

## Oregon Authors – Genre Fiction

### Mystery

Ellie Alexander: [Meet Your Baker: A Bakeshop Mystery](#). St. Martin's Paperbacks, 2014.

Portland, OR; series set in Ashland, OR.

Jules returns home to Ashland, OR to run her mother's bakery, Torte, after spending several years at sea as a pastry chef on a cruise ship. When a murder occurs at the bakery, Jules is determined to solve the mystery of who did it, and thus ensues a classic cozy (small town, the murdered person is not-so-nice, lots about the relationships of the town residents). Oregon readers will appreciate the details about Ashland, including the Shakespeare Festival, and scan of reviews show readers from elsewhere love the town Alexander "created." Fans of cozy mysteries and well-drawn characters will enjoy this book, as well as readers who like when the setting is almost a character in itself or who enjoy reading (and thinking) about food, as the book contains much detail about the operation of the bakery and the food. Recipes are included!

*Meet Your Baker* is the first in the series under this pseudonym; the next in the series, *A Batter of Life and Death*, will be out this year. Kate Dyer-Seeley also writes the Meg Reed series (SCENE OF THE CLIMB), and will have a new book out in 2015 under that name as well, titled *Slayed on the Slopes*, which is set on Mount Hood.

Warren Easley: [Dead Float](#). Poisoned Pen Press, 2014.

Wilsonville, OR

In this second title in Easley's series featuring small-town lawyer Cal Claxton, "a small town lawyer who works to fish," Claxton's best friend Philip Lone Deer asks Claxton to help guide a fishing trip along the Deschutes River for a group from Portland. When the CEO of the client company is murdered while on the trip, everyone is a suspect, including Cal, who must work to solve the mystery in these difficult circumstances.

Mysteries from Poisoned Pen Press are almost guaranteed to be good, and Easley combines a classic mystery in the tradition of Hillerman with loving descriptions of fly fishing, the outdoors, and the state of Oregon.

The first in the series is called *Matters of Doubt*.

## Thriller

Chelsea Cain: [One Kick](#). Simon & Schuster, 2014.

Portland, OR

Cain is well known for her Portland-set Gretchen Lowell series, which can sometimes be a bit too gory for some readers. In *One Kick*, the first in a new series featuring Kick Lannigan, we keep the same thrilling pace Cain is known for with less gore but no less gruesome a subject. Kathleen, or Kick, was abducted at age 6 and found six years later, and, naturally, is one pretty screwed up lady who also happens to be skilled at marksmanship, boxing, and martial arts and who is determined to never let happen to another child what happened to her. When two children in the Portland area go missing, Kick is approached by the mysterious John Bishop to help find them.

Fans of Carol O'Connor's Mallory mystery/thrillers will likely enjoy Kick Lannigan, who is a similar fascinatingly smart, overwhelmingly frustrating, pretty unlikeable main character. Readers should be warned that the book's plot centers around exploited children and a ring of child pornographers, and that it is anything but easy reading. *Kick Back*, the second in the series, is due out in 2016.

Roger Hobbs: [Vanishing Games](#). Knopf, 2015.

Portland, OR

I will start out by saying that I was a HUGE fan of Hobbs' debut, *Ghostman*, which introduced us to the brilliant, yet flawed, Jack White. White's job as a "ghostman" is to pull a heist and then make sure everyone involved disappears – think the Jason Bourne of high-stakes heists. In *Vanishing Games*, the second in the series, we meet a much smoother White who has been called to Macau to help out a former colleague and good friend known as Angela, who Jack has not heard from in the six years since the heist-gone-wrong in Kuala Lumpur that drove the plot of the first novel. Angela's job to steal a shipment of sapphires has imploded, and Jack returns to Angela and Macau to help find the sapphires and wrap up the job. There is much to like in this story, from the fast, FAST pacing to the descriptions of everything from the glittering casinos to the dirty underworld of Macao.

## Romance

Delilah Marvelle: [The Duke of Andelot](#). 2015

Portland, OR

Gerard, the heir to the Andelot dukedom, meets aspiring stage actress Therese on the road to Paris during the beginning of the French Revolution. Gerard is on this way to Paris to help save his godfather, the King of France, and immediately Gerard and Therese fall into a torrid and passionate affair. As Therese becomes the toast of the Republic, spying for Gerard, the two play a dangerous game in both politics and in the heart.

*The Duke of Andelot* is the finale in the School of Gallantry series, and is set nearly thirty years prior to other titles in the series. Previous titles show Therese as the Mistress of the School of Gallantry in

London, and this title fills in a backstory for two beloved characters of the series. Marvelle calls the story “The Scarlet Pimpernel meets *Sex in the City*.” Marvelle excels at writing flawed but relatable characters and is known for erring on the very steamy (one reader calls it “sinfully explicit”) side of the romance genre.

## Science Fiction & Fantasy

Fonda Lee: [Zeroboxer](#). Flux, 2015.

Portland, OR

*Zeroboxer* is one of those crossover novels that will surely appeal to a wide range of readers. This future-set science fiction thriller is set in the world of the weightless combat sport of zeroboxing, and rising star Carr Luka is our hero. When he is paired with his personal promoter, Risha, sparks fly, and Carr looks poised to have it all: the girl, the championship title, and the admiration of the people of Terran, the new name for the Earth. But Carr’s rising star puts him in the path of a dangerous secret, and he must take steps to protect himself and his dreams.

*Zeroboxer* has elements that will appeal to many readers: the Earth vs Mars conflict (recently excellently done in James SA Corey’s *Expanse* series), the thrill of the sports arena, and the shady underbelly of an exploited Earth and a corrupt elite (think *Elysium*, *Total Recall*, *Bladerunner*). Lee’s worldbuilding is notable, particularly in the development of the entirely new sport of zeroboxing.

This is Lee’s debut novel.

Wendy Wagner: [Skinwalkers](#). Paizo Publishing, 2014.

Milwaukie, OR

Set in a cold and inhospitable northern environment during the days of the Vikings, *Skinwalkers* focuses on Jendara, a former pirate, who is living in a small village in the Ironbound Archipelago with her son Kran. When a group of her fellow villagers are brutally murdered, reminiscent of a similar event that killed Jendara’s father, Jendara and her allies set out to avenge their people and come across many mysterious leads that bring into question the existence of the Skinwalkers, a mythical group of shapeshifters who use the pelts of dead animals to transform.

*Skinwalkers* is part of the Pathfinder Tales series, based upon the world of the Pathfinder roleplaying games. Wagner’s strength lies in the way in which she tells her story, almost as if she was spinning a tale in front of a fire, and her strong characters. Fans of *Game of Thrones* will likely enjoy this story, particularly those who like the mystery of what’s beyond The Wall and of the White Walkers.

Cheating a little: Mary Robinette Kowal moved to Chicago, but I’ll always think of her as a Portlander. *Valour and Vanity*, the latest in her Glamourist series, came out in 2014 (Tor).

## Historical Fiction

Jane Kirkpatrick: [A Light in the Wilderness](#). Fleming Rivell Company, 2014.

Bend, OR

Based on a true story, *A Light in the Wilderness* follows freed slave Letitia (“Tish”) Carson and her Irish husband Davey, and Nancy Hawkins and her husband as they head west to Oregon prior to the Civil War. Letitia and Nancy become firm friends, despite the different colors of their skin, as they meet from time to time on the journey west. *A Light in the Wilderness* is very much about trust, loneliness, loss, and heartbreak, but also about the incredible power of kindness and friendship. Readers of historical fiction will very much enjoy the fictionalization of the true story of Letitia (Kirkpatrick is working on a biography of her), as well as the details about what life was like as a freed slave and on the incredible difficulties of traveling to Oregon.

Fans of Jeanette Oke will find much to love in Kirkpatrick’s stories, for their gentle but honest tone.

Lois Leveen: [Juliet’s Nurse](#). Atria, 2014.

Portland, OR

Leveen is likely well known to many of us from her debut novel, *The Secrets of Mary Bowser* (which would be a great readalike to the Kirkpatrick we just talked about, as it is based on the true story of a freed slave who overcomes great odds, serving as a spy for the North during the Civil War). In *Juliet’s Nurse*, Leveen once again shows us the unseen side of a story we think we know well – Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*.

Told from the point of view of Juliet’s nurse, who is often played for laughs in the play, we learn a great deal about Juliet’s childhood, spent mostly closed off from the rest of the world with only her nurse and her cousin Tybalt as company. Nurse has given up much to live in Juliet’s household, and is the only true mother Juliet really knows. In the second half of the story, we see the events in Shakespeare’s play told from a completely different perspective (and it’s pretty clear what Nurse – and Leveen – think of Romeo) – but it is in the first half that the story really shines. *Juliet’s Nurse* is both a perfect smart beach read and a spot-on book club pick.

## Graphic Novels

Cathy Camper: [Lowriders in Space](#). Chronicle, 2014.

Portland, OR

Three cheers for fellow librarian Camper and her debut graphic novel with illustrator Raul Gonzales! The reader meets Lupe Impala (a fox), El Chavo Flapjack (an octopus), and Elirio Malaria (a mosquito!) and learns much about their love of fixing up cars – particularly low-riders – and their dreams of opening their own shop. When a car competition with a big grand prize is announced, the three friends go all in to try and make their dreams happen.

Camper's story will appeal to bilingual patrons and provides many opportunities for readers to learn more about science and cars as well as about the power of friendship. Gonzales' energetic Bic-pen-and-Sharpie art reminiscent of youthful doodles is the perfect companion. It's a great story for older kids and teens, but also for grown-ups.

Chuck Palahnuik: [Fight Club 2](#). Dark Horse, 2015.

Portland, OR

It's Palahnuik – what more do we need to say? There's still much we don't know (such as if the graphic novel sequel, set to release serially in seven parts, will have a different name), but we do know the story picks up ten years after the events of *Fight Club*, where Tyler Durden is living a pretty staid life (wife, kid, pills) that still manages to be a misery (problematic wife, failing his son like his father failed him, pills).

Announced at Comicon in 2013, Palahnuik shares that the novel will bring back Project Mayhem.

Cameron Stewart will provide the art; the first issue will be released at the end of May 2015.