

PARTING SHOT

A weekly snapshot from The Daily Astorian and Chinook Observer photographers



Chandler Emken, 17, of Astoria, catches air at the Tapiola skate park in July.

Joshua Bessex/The Daily Astorian

ODDITY

Dead again — only not in Astoria

Final novel in Dexter series skips Northwest plot twist

By DAVID FISCHER
Associated Press

MIAMI — Spoiler alert: Book Dexter does not become a lumberjack.

The eighth and final novel in the Dexter series, "Dexter Is Dead," now in bookstores, picks up from the end of the previous book, with the titular vigilante serial killer under arrest and facing a murder charge ironically for a crime he didn't actually commit.

"I always knew that someday the wheels would come off," author Jeff Lindsay said.

Starting with the 2004 novel "Darkly Dreaming Dexter," the series follows the exploits of Dexter Morgan, a blood splatter analyst with the Miami-Dade Police Department. Following a code developed by his adoptive father — a police officer — to only kill other killers, Dexter balances a public life of work, friends and family with his not-so-public, homicidal pastime.

But now Dexter's story is coming to a climatic conclusion.

"I had all these wonderful, outrageous ideas for how it would happen, and I didn't end up using any of them, which I guess is par for the course," Lindsay said. "Your first idea, the one that gets you going, is never the one you end up with."

Irate fans

It's safe to assume that none of those ideas involved Dexter faking his death and starting a new life in the Pacific Northwest as a lumberjack. That's how the "Dexter" television series based on Lindsay's characters concluded in 2013 after eight sea-



Luis M. Alvarez/AP Photo

In this Dec. 12, 2006, file photo, author Jeff Lindsay poses next to a poster from Showtime series "Dexter" at his home in Cape Coral, Fla. The eighth and final novel in the Dexter series, "Dexter Is Dead," was published on July 7. Lindsay said he has mixed feelings about leaving a popular character and a successful book series behind.

sons. (Scenes for the finale were shot at a house in Alderbrook and at the Port of Astoria.)

"Boy oh boy oh boy, did I get mail about that," Lindsay said.

While the first season of the show kept relatively close to the

first novel, the plotlines of later seasons had virtually nothing to do with the books. So Lindsay could only tell irate fans, "It wasn't me."

Fan reaction aside, Lindsay said he doesn't really have an

opinion on the final episode because he didn't actually see it. He had just started a 10-month book tour for his previous novel, "Dexter's Final Cut," and he didn't get a chance to watch the show's finale.



Submitted Photo

Jerry Olson shared this photo of the filming of the "Dexter" finale in Alderbrook. The photo, with actor Michael C. Hall, pictured inset, appeared in Elleda Wilson's *In One Ear* column on July 19, 2013.

"So I don't have any opinion on whether it was good or bad except that TV is very, very different," Lindsay said. "The demands of that medium are very different from what is demanded in the book, and it's never going to be the same thing. I'm sure they (the show's producers) did what they thought was right."

Violent psychopaths

Lindsay said he has mixed feelings about leaving a popular character and a successful book series behind.

"This is kind of what I had always wanted, to have a book series like that," Lindsay said. "And to say goodbye to it is like launching yourself into the unknown and starting over again. But it was time. I don't think it got stale, but I felt like someday soon it might start to get stale on me. Better to go out on top, leave them wanting more."

Lindsay said he was never bothered by the gruesome murders or the violent psychopaths he spent more than a decade writing about. He credits this to the training he received years ago while pursuing an acting career in Hollywood.

"One of the things they taught us was how to be the

whacky neighbor on the hit sitcom," Lindsay said. "It's not who you are. You go home, and you take the costume off. You have dinner with the family. And the next day, you go in and put the costume on again. And that's always the way I wrote Dexter."

While Lindsay's acting career never really took off, he did get to use his voice-acting skills by performing the audiobooks of the last four Dexter novels, starting with the cannibalism-themed "Dexter Is Delicious." He said his publisher initially insisted that non-fiction writers could do their own audiobooks, but it just wasn't done with fiction.

"I just kept telling them, it's something I do, and I used to be good at it," Lindsay said.

Lindsay will spend the near future promoting "Dexter Is Dead," but he hasn't decided what to work on next. He said he may or may not stick with the crime fiction genre.

"I've got a couple of ideas going in that, and I've got some ideas outside that," Lindsay said. "When my wife and my agent tell me which one of those ideas I'm going to do, I'll start doing it."

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