volumes because revised entries are now being handled exclusively through the more efficient *New Revision Series* mentioned below.

CA Original Volumes

- 45-48 through 97-100 (14 books)

Cover: Brown with black and gold trim.

- 101 through 165 (65 books)

Cover: Blue and black with orange bands.

The same as previous *CA* original volumes but with a new, simplified numbering system and new cover design.

CA Permanent Series

- *CAP*-1 and *CAP*-2 (2 books)

Cover: Brown with red and gold trim.

There will be no further *Permanent Series* volumes because revised entries are now being handled exclusively through the more efficient *New Revision Series* mentioned below.

CA New Revision Series

- *CANR*-1 through *CANR*-67 (67 books)

Cover: Blue and black with green bands.

Includes only sketches requiring significant changes; **sketches are taken from any previously published *CA*, *CAP*, or *CANR* volume.**

If You Have:

You May Discard:

CA First Revision Volumes 1-4R through 41-44R and <i>CA Permanent Series</i> Volumes 1 and 2	CA Original Volumes 1, 2, 3, 4 Volumes 5-6 through 41-44
CA Original Volumes 45-48 through 97-100 and 101 through 165	NONE: These volumes will not be superseded by corresponding revised volumes. Individual entries from these and all other volumes appearing in the left column of this chart may be revised and included in the various volumes of the <i>New Revision Series</i> .
CA New Revision Series Volumes <i>CANR</i> -1 through <i>CANR</i> -67	NONE: The <i>New Revision Series</i> does not replace any single volume of <i>CA</i> . Instead, volumes of <i>CANR</i> include entries from many previous <i>CA</i> series volumes. All <i>New Revision Series</i> volumes must be retained for full coverage.

A Sampling of Authors and Media People Featured in This Volume

Allison Anders

A successful female film director and screenwriter, Anders crafts movies that focus on the lives of women. Her films include *Gas Food Lodging*, which won the 1992 New York Film Critic's Circle Best New Director Award.

John M. Barry

Reporter Barry's 1989 volume, *The Ambition and the Power: A True Story of Washington*, chronicles Jim Wright's term as Speaker of the House of Representatives

Rick Bragg

A Pulitzer Prize-winning reporter for his coverage of the Oklahoma City bombing, Bragg describes his personal journey from a harsh childhood to being a successful journalist in the memoir *All Over but the Shoutin'*.

Pat Cadigan

A novelist and short story writer, Cadigan is one of the most successful female writers in the field of science fiction. Her novels include *Mindplayers*, *Synners*, and *Fools*. Cadigan is also the author of the short story collections *Patterns* and *Dirty Work*.

Robert W. Chambers

An early and influential practitioner of horror fiction, Chambers is best known for the *The King in Yellow*, a collection that includes five tales relating to a fictional play which is so horrid it is said to cause madness when read.

William Jefferson Clinton

The forty-second president of the United States, Clinton elaborates on his policies concerning welfare, education, and health care in two volumes, *Putting People First* and *Between Hope and History*.

Robert Fagles

Fagles, who discovered classical Greek literature while a freshman in college, has produced acclaimed translations of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Literary critics have ranked Fagles among the eminent translators of his time.

Sascha Feinstein

A professor and author of the poetry collection *Summerhouse Piano*, Feinstein is interested in the connection between jazz music and poetry. He has co-edited two critically-acclaimed books on the topic, *The Jazz Poetry Anthology* and *The Second Set*.

Adam Gopnik

A writer, editor, and art critic, Gopnik's pieces for the *New Yorker* have received wide recognition. He has also penned books to accompany art exhibits, including *High and Low*, which compares high and commercial art.

Karen Horney

As a psychoanalyst and contemporary of Sigmund Freud, Horney questioned aspects of Freud's work, including his belief that psychological problems originate in childhood. Her views are presented in books such as *Our Inner Conflicts* and *Neurosis and Human Growth*.

John Muir

Naturalist Muir spent much of his time exploring the mountains of California. He turned to writing late in life as a way to combat the the commercial exploitation of the land he loved. His essay collections include *The Mountains of California* and *Studies in the Sierra*.

David M. Oshinsky

Known for the unbiased treatment of his subjects, historian Oshinsky penned *Worse than Slavery*, which describes the inhumane conditions black prisoners endured while serving time at a Mississippi work camp.

Paul Reubens

Actor and comedian Reubens is best known for a character he created, the eccentric and child-like Pee-wee Herman. In addition to portraying Pee-wee in two feature films and a critically-acclaimed television series, Reubens was a writer for these productions.

Charlotte Riddell

Riddell, considered an accomplished writer of supernatural fiction during the Victorian era, is the author of *Weird Stories*, a collection of short fiction. Riddell is also remembered for prose focusing on English society and business life.

George Sterling

A close friend of author-adventurers Ambrose Bierce and Jack London, Sterling was a bohemian poet who was influenced by literary Decadence, a movement that originated in France during the nineteenth century.

Timberlake Wertenbaker

Wertenbaker is a prize-winning playwright whose works include *The Grace of Mary Traverse* and *Three Birds Alighting on a Field*. She won a 1990-1991 Drama Critics Circle Award for *Our Country's Good*.

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Indexing note: All *Contemporary Authors* entries are indexed in the *Contemporary Authors* cumulative index, which is published separately and distributed with even-numbered *Contemporary Authors* original volumes and odd-numbered *Contemporary Authors New Revision Series* volumes.

As always, the most recent *Contemporary Authors* cumulative index continues to be the user's guide to the location of an individual author's listing.

A

ABZUG, Bella S(avitsky) 1920-1998

OBITUARY NOTICE—See index for *CA* sketch: Born July 24, 1920, in New York, NY; died of complications following heart surgery, March 31, 1998, in Manhattan, NY. Attorney, feminist, congresswoman, and author. Sporting her trademark floppy hat and unshaken in her conviction, Abzug was outspoken in her efforts to bring awareness to women's issues, to defend her clients against Senator Joseph McCarthy's investigation into alleged communist activities, to end the war in Vietnam, and to impeach President Richard M. Nixon after Watergate. "Bella was an original," said former New York Mayor Ed Koch as quoted in the *Chicago Tribune*. "The women of the world, not just the country, owe her a great debt. She stood up for them as nobody else. She was their champion." When describing herself in her autobiography *Bella! Ms. Abzug Goes to Washington*, Abzug wrote: "There are those who say I'm impatient, impetuous, uppity, rude, profane, brash and overbearing. Whether I'm any of these things, or all of them, you can decide for yourself. But whatever I am—and this ought to be made very clear at the outset—I am a very serious woman."

Abzug began her career as an attorney, being admitted to the Bar of New York State in 1947. From 1947 to 1970 she was engaged in private practice. It was during these years that she represented various blue collar workers as well as people being investigated during McCarthy's notorious hunt for communists. She also worked in civil rights cases. John J. Goldman in the *Los Angeles Times* recalled that "[Abzug] once hid in the bathroom when the Ku Klux Klan threatened to kill her." In 1961 she became legislative director of the Women's Strike for Peace, a position

she held until she was won a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives in the 19th New York district in 1970. Showing her bent for feminism, Abzug used the slogan "This woman's place is in the House—the House of Representatives" during her campaign. Abzug's victory made her the first Jewish woman ever elected to Congress. Goldman explained that "on her first day in Congress in 1971, she startled colleagues by introducing a resolution calling for the withdrawal of all troops from Indochina. . . . In 1975, she introduced the first lesbian-gay civil rights bill in Congress." From 1972 to 1976 Abzug represented the 20th New York district; she became an assistant whip to House Speaker Thomas "Tip" O'Neill, Jr. She also cowrote legislation concerning privacy acts and the freedom of information act. In the mid-1970s she was named one of the twenty most influential women in the world in a Gallup poll. She made a bid to enter the Senate in 1976 but failed to earn the democratic nomination, nosed out by one percent of the vote by Daniel Patrick Moynihan. In her later years she ran for mayor of New York City and again for the House of Representatives (twice). All three bids were unsuccessful.

While President Jimmy Carter was in office, Abzug was named co-chair of the National Advisory Committee on Women. According to the *New York Times*, "after arguing with [Carter] over economic policy, [Abzug] was sacked. The majority of committee members resigned in protest. Ms. Abzug, unapologetic, said with a shrug, 'I've got to find myself another big, nonpaying job.'" Among the other women's groups she assisted and/or founded were Women-USA, Women's Foreign Policy Council, Women's Environmental and Development Organization, and the National Women's Political Caucus. A

lecturer and speaker, she also offered daily news commentary for CNN. Abzug's raspy voice and large hats were often criticized by her political foes. She once said "Women have been trained to speak softly and carry a lipstick. Those days are over." She took to wearing hats while she was a lawyer so she wouldn't continue to be mistaken for a secretary. She was the author of two books: *Bella!* and, with Mim Kelber, *Gender Gap: Bella Abzug's Guide to Political Power for American Women*.

OBITUARIES AND OTHER SOURCES:

BOOKS

Who's Who in America, Marquis, 1998.

PERIODICALS

Chicago Tribune, April 1, 1998, sec. 1, p. 10.

Los Angeles Times, April 1, 1998, p. A10.

New York Times, April 1, 1998, p. A1.

Washington Post, April 1, 1998, p. B6.

* * *

ALLEN, Nancy 1938-

PERSONAL: Born January 10, 1938, in Pittsburgh, PA; daughter of Alan (a lawyer) and Mary Lang (a homemaker) Riester; married Phillips V. Dean, 1958 (divorced, 1991); married Robert B. Allen, 1991 (a chief mate of a cargo ship); children: (first marriage) Jeffrey B. Dean. *Ethnicity:* "Caucasian". *Education:* Pembroke College, A.B., 1959; Brown University, M.A.T., 1963. *Politics:* Independent. *Avocational interests:* Sailing, diving, collage.

ADDRESSES: Home—1641 Binney Dr., Ft. Pierce, FL 34949. E-mail—seair@gate.net.

CAREER: North Kingstown School Department, North Kingstown, RI, art teacher, 1964-69; Pine School, Stuart, FL, art teacher, 1971-73; boating journalist, 1973-78; real estate broker and salesperson, Stuart, FL, 1978—; nonfiction writer.

MEMBER: Toastmasters International, National League of American Pen Women.

WRITINGS:

Fair Seafarer: A Honeymoon Adventure with the Merchant Marine, Bridge Works (Bridgehampton, NY), 1997.

Contributor of numerous articles to periodicals, including *Boating*, *Motor Boating & Sailing*, and *Motorboat*.

WORK IN PROGRESS: Researching mandatory minimum sentencing and women prisoners.

SIDELIGHTS: In 1969, when Nancy Allen sailed off with her then-husband and ten-year-old son on a forty-foot yawl, she began an adventure that she told *CA* she just had to record. A writer Allen met in her travels suggested submitting some of her work to boating periodicals. From 1973 to 1978 she was a contributing and field editor for *Motor Boating & Sailing* and *Motorboat*. In 1997, after another adventure at sea, Allen wrote *Fair Seafarer: A Honeymoon Adventure with the Merchant Marine*.

In 1991, after seeing an advertisement in a yachting magazine seeking a woman to help outfit a cutter and cruise the Bahamas, Allen, recently divorced from her husband of thirty-two years, applied for the job. She ended up marrying the *M/V Endurance* chief mate, who worked as a merchant seaman six months of each year. According to a *Publishers Weekly* reviewer, Allen's new husband, a man she knew all of eight months, warned her, "This would be no row in the pond." Allen set out to sea with *Endurance*, a modern container ship with a small crew that carries goods from port to port. The *Publishers Weekly* contributor who reviewed *Fair Seafarer* wrote that "Allen is continually engrossing, informative and fun," and noted the author's comparison of today's ships with those of the past, and discussion of practical, everyday tasks such as paperwork, and the teeming human traffic during her brief shoretime in Asia.

Allen's diary begins with a quote from a fellow seafarer: "A sailor's life is at best but a mixture of a little good with much evil, and a little pleasure with much pain. The beautiful is linked with the revolting, the sublime with the commonplace, and the solemn with the ludicrous." The 845-foot freighter *Endurance* is just three feet shorter than the *Titanic*, a fact noted by Allen as they set out and navigated through iceberg territory.

In the *Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel*, reviewer Eileen Spiegler wrote of Allen, "Her personal ship log has something even for those without sea legs. With her twin gifts of word economy and luxurious detail, she captures the world." Allen's details include a history of the Merchant Marine, which dates back to 1500 B.C., when Egypt, Crete, Greece, and Phoenicia started building ships able to withstand the open sea. Joan Baum, an *Independent* commentator, asserted that the information in *Fair Seafarer* on food alone is worthwhile reading.

Allen told *CA*: "As an only child, my playmates were story-spinning authors. Literary flights transported me away from bleak Pittsburgh to the Emerald City, and into the heavens/under the sea with Mary Poppins. Although I majored in art, I never stopped reading—especially adventure stories. I wrote adolescent poetry and long letters to friends, in the style of my new heroine: Dorothy Parker.

"Finally, at thirty-one, I embarked on a real-life odyssey: I sailed off with my former husband and ten-year-old son on a forty-foot yawl. Freed of life's usual obligations, I began writing down my experiences (for how can you go boating without adventure?).

"A freelancer I met in the Dry Tortugas showed me *Writer's Market*; she suggested submitting to 'the magazine that pays the most.' This I did. I'll never forget tearing open the letter from *Boating*. Its editor wrote, '[Yours is] one of the finest articles I've had the opportunity to bring to our readers. You have a rare gift.' At that precise moment, I became serious about writing.

"In 1991 my thirty-two-year marriage collapsed. Lost and lonely, I answered a want ad in—what else?—a boating magazine. Oh how I wanted to go sailing again, but romance . . . never. Well, eight months later I married the ad-placer and found myself on the high seas again. Not on the sailboat described in the want ad, however; but on my mate's containership plying the North Pacific and Far East.

"Removed from responsibility, I had time to observe, reflect, and write. I had recently read Paul Theroux's *Riding the Iron Rooster* and Mary Morris's *Nothing to Declare*; and re-read *Two Years before the Mast*. These books, like my childhood tales, took me to places I could not/would not go in real life. Now it was my turn . . . to bring readers along on a seagoing adventure."

BIOGRAPHICAL/CRITICAL SOURCES:

BOOKS

Allen, Nancy, *Fair Seafarer: A Honeymoon Adventure with the Merchant Marine*, Bridge Works (Bridgehampton, NY), 1997.

PERIODICALS

Independent, December 24, 1997, p. B32.

Publishers Weekly, August 25, 1997.

Sun-Sentinel (Ft. Lauderdale, FL), November 9, 1997.

* * *

ALMASI, Janice F. 1963-

PERSONAL: Born September 16, 1963, in Pittsburgh, PA; daughter of John (in electronics) and Jessie L. (an artist) Almasi. **Ethnicity:** "English/Hungarian." **Education:** Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, B.S.Ed., 1984; University of Maryland at College Park, M.Ed., 1989, Ph.D., 1993. **Religion:** Byzantine Catholic.

ADDRESSES: *Office*—583 Baldy Hall, State University of New York at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY 14260. *E-mail*—almasi@acsu.buffalo.edu.

CAREER: State University of New York at Buffalo, associate professor of reading, 1994—. Niagara Frontier Reading Council, president-elect, 1998-99.

MEMBER: International Reading Association, American Educational Research Association, National Reading Conference, National Council on Research in Language and Literacy, New York State Reading Association.

WRITINGS:

(Editor) *Lively Discussions: Fostering Engaged Reading*, International Reading Association (Newark, DE), 1996.

WORK IN PROGRESS: Research on developmental theory of peer discussion.

ALTEN, Steve 1959-

PERSONAL: Born August 21, 1959, in Havertan, PA; son of Larry and Barbara Alten; married Kim (a physician's assistant), June, 1992; children: three. **Ethnicity:** "Jewish." **Education:** Pennsylvania State University, B.S.; University of Delaware, M.S.; Temple University, Ed.D., 1988. **Religion:** Jewish.

ADDRESSES: Agent—Ken Atchity, Atchity Editorial/Entertainment International, 435 South Curson, Los Angeles, CA 90036.

CAREER: Writer. Former self-employed water purification systems salesman and general manager of a wholesale meat plant.

WRITINGS:

Meg: A Novel of Deep Terror, Bantam-Doubleday (New York City), 1997.

ADAPTATIONS: *Meg* has been recorded on audiocassette by Bantam Books Audio, 1997; film rights for *Meg* have been purchased by Disney.

WORK IN PROGRESS: *Fathom*.

SIDELIGHTS: Steve Alten is the author of *Meg: A Novel of Deep Terror*, a horrific thriller about a massive prehistoric shark, a *Carcharodon megalodon*, that has survived into present times. Patterned deliberately after Peter Benchley's *Jaws*, *Meg* reportedly earned Alten over three million dollars between print and film rights.

The megalodon, described as significantly more powerful than a tyrannosaurus rex, is first discovered by the novel's hero, Jonas Taylor, while he performs a covert diving operation in the Pacific Ocean. As the sole survivor of that operation, Taylor is haunted by thoughts of the giant shark, which he only glimpsed. Years later, Taylor has become an authority in paleontology obsessed with the megalodon. Through both the encouragement of an old friend and the rivalry of an attractive woman who pilots submarines, Taylor eventually determines to return to the megalodon's site.

The megalodon—weighing twenty tons and possessing a jaw span of nine feet—eventually reaches the water's surface. A nuclear submarine, an old destroyer, and even a helicopter are called upon to battle the monster as it consumes or destroys seem-

ingly everything it encounters. Taylor, despite being inside a mini-submarine, ultimately finds himself a victim of the shark and its seemingly insatiable appetite. But the hero proves resourceful even in amazingly unlikely circumstances.

Some critics dismissed *Meg* as incoherent and unrealistic; others accepted the novel as light entertainment. Richard Ellis, in a negative review in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*, described *Meg* as a nothing but a "stepping-stone to a Hollywood extravaganza with expensive special effects, throbbing music, and plenty of blood." A *Kirkus Reviews* critic, while criticizing Alten's prose, called *Meg* "hellishly riveting."

Alten told *CA*: "I have always enjoyed reading action novels and wanted to become a writer. I wanted to write about subjects that would hold a reader's attention. The story has to be fast-paced and fun, but believable. My writing process begins with a basic concept and expands as I research the subject. The storyline is developed from research. My primary motivation when I wrote *Meg* was to earn money, as my family and I were struggling financially at the time. *Meg* was written at my dining room table from ten o'clock at night to four o'clock in the morning over one year."

BIOGRAPHICAL/CRITICAL SOURCES:**PERIODICALS**

- Booklist*, April 15, 1997, p. 1364.
Entertainment Weekly, June 20, 1997, p. 64.
Kirkus Reviews, April 15, 1997, pp. 568-569.
Library Journal, May 1, 1997, p. 136.
Los Angeles Times Book Review, July 20, 1997, p. 2.
Publishers Weekly, March 24, 1997, p. 56; May 12, 1997, p. 24.

OTHER

Meet Steve Alten, <http://www.lainet.com/~aeikja/steve.htm> (1998).

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ANDERS, Allison 1954-

PERSONAL: Born November 16, 1954, in Ashland, KY; children: two. **Education:** Attended Los Angeles

Valley Junior College and University of California—Los Angeles film school.

ADDRESSES: Office—UTA, 9560 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90210-3710; Cineville Inc., Skywalker Studios, 1861 South Bundy Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90025. *Agent*—Joel Milner, 10100 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles CA 90067.

CAREER: Screenwriter, film director, and producer. Director of films, including (with Dean Lent and Kurt Voss) *Border Radio*, 1987; *Gas Food Lodging*, I.R.S. Releasing, 1992; *Mi vida loca*, Sony, 1993; (with others) *Four Rooms*, Miramax, 1995; *Grace of My Heart*, Gramercy/Universal, 1996. Producer of films, including *Lover Girl*, Peninsula Films/Dream Entertainment, 1997.

AWARDS, HONORS: Best First Film Award (with others), University of California—Los Angeles, 1982, for *Border Radio*; Best New Director Award, New York Film Critics' Circle, 1992, for *Gas Food Lodging*; MacArthur Foundation fellowship, 1995.

WRITINGS:

SCREENPLAYS

(Coauthor) *Border Radio*, International Film Marketing, 1982.

Gas Food Lodging, I.R.S. Releasing, 1992.

Mi vida loca (title means "My Crazy Life"), Sony, 1994.

(Coauthor), *Four Rooms*, Miramax, 1995, Faber (London), 1996.

Grace of My Heart, Gramercy/Universal, 1996.

Also author of the screenplay *Paul Is Dead* (not produced).

SIDELIGHTS: Allison Anders is an independent filmmaker known for her focus on women's lives and coming-of-age themes. Reviewers have noted that her films, which include *Grace of My Heart*, *Mi vida loca*, and a segment of 1996's *Four Rooms*, in part draw on her own experience. Anders' first feature film, *Gas Food Lodging*, won the 1992 New York Film Critics Circle's Best New Director Award. A screenwriter and director, Anders also received a MacArthur fellowship award in 1995.

According to *Film Comment* reviewer Maitland McDonagh, *Gas Food Lodging* (1992) is "a real women's road movie," as contrasted with *Thelma &*

Louise, which was "a standard-issue road picture in drag." The characters in *Gas Food Lodging* are reminiscent of the background people in the backwater towns that such "standard-issue" road-movie compadres speed by on their way somewhere else. Nora is a fortysomething waitress in a truck-stop restaurant located in the desert region of southern New Mexico. One of her teenage daughters, Shade, divides her time between weeping over the films of a Mexican movie queen and looking for a man for her mother, so she can have the experience of the "normal" family life she lost when her father left years before. Nora's other daughter, Trudi, spends her time sleeping with the local high school boys. Nora tries her best to raise her daughters in their small mobile home, but has trouble communicating with them. *Washington Post* reviewer Hal Hinton called the film "a great movie about making do." He added that Anders' film is comprised of "a collection of keenly shaped observations and found moments," and commented, "It's the singularity of these moments and the vitality and resistance of these characters that make *Gas Food Lodging* stand out."

Mi vida loca (1994), which translates as "My Crazy Life," is set in Anders' old Los Angeles neighborhood, Echo Park. In "a stunted world, rooted in ignorance, multigenerational poverty, and random violence," as described by Maitland McDonagh in *Film Comment*, the film follows the lives of teenage Latina gang girls Mousie, Sad Girl, Giggles, Rachel, Whisper, and La Blue Eyes, and of the frequently absent males in their lives: gang members, convicts, drug users and dealers, and those who die young. The girls—some of whom are professional actors, while others are young women from the neighborhood—mimic their male counterparts in an attempt to assert control over their lives, not only by dealing drugs, fighting, and other acts of violence, but even by serving time or becoming victims of violence themselves. But their mimicry does not lead them to stability and comfort, and, as McDonagh put it, "Anders doesn't pretend they're even close." At the film's end, the girls have changed but their problems haven't. *Mi vida loca* "occasionally comes astonishingly close to poetry," in the opinion of McDonagh, reviewing Anders' work for *Film Comment*. Hal Hinson, writing for the *Washington Post*, declared, "Anders' zigzagging story line allows her to follow side roads that result in beautiful digressions of the sort you wouldn't find in a more conventional film."

In *Four Rooms*, Anders shares credit with fellow indie filmmakers Quentin Tarantino, Robert Rodriguez,

and Alexandre Rockwell, each of whom contributed one episode. The film tells the story of Ted, a bellhop, who is alternately demeaned, seduced, and otherwise berated by hotel guests before finally getting his comeuppance in four rooms of a Hollywood hotel. Anders' contribution is "The Missing Ingredient," in which Ted comes upon a coven of witches (including Madonna), who attempt to seduce him so that they can obtain some sperm for one of their ritual ceremonies. The screenplays were published in 1996 in book form, under the same title.

In her 1996 film *Grace of My Heart*, Anders chronicles the romantic and musical career of a teenage Philadelphia heiress who turns up in Broadway's Brill Building in 1958, hoping to find success as a singer. A producer named Joel changes the young woman's name from Edna Buxton to Denise Waverly and has her write songs for female vocal groups—songs that turn out to be hits. Denise falls for a fellow songwriter (who tries to ride her coat tails), gets dumped by a married disc jockey, and then winds up on the California Coast with a paranoid but brilliant producer/rock star, all of them whom drag her down. Finally, Denise is given the chance to fulfill her dreams to become a singer and a star in her own right by Joel, who has remained a friend and mentor throughout the film. In *Entertainment Weekly*, reviewer Owen Gleiberman remarked that the film is "fresh and thrilling, and very much from a woman's vantage, to linger on this backstage view." *Newsweek* critic David Ansen praised "the story's contagious vitality." Loosely based on the early career of pop singer Carole King, *Grace of My Heart* incorporates new songs written by veteran 1960s composers Burt Bacharach, Joni Mitchell, and Gerry Goffin (Carole King's ex-husband), as well as by 1990s composers Elvis Costello, Los Lobos, and Sonic Youth.

BIOGRAPHICAL/CRITICAL SOURCES:

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Contemporary Theater, Film, and Television, Volume 16, Gale (Detroit, MI), 1997.

PERIODICALS

Chicago Sun-Times, August 12, 1994; December 25, 1995.

Entertainment Weekly, August 21, 1992, p. 39; July 22, 1994, pp. 24-25; February 17, 1995; January 12, 1996, p. 42; September 13, 1996, p. 111.

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Interview, June, 1994, p. 96.

Ms., May/June, 1994, pp. 80-83.

Newsweek, October 7, 1996, p. 78.

People Weekly, August 29, 1994, p. 20; January 15, 1996, p. 19; September 16, 1996, p. 27.

Playboy, August, 1994, p. 17.

Premiere, November, 1995, p. 76; October, 1996, p. 49.

Rolling Stone, July 14, 1994, p. 99; October 3, 1996, p. 79.

Sight and Sound, May, 1996, p. 44.

Time, September 12, 1994; September 16, 1996, p. 90.

Vanity Fair, October, 1996, p. 194.

Variety, September 25, 1995, p. 93; September 9, 1996, p. 115.

Video Magazine, April, 1997, p. 78.

Vogue, July, 1994, p. 68; December, 1995, p. 178.

Washington Post, October 2, 1992; August 5, 1994; December 25, 1995.

OTHER

Chicago Sun-Times, http://www.suntimes.com/ebert/ebert_reviews/1996/09/091302.html (1998).

Internet Movie Database, <http://www.imdb.com> (1998).

USA Today, <http://www.usatoday.com/life/enter/movies/lef215.htm> (October 29, 1997).*

—Sketch by Richard Chapman

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ANDRESS, Lesley

See SANDERS, Lawrence

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ANDREW, John A. III 1943-

PERSONAL: Born January 16, 1943, in Boston, MA; son of John A., Jr. and Deborah M. Andrew; married September, 1966; wife's name, Roz (a printer); children: John F., Lea W. Andrew Frandina. **Education:** University of New Hampshire, B.A., 1965, M.A., 1967; University of Texas at Austin, Ph.D., 1973. **Religion:** Unitarian-Universalist.

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