

*Contemporary
Authors*

volume 152

Contemporary Authors®

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

**TERRIE M. ROONEY,
JENNIFER GARIEPY,
Editors**

volume 152



DETROIT • NEW YORK • TORONTO • LONDON

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Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 62-52046
ISBN 0-7876-0127-6
ISSN 0010-7468

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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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

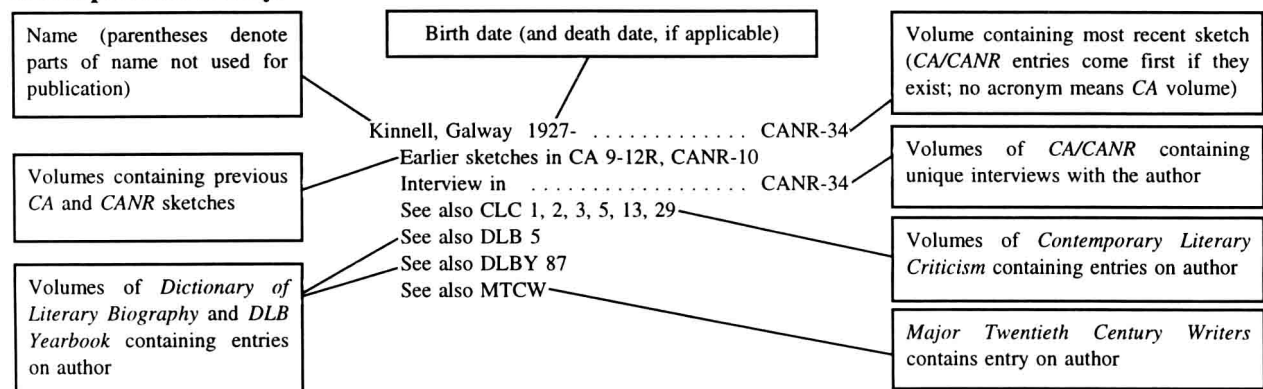
A CA listing entails no charge or obligation. Authors are included on the basis of the above criteria and their interest to CA users. Sources of potential listees include trade periodicals, publisher's catalogs, librarians, and other users.

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*, 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. It can be searched by name, title, subject/genre, nationality/ethnicity, personal data, and as well as advanced searching using boolean logic. The disc is updated every six months. For more information, call 1-800-877-GALE.

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), and is expected to become available through CARL Systems and The Library Corporation. More OPAC vendor offerings will soon follow.

GaleNet. *CA* is available on a subscription basis through GaleNet, a new 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 1-800-877-GALE.

Magnetic Tape. *CA* is available for licensing on magnetic tape in a fielded format. Either the complete database or a custom selection of entries may be ordered. The database is available for internal data processing and nonpublishing purposes only. For more information, call 1-800-877-GALE.

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, *Contemporary Authors*, 835 Penobscot Bldg., 645 Griswold St., Detroit, MI 48226-4094; call toll-free at 1-800-347-GALE; or fax at 1-313-961-6599.

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 “152,” the entire *CA* print series consists of only 131 physical volumes with the publication of *CA* Volume 152. 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 152 (51 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*-53 (53 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 152	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> -53	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

Stephen Vincent Benet

Benet wrote poems, short stories, plays, and films. He is best known for his works that celebrate American history, two of which were awarded the Pulitzer Prize: *John Brown's Body* in 1929, and *Western Star* in 1944.

Margarethe Cammermeyer

Colonel Cammermeyer sparked controversy in 1992 when the U.S. military discharged her solely because she is a lesbian. Later reinstated by a court order, she relates her story in the memoir *Serving in Silence*.

Carol Higgins Clark

An author and actor, Clark is the writer of the Regan Reilly series of mystery novels, including the popular books *Decked*, *Snagged*, and *Iced*. *Decked* was nominated for an Agatha Award.

Paulo Coelho

A contemporary of Gabriel Garcia Marquez, Coelho is one of the most popular writers in Latin America. Among his translated works are *The Diary of a Magus: The Road to Santiago* and *The Valkyries: An Encounter with Angels*.

Mickey Dolenz

A member of the popular rock group The Monkees, Dolenz tries his hand at writing with his memoir, *I'm a Believer: My Life of Monkees, Music, and Madness*, which he wrote with noted celebrity collaborator Mark Bego.

Duong Thu Huong

Born in Vietnam, Duong is among the most popular novelists in her country. Her works, which include *Paradise of the Blind* and *Novel without a Name*, often address the effects of Communist rule in Vietnam.

Richard Linklater

A screenwriter and director noted for his penetrating wit and gift for dialogue, Linklater is the creator of such popular films as *Dazed and Confused*, *Before Sunrise*, and the underground cult classic *Slacker*.

Bruce Olds

Olds's first novel, *Raising Holy Hell*, is a fictionalized account of abolitionist John Brown and his crusade to eradicate slavery in America. The book was nominated for a Pulitzer Prize and received numerous other accolades.

Mark Polizzotti

An award-winning translator, Polizzotti is also the author of *Revolution of the Mind: The Life of Andre Breton*, which chronicles the life of the man credited with starting the surrealist movement in literature and art.

Richard Pryor

A popular comic actor and screenwriter, Pryor defined himself in films, on television, and comedic recordings. He discusses his life, including his struggle with multiple sclerosis, in *Pryor Convictions: And Other Life Sentences*.

Evan Thomas

Thomas won the Harry S Truman Book Award in 1988 for his volume *The Wise Men: Six Friends and the World They Made*, which relates the story of six influential men who shaped U.S. foreign policy following World War II.

A. J. Verdelle

Essayist and novelist Verdelle is the author of *The Good Negress*, which received numerous tributes, including the Literary Honor Award from the Black Caucus of the American Library Association.

Sheila Watson

With the publication of *The Double Hook*, Watson is considered to have created the first modern Canadian novel. Among other accolades, the book garnered her the Beta Sigma Phi Canadian Book Award.

Walter Jon Williams

A prolific author of science fiction and adventure novels, Williams's work includes *Hardwired* and *Wall, Stone, Craft*. His books have received numerous honors, including Nebula and Hugo Award nominations.

Tim Winton

Winton is an Australian author whose books are noted for their well-drawn characters and settings. Among his best known works are the novels *An Open Swimmer* and *The Riders*, which was shortlisted for the Booker Prize in 1995.

Steve Zaillian

Zaillian is a screenwriter revered for his intelligent adaptations. His credits include *The Falcon and the Snowman*, *Clear and Present Danger*, and *Schindler's List*, for which he received an Academy Award.

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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.

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**Indicates that a listing has been compiled from secondary sources believed to be reliable, but has not been personally verified for this edition by the author sketched.*

ABDEL-MAGID, Isam Mohammed 1952-

PERSONAL: Born July 19, 1952, in Rufa'a, Sudan; son of Mohammed Abdel-Magid (a carpenter) and Umsalama (a homemaker; maiden name, El-Tahir) Ahmed; married Layla Salih Mahmoud (a chemical engineer), September 21, 1979; children: Lubna, Hisham, Mohammed, Tagried, Tasneem, Ayah. **Education:** University of Khartoum, B.Sc., 1977; University of Padova, Diploma in Hydrology, 1978; Delft University of Technology, M.Sc., 1979; University of Strathclyde, Ph.D., 1982. **Religion:** Islamic. **Avocational interests:** Reading.

ADDRESSES: *Home*—Al-Barari Post Office, Box 51, Buri, Khartoum, Sudan. *Office*—Department of Civil Engineering, College of Engineering Sciences, Omdurman Islamic University, Box 382, Omdurman, Sudan. *E-mail*—eng0037@squ.edu.

CAREER: General Corporation for Irrigation and Drainage, Wad Medani, Sudan, civil engineer, 1977; University of Khartoum, Khartoum, Sudan, assistant professor, 1982-87, associate professor of civil engineering, 1987-88; University of the United Arab Emirates, Al-Ain, assistant professor of civil engineering, 1988-91; Sultan Qaboos University, Oman, assistant professor of engineering, 1991—. Omdurman Islamic University, professor of water resources and environmental engineering, 1995—. Sudanese Engineering Council, specialist engineer.

MEMBER: International Water Resources Association, Sudan Engineering Society, Sudanese Environment Conservation Society, Institution of Water and Environmental Management (England).

WRITINGS:

Selected Problems in Water Supply, Khartoum University Press (Khartoum, Sudan), 1986.
Selected Problems in Wastewater Engineering, Khartoum University Press, 1987.
 (With D. R. Rowe) *Handbook of Wastewater Reclamation and Reuse*, CRC Press (Boca Raton, FL), 1995.
 (With Rowe and A. M. Hago) *Modeling Methods for Environmental Engineers*, CRC Press, in press.

IN ARABIC

(With B. M. El-Hassan and M. E. Siddig) *Guidelines for the Operation and Maintenance of Slow Sand Filters in Rural Sudan*, International Ref. Center for Community Water Supply and Sanitation (Rijswijk, Netherlands), 1983.
Water Treatment and Sanitary Engineering, Khartoum University Press, 1986.
 (With El-Hassan) *Water Supply in the Sudan*, Khartoum University Press, 1986.
 (With El-Hassan) *Industry and the Environment: The Treatment of Industrial Wastes*, Institute of Environmental Studies, University of Khartoum, 1986.
Environmental Engineering, Dar Al-Mustaqbal Publishers (Amman, Jordan), 1995.
Pollution: Hazards and Control, Arab League Education Culture Science Organization (Tunis, Tunisia), in press.

WORK IN PROGRESS: Research on the reuse of industrial wastewater.

SIDELIGHTS: Isam Mohammed Abdel-Magid told CA: "My dreams of becoming a writer date back to

my childhood. These dreams, which revolved around writing fiction, never flourished, even when I thought of collecting my grandma's fairy tales. Somehow, a taste for engineering was forced on me in school and with the help of my father. I would have loved to be a general practitioner of medicine instead.

"Anyway, I learned to love the engineering sciences. Teaching environmental subjects opened doors and inspired my writing. I recognized the shortcomings of various textbooks. I lived in a poor country where books are scarce and expensive. Writing textbooks would serve many purposes: they could bring true long forgotten dreams, enhance teaching, foster learning, provide cheap, locally available books, and enrich the local language. Thus, Arabic environmental books were born. Then, I began writing English problem-solving books.

"Now, I write in both languages. It is an admirable habit that may, however, be a nuisance to my family. My work is greatly influenced by the research results and papers that I read in specialized journals and books. I used to read everything that I could grasp. I am still attracted by fiction, and I can't help my weakness for international writers."

* * *

ABRAHAM, Pearl

PERSONAL: Education: Graduate of New York University's writing program.

WRITINGS:

The Romance Reader, Riverhead Books (New York), 1995.

Also author of short story, "The Engagement," *Commentary*, July 1995.

SIDELIGHTS: Pearl Abrahamrevie's first novel, *The Romance Reader*, takes its title from the teenage heroine's taste for modern and traditional romance novels. Although it might not be unusual for a teenager to love romance stories, the young female character in *The Romance Reader*, Rachel Benjamin, is the daughter of an orthodox rabbi and in her family such literature is forbidden. Even a library card is prohibited. Rachel rebels against religious strictures

that prohibit such activities as dancing, singing, watching television, and anything but extremely guarded contact between the sexes. The author, Abraham, grew up in a Hasidic community and draws on her experiences growing up to develop Rachel's character.

While *The Romance Reader* takes place in modern times, in a small upstate New York community, the way of life depicted in Abraham's writings shares much with Jewish life of long ago. *Los Angeles Times* reviewer Elaine Kendall comments: "An intimate, unsettling, and wholly engaging look inside a seldom-revealed world, *The Romance Reader* benefits from the unique quality of its setting and the fact that the narrator has grown up within the community. Though there have been some fascinating nonfiction excursions into the life of the Hasidim, these have been from an outsider's dispassionate viewpoint. Here the subject is treated with an empathy and understanding that no mere observer, no matter how sensitive, could possibly summon."

A reviewer writes in *Entertainment Weekly* that Abraham's coming-of-age novel, *The Romance Reader*, has "great subtlety and warmth." A *Publishers Weekly* critic notes that "Abraham's intense, sensitive prose and her ability to create vivid scenes and memorable characters augment this authentic, often disturbing, look at Hasidic home life and beliefs. *The Romance Reader* was selected as a Literary Guild featured alternate selection.

BIOGRAPHICAL/CRITICAL SOURCES:

PERIODICALS

Commentary, July, 1995, p. 36.

Entertainment Weekly, September 8, 1995, p. 77.

Los Angeles Times, August 29, 1995, p. E5.

Village Voice, August 22, 1995, p. 72.*

* * *

ABRAHAMS, Peter 1947-

PERSONAL: Born in 1947, son of a dentist; married Diana Gray (a teacher), 1978; children: Seth, Ben, Lily. Education: Williams College, B.A., 1968.

ADDRESSES: Agent—c/o Warner Books/Mysterious Press, 1271 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020.

CAREER: Writer. Worked as a spear fisherman in the Bahamas, 1968-70; Canadian Broadcasting Co., Toronto, Canada, producer.

AWARDS, HONORS: Edgar Award nomination for best novel of 1994, for *Lights Out*.

WRITINGS:

THRILLERS

The Fury of Rachel Monette, Macmillan (New York), 1980.

Tongues of Fire, M. Evans (New York), 1982.

Hard Rain, Dutton (New York), 1988.

Pressure Drop, Dutton, 1989.

Revolution #9, Mysterious Press (New York), 1992.

Lights Out, Mysterious Press, 1994.

The Fan, Warner Books (New York), 1995.

Also author of *Red Message*, 1986.

ADAPTATIONS: *The Fan* was adapted for film by Frank Darabont and Phoebe Sutton and released by TriStar, 1996.

SIDELIGHTS: Peter Abrahams is author of several suspenseful novels that have become favorites of readers and critics alike. "Abrahams's thrillers, generally first-rate, . . . usually hinge on the sins of the past (Nazi intrigue, etc.) staining the present," according to a critic for *Kirkus Reviews*. In an interview with Kay Longcope of the *Boston Globe*, Abrahams explained: "They're all sorts of thrillers, but defining them isn't easy. . . . I think of them as novels but the suspense element plays a strong role. I like to lead my main character to something the reader will dread, then say, 'Given characteristics of that particular character, that had to happen.' I like a bit of humor, too. Generally, thrillers provide a humorless terrain."

Abrahams's books often feature ordinary heroes and heroines, complicated plot twists, and political intrigue. His first, *The Fury of Rachel Monette*, follows the title character to Morocco, France, and Israel as she attempts to solve her husband's murder, discover the secret of a 1942 German letter he left behind, and recover her young son, who has been kidnapped by a man posing as a rabbi. *The Fury of Rachel Monette* garnered praise from critics: A *Publishers Weekly* reviewer commented that "[s]teadily sustained suspense and smooth writing keep the reader hooked," and *Spectator* contributor Harriet Waugh called the

book "well written, fast moving, constantly surprising and jolly exciting."

An Israel connection also figures prominently in *Tongues of Fire*, Abrahams's second novel. In it, Isaac Rehv, a former Israeli soldier, flees to the United States after his country is destroyed by Arab invaders. There, Rehv conspires to assassinate an Arab leader and attracts the attention of a zealous CIA agent who tails Rehv around the world, from Canada to Sudan and Mecca. Although some reviewers considered *Tongues of Fire* to be a bit implausible, many praised Abrahams's skill nonetheless. A *Publishers Weekly* reviewer termed the book "fast-paced and exciting," while *Los Angeles Times Book Review* contributor Raymond Mungo called it "a wickedly clever and intricate mystery." According to a *West Coast Review of Books* critic, Abrahams's "gripping prose can best be described as throat-grabbing."

Abrahams's third thriller to catch the attention of critics was *Hard Rain*, which conjures up the atmosphere of the late 1960s and takes its title from a Bob Dylan tune. In it, Jessie Shapiro is caught up in political intrigue as she searches for her ex-husband and young daughter, who have failed to return from a weekend trip. Defining events of the past, such as Woodstock and the Vietnam War, haunt the present as Jessie treks from Los Angeles to Vermont in search of clues. Writing in the *Los Angeles Book Review*, Charles Champlin praised *Hard Rain* as a "top-rank adventure." *Publishers Weekly* critic Sybil Steinberg called the book "an intricate, convincing thriller." *New York Times Book Review* contributor William J. Harding was also enthusiastic, commenting that *Hard Rain* has the elements of "a good thriller": "style, atmosphere and a surprising plot."

Pressure Drop, Abrahams's follow-up to *Hard Rain*, also generated approval from critics. According to *Quill & Quire* contributor Paul Stuewe, "*The Fury of Rachel Monette* and *Hard Rain* were competent thrillers, but Peter Abrahams's latest novel breaks to the front ranks of this extremely crowded field." In *Pressure Drop*, Abrahams sets up two seemingly unrelated plot lines that eventually collide. In one, suspicious and dangerous circumstances develop around Nina Kitchener, whose baby boy, conceived through artificial insemination, is kidnapped from the hospital shortly after birth. In the other, N. H. "Matt" Matthias investigates nagging questions surrounding a scuba-diving accident that took place at his resort in the Bahamas, uncovering a connection between the

accident and Nina's tragedy. Reviewing *Pressure Drop* in the *Armchair Detective*, William J. Schafer praised Abrahams's writing as "highly literate, brisk, and graphic," and his characterizations as "fresh and unclined."

Flashbacks to 1960s Vietnam War protests provide a backdrop for Abrahams's next thriller, *Revolution #9*. The main character is Charlie Ochs, a Cape Cod lobsterman who has been lying low since a campus protest bombing he was involved in accidentally killed a young boy. Ochs, who has spent nearly twenty years living underground, is finally tracked down by federal agents the night before his wedding. He is given an ultimatum: help the government find the bombing's mastermind, Rebecca Klein, or serve time for his own role in the attack. According to *Tribune Books* contributor Richard Martins: "Charlie's hunt through the past is an often painful but always gripping story. Abrahams weaves in and out of time and temperament with considerable skill." Although finding *Revolution #9* a bit "uneven," a *Publishers Weekly* reviewer nonetheless noted that "expert pacing and an intriguing plot hold the reader's interest."

Abrahams followed *Revolution #9* with *Lights Out*, which received an Edgar Award nomination for best novel of 1994. The book's main character is Eddie Nye, who, despite his innocence, has spent fifteen years in prison on drug charges. He is not free long before he is again plunged into dangerous intrigue while investigating his frame-up. According to *Publishers Weekly* critic Sybil Steinberg, Abrahams "creates a fascinating and memorable character in Eddie Nye." Steinberg further noted, "Consistently interesting and suspenseful, his thriller's shocking outcome is revealed only on the very last page."

In his eighth book, *The Fan*, Abrahams focuses on Gil Renard, a down-and-out traveling knife salesman, and Bobby Rayburn, an arrogant and successful baseball player who is riding out a batting slump. Renard, a baseball fanatic, has lost his job and wife and has slid into committing petty crimes. He becomes obsessed with Rayburn, managing to become the caretaker on the ballplayer's estate while he plans to murder the star on the field. *The Fan* was a hit with critics; *Booklist* contributor Wes Lukowsky called it a "first-rate thriller," and *Library Journal* reviewer Margaret Hanes termed it an "excellent novel." A *Rapport* critic proclaimed that if "you're not a fan of Peter Abrahams by now, *The Fan* will make you

one." *The Fan* was filmed in 1996 by action pro Tony Scott, and starred Robert DeNiro and Wesley Snipes.

Commenting on his books to Kay Longcope in the *Boston Globe*, Abrahams stated: "I'm interested in putting ordinary people into extraordinary situations, as Alfred Hitchcock did, rather than making James Bond-type superheroes and putting them in life and death situations. You can generate a lot more dread. I want to directly attack the imagination, to ensnare it. That's the way a good book works for me."

BIOGRAPHICAL/CRITICAL SOURCES:

PERIODICALS

- Armchair Detective*, spring, 1990, p. 238.
- Booklist*, January 15, 1995, p. 868.
- Boston Globe*, February 22, 1988.
- Kirkus Reviews*, June 15, 1980, pp. 789-90; September 1, 1989, p. 1264; June 1, 1992, pp. 682-83; January 1, 1994, p. 2.
- Library Journal*, February 1, 1994, p. 109; February 1, 1995, p. 97.
- Los Angeles Times*, July 20, 1992, p. E3.
- Los Angeles Times Book Review*, June 27, 1982, p. 10; January 17, 1988, p. 10.
- New York Times Book Review*, February 21, 1988, p. 20.
- Publishers Weekly*, June 27, 1980, p. 79; April 9, 1982, p. 43; November 6, 1987, p. 58; June 1, 1992, p. 50; January 10, 1994, pp. 43-44; January 23, 1995, pp. 58-59.
- Quill & Quire*, February, 1990, p. 27.
- Rapport*, volume 19, number 6, p. 29.
- Spectator*, January 30, 1982, pp. 22-23.
- Tribune Books* (Chicago), August 2, 1992, p. 5; March 20, 1994, p. 7; March 19, 1995, p. 6.
- Washington Post Book World*, August 16, 1992, p. 6.
- West Coast Review of Books*, July, 1982, p. 33.*

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ABRAMSON, Rudy 1937-

PERSONAL: Born August 31, 1937, in Florence, AL; son of Emmett R. and Ina (Paulk) Abramson; married Joyce Taylor, December 31, 1965; children: two. **Education:** Graduate of the University of Mississippi. **Religion:** Protestant. **Avocational interests:** Backpacking.

ADDRESSES: *Agent*—c/o Goodman Associates, 500 West End Ave., New York, NY 10024.

CAREER: *Los Angeles Times*, Washington, DC, correspondent, 1965-93.

WRITINGS:

Spanning the Century: The Life of W. Averell Harriman, 1891-1986, Morrow (New York), 1992.

Hallowed Ground: Preserving America's Heritage, Thomasson-Grant, Inc. (Charlottesville, VA), 1996.

Contributor of reviews and articles to periodicals, including *Audubon*, *Chicago Tribune*, *New York Times Book Review*, *Smithsonian*, and *Washington Post*.

SIDELIGHTS: Rudy Abramson, a long-time Washington correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*, is the author of *Spanning the Century: The Life of W. Averell Harriman, 1891-1986*, an account of the life of the businessman, politician, and tycoon who seemed to always be a part of significant political events in the twentieth century, but never a key member. *Spanning the Century* chronicles Harriman's ventures as he made a name for himself in railroads, mining, banking, and shipping, and also considers whether Harriman's great wealth was what afforded him a place within the inner circles of great leaders and if Harriman made a discernible contribution to foreign policy. Abramson based his biography on Harriman's personal papers, family archives, business records, political documents from Harrison's time as Governor of New York, as well as oral interviews with Harriman's contemporaries. "Abramson has done a masterful job of presenting the political and economic context in which this man's contributions were made," remarked Kent G. Sieg in *Presidential Studies Quarterly*.

The son of railroad magnate E. H. Harriman, W. Averell Harriman was born in 1891 into a lifestyle that has been compared to aristocracy; a result of his father's fortunes as a businessman and on Wall Street. The elder Harriman, however, was an overbearing man, domineering his son to such an extent that he developed a stutter. "Always there was the pressure to do better," noted James Chace in *New York Times Book Review*. Harriman entered Yale soon after his father died and became quite popular, in spite of "a personality that others described as vain, humorless, and characterized by impatience,"

as Warren F. Kimball commented in *American Historical Review*. Harriman was purported to have studied mainly rowing, his mother being a financial backer of the crew team, and coached the team with great success, beating Harvard. Two years out of school, Harriman's mother appointed him vice-president of the family company, Union Pacific Railroad. He persuaded his mother to invest in a shipbuilding endeavor, the takeover of the Hamburg-American steamship line, after World War I. Harriman also negotiated with Leon Trotsky during the 1920s over controlling interest in Soviet manganese mines, an encounter that did not prove lucrative as the mines would ultimately fail, as would the steamship line. Although Harriman did not inherit his father's keen business skills and would make dramatic failures, such as the mines, Harriman was able to make money through a series of less spectacular business dealings.

Abramson details Harriman's true interests in the 1920s as love of a leisurely lifestyle with a passion for polo, which he played on a nationally competitive level, and women. Although he was married, a fact few of his friends knew, he gained a reputation as a playboy, finally seducing Cornelius Vanderbilt Whitney's wife, Marie. In 1929, the lovers divorced their spouses, then united in a marriage that would last until Marie's death in 1970, despite Harriman's continued philandering.

A Wall Street Republican, Harriman yearned for power and influence, and it was this that induced him to change his stance several times on economic policies he did not agree with and back successive Democratic presidencies. Harriman was a leading supporter of Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal and was subsequently appointed as the administrator for industry codes in the National Recovery Act. At the beginning of World War II, Roosevelt designated Harriman to head the Lend-Lease program with Britain; as the war continued Harriman became the chief liaison between Winston Churchill and Roosevelt. Three decades later, Harriman would marry Churchill's daughter-in-law, Pamela, whom he met during the war.

Harriman was named Ambassador to Moscow in 1941, chiefly because of his early business ties, meeting with Stalin and relaying the Soviet wartime position to Roosevelt. After the war, Harriman was appointed Secretary of Commerce by President Harry Truman and later as an intermediary between the feuding White House and the Defense Department. His successful negotiations between the President and

the Pentagon would prove to be one of the highlights of his political career. Harriman's attempt at the Democratic presidential nomination in 1952 was futile, although he was voted in as governor of New York in 1954 by a narrow margin. His term in office was inconsequential, for he had little interest in state politics. Harriman again ran for the presidency in 1956, which also failed. During the 1960s, Harriman served as assistant secretary of state for Far Eastern affairs under the Kennedy administration, successfully negotiating the limited nuclear test-ban treaty. An ambitious businessman and politician, Harriman spent much of his life devoted to public service. "Yet the office he most wanted eluded him," maintained Godfrey Hodgson in the *Los Angeles Times Book Review*. "He never did become secretary of state. In fact, it is impossible to escape the conclusion from this admirably thorough biography that after 1946 Harriman was always looking for a job equal to his own estimate of his talents."

"In *Spanning the Century*, Mr. Abramson . . . has produced an absorbing biography of a man whose career was central to the creation of American foreign policy in the American Century," judged Chace in *New York Times Book Review*. Chace further commented: "Writing with verve and distinction, Mr. Abramson never lets this story flag, while at the same time displaying a scholarly regard for the research and interviews indispensable for a serious biography," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* contributor Sieg declared that "The number of oral interviews . . . gives the work a personal touch and allows the author to present his audience with unique information available nowhere else. This makes the book a gripping read." Harry S. Ashmore, writing in the *Chicago Tribune*, concluded that Abramson "presents his protagonist against the backdrop of what amounts to the social history of a vanishing age. *Spanning the Century* is biography at its best."

BIOGRAPHICAL/CRITICAL SOURCES:

PERIODICALS

- American Historical Review*, April, 1993, pp. 589-90.
Boston Globe, July 19, 1992, p. 12B.
Chicago Tribune, July 26, 1992, sec. 14, p. 1.
Los Angeles Times Book Review, August 9, 1992, pp. 2, 5.
New Republic, July 27, 1992, pp. 53-59.
New York Times Book Review, July 26, 1992, sec. 7, p. 11.

- Presidential Studies Quarterly*, summer, 1993, pp. 567-70.
Washington Post Book World, August 23, 1992, pp. 3, 6.

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ADAMS, Colin C. 1956-

PERSONAL: Born October 13, 1956, in New York; son of F. Gerard (a professor of economics) and Courtney (a professor of musicology; maiden name, Sherbrooke) Adams; married, wife's name Amelia, December 28, 1985; children: Alexa. **Education:** Massachusetts Institute of Technology, B.S., 1978; University of Wisconsin—Madison, Ph.D., 1983.

ADDRESSES: *Office*—Department of Mathematics, Williams College, Williamstown, MA 01267. *E-mail*—Colin.Adams@williams.edu.

CAREER: Oregon State University, Corvallis, professor of mathematics, 1983-85; Williams College, Williamstown, MA, professor of mathematics, 1985—. University of California, Santa Barbara, professor, 1988-89; University of California, Davis, professor, 1991-92.

MEMBER: American Mathematical Society, Mathematical Association of America.

AWARDS, HONORS: National Science Foundation grants, 1987—; Distinguished Teaching Award, Northeastern Section, Mathematical Association of America, 1996.

WRITINGS:

The Knot Book, W. H. Freeman (New York), 1994.

WORK IN PROGRESS: *How to Ace Calculus: The Streetwise Guide*, with Joel Hass and Abigail Thompson; research on knot theory and low-dimensional topology.

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ADOUM, Jorge Enrique 1926-

PERSONAL: Born in 1926.

ADDRESSES: *Home*—Paris, France.