

With several novels: writing is no mystery for Haynes

By Tootie Smith
Staff Writer

"...The only other piece of furniture, equally old and tarnished, was Henry Bishop, who sat slouched sideways in his chair like the cadaver in a mystery novel, his head resting on his forearm on the green desk blotter. Before him sat an enormous ceramic coffee mug decorated with the stylized initials JJAC and the college's insignia, and a finger-full of whiskey..."

"Bishop's Gambit Declined"
by Conrad Haynes

Is it a plane? Is it a bird? No, it's super-sleuth, journalist, mystery writer Dana Haynes -- or Conrad Haynes, depending on which of his works you happen to be reading at the time.

Haynes is a former student from CCC, and currently is the editor of the West Linn Tidings, and author of five mystery novels.

This energetic ball of wit flew into Linda Vogt's Reporting 1 class last week and spoke to students about his experiences as a journalist and writer.

"I always knew I would be a newspaper reporter," said Haynes.

"It's the neatest possible job; I wouldn't want to do anything else. Journalism is great training if you want to be a fiction writer," he continued.



Former student, Dana Haynes, is writing mystery novels and he is also the editor of the West Linn Tidings. Haynes was on campus last week speaking to reporting students.

Photo by Lane Scheideman

"...Who at this school isn't Caucasian?" she wondered silently. "For now, we're sayin' it was robbery, because his wallet is gone, and there's no wristwatch. College officials are

aidin' us in our investigation, which the West Linn Police Department has handed over to Portland PD's Homicide Department. It looks like I'm the case officer..."

Speaking faster than his brain can think, he offered sound advice on a career path journalism students can take, but not necessarily one he took.

"My career path was illogical; I made stupid mistakes. I never did an internship. Now it is the only way to get a job.

"Journalism is a smart and good major, but it's not the only way to go," he said.

Haynes graduated from Lewis and Clark College in 1985 with a BS in Political Science after attending CCC for four years. He was also editor of *The Print*.

Haynes did some freelance writing for smaller weeklies, a couple of features for the Oregonian, then landed a reporting position at the Lake Oswego Review. Just recently, he became editor of the West Linn Tidings.

"...Tucker is convinced the secret behind this murder is in the computer and the computer access code Wasserman had, and what ever he saw in the terminal. It wasn't hard to find out whose code he possessed. According to Helligan, that time slot on Mondays is reserved computer time for the Publications Department. Tucker assumed Wasserman hacked into someone's private files..."

Haynes adopted his wife's

maiden name, Conrad, and uses it for his mystery novel series, *PROFESSOR HARRY BISHOP MYSTERIES*, published by Bantam Press.

Peggy Conrad Haynes, his wife, remains his staunchest critic and most ardent supporter. She helps in editing, typing, and is currently employed as an executive secretary in Portland.

"It's a good thing I'm a feminist, because I like being kept," said Haynes when referring to his wife's lucrative employment that kept him alive financially through lean times as a writer.

Giving advice on how to develop a story, Haynes said some stories are word driven and some are image driven. The writer should know which type of story it is, and focus in on that.

When asked if he ever experienced writer's block, he said, "In journalism, the word for writer's block is unemployment."

A lack of words is not a problem for our not so mild-mannered Clark Kent, super-sleuth, journalist of mystery novels. Now, is it Dana Haynes or Conrad Haynes?

"... She looked very calm and wistful. Harry knew she had exorcised her demons..."

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