

Historical U.S Eugenics Program puts Chilling Twist on New Mystery Novel

A young Iraq war vet returning to police duty stumbles into his first murder case and discovers he is center-stage in a collision course with time, and an unimaginable reality.

(Pasadena, CA) Award-winning editor and writer J.M. Burns proves his worth as a fiction writer after a long history working in wine, food and travel journalism. Still active in the industry that he is truly passionate about, Burns turns focus to his new *David Endicott Mystery Series* and debut novel “*Deadline: Stiff*” (ISBN 978-1583850916, Cold Tree Press, 2006).

Freshly returned from military police duty in Iraq, David Endicott, a young semi-hero from a family of L.A. cops, is eager to get his life back. In a strange turn of events, he is stumbled into his first case by finding a mysterious murder victim in an eccentric billionaire’s guesthouse. Recruited by the homeowner, David is asked to uncover the identity of the mystery man, how he gained entry, and what he wanted.

It all sounded so simple, but David soon finds out that time is dangerously limited, and in the heart-pounding style of TV’s “24,” Burns’ pegs good-guy Endicott against a seven frenetic days, and a secret so sinister, it will shake the foundation of everything he knows.

Burns bases much of his driving plot on the chilling real-life history of the U.S. Betterment Foundation, a 20th century American eugenics program that took “racial cleansing” to an extreme. Researching the now unclassified materials in a basement at Cal-Tech in Pasadena proved an unsettling experience for Burns. “I’ll never forget looking at the yellowing documents, it was a truly creepy experience. The powerful ‘all’ believed society’s ills could literally be bred out of the next generation, and few realize that over 20,000 legal sterilizations were performed in California before the practice was outlawed in 1979.”

As the novel unfolds, the circles of intrigue that ensnare David prove more and more complicated. Finally, David must go into the past to unravel the mystery, and find the truth about a rare Chinese butterfly that somehow holds the key to all his questions. “*Deadline: Stiff*” gives “survival of the fittest” entirely new meaning by posing the inevitable question – Will evil always be a part of history?

J.M. Burns has had a prominent career in journalism. While at the Los Angeles Times Syndicate, Jim worked with prominent national and international writers, editing one of the most widely syndicated food packages in America. Most recently, he was Editor-in-Chief of the Underground Wine Journal. He currently teaches mass media and journalism in Southern California, and is busy at work on his second *David Endicott Mystery Series* novel. “*Deadline: Stiff*” (ISBN 978-1583850916, Cold Tree Press, 2006) can be purchased through local or online bookstores. For more information, visit www.deadlinestiff.com. Publicity contact: www.readerviews.com. Review copies available upon request.