

In Conversation With Mystery, Thriller, Suspense Author C T Mitchell

by Carolyn Martinez

I attended a workshop presented by C T Mitchell on becoming an Amazon bestseller. His first image said – *Australia hasn't yet found its J K Rowling*. Gold! Though we have many brilliant authors in Australia, he's right. Our *one* who gets catapulted into the dizzying heights of worldwide fame of the Rowling variety is still yet to be decided. It's an exciting proposition! Who will it be? Making it even more enticing, is Rowling's humble beginning. She worked hard. She achieved it. It's there for the taking for *any* Australian with the talent, work ethic and gravitas to keep knocking on doors.

Fascinated by the man who captured my attention so fully with his first sentence, I approached him for an interview. He was kind enough to agree.

How many books have you written?

I have published 22 mystery short reads and 1 thriller novel since March 2015; all located around Cabarita Beach and the Northern Rivers region, NSW, Australia.

How do you define success for an author? Are you successful?

Actually publishing a book. For me, I procrastinated for 20 years+ before I finally wrote a book and published it. Beating procrastination is success to me. I have been fortunate with some of my books hitting #1 Amazon US & UK in category. So yes I believe I have enjoyed some success.

How do you do research for your books?

Having been a visitor to Cabarita Beach for over 20 years, I continue to visit the area regularly and soak up its experiences. My books are not complex and therefore I don't have to conduct in depth research. That may change as I further develop as a writer.

Do you have a favourite/s from the books you've written?

Murder Secret (previously published as *Breaking Point*) is my current favourite. It's my first thriller novel as opposed to my mystery short reads. It has been well received achieving a 4.7 average review ranking. When writing it I only worked out the murderer in the very last chapter.

Dead Boss (previously published as *Murder on the Beach*) was my first #1 Amazon US & UK and is a favourite because it broke a barrier for me.

What's your writing schedule/habits?

Initially I started early, 5.15am, and wrote for two hours. I'd then come back to writing at 8pm and finish around 9.30pm/10pm. Being a little older and not wanting to suffer the early morning cold, I now start writing at 7am. I write 4-5 times a week and work on book promotion mostly at night.

Do you believe in writer's block?

I'm sure it occurs but I haven't suffered it too much. Some days are better than others. Words flow freely and I can get my minimum requirement of 1000 words done quickly. If I'm chugging along and the words aren't coming, I'll change my circumstances by going for a walk, watching television or going out for coffee. If things still aren't flowing, I pack it in and come back fresh next day.

Do your fans influence future works?

I have good engagement with my 5000+ reader group. We 'talk' weekly and they give me a few requests from time to time. Some

want to see more of my cozy mysteries; others are Jack Creed diehard fans.

I once ran a competition for a fan to name the murder victim in my next thriller. I received over 150 names. Thankfully I drew a good one live on a YouTube video. Phew...

How do you come up with new ideas that haven't been written before?

I participate in life. I actively listen to what is going on around me and adapt it for my books. My ideas aren't original, just adaptations of life.

Dead Shot (previously published as *Rejection*) came to me while drinking coffee (I do that a lot) in a local shop. The news was on and America was going through another University shooting. An idea was born.

What are your tips for aspiring authors in terms of character development?

As I mentioned before, I'm not the most descriptive writer. Short stories tend to move quicker and character descriptions tend to be minimal. However as I move towards longer writing, I'm working on developing my characters more.

Reading other authors' works helps build character definition. I also like the teachings of K M Weiland – her books on writing are great as is her blog www.helpingwritersbecomeauthors.com

What's your background, how did you become a crime writer?

I'm a former real estate agent who met a lot of criminals; some in the legal fraternity. It developed my interest in crime and pushed me toward crime writers like Agatha Christie, James Patterson and Peter James.

What are you working on now?

I'm close to finalising a publisher agreement with an Indian digital distribution group. They need 25 books from me; so two to go.

What does the future look like for C T Mitchell?

Positive. I started writing because I wanted to become a full-time author. I secured a UK publisher in April 2017 and we are working together on getting a book done to be distributed to bookstores in the UK, US and Australia.

This publishing deal helped me get accepted into the Crime Writers Association (UK) – home of the Dagger Awards (the Oscar's for crime writers). I want one!

My pen name is a compilation of my three children's names. My books are my legacy to them.

[More on C T Mitchell.](#)

Carolyn Martinez is an [author](#), [editor and author's coach](#), and the Founder of [Brisbane Book Authors](#) – a non-profit, social networking group for published authors.

Writing in Deep Point of View

Deep Point of View (Deep POV) is a term being discussed by those in the know – agents, publishers, authors – so it's worth taking a moment to understand what it is. Blogs and author posts confused me at first. One said – it's to write 'leaner, meaner, cleaner and faster' but then every example given was longer than the original sentence!

I'm going to share with you what I've come to understand about Deep Point of View. I believe that Deep Point of View is a

form of show not tell that strips the author's voice out of the writing to portray scenes from the character's viewpoint. When done right, it establishes immediate rapport with your reader.

There are three keys to writing in Deep POV:

1. Remove unnecessary words.
2. Minimise speech tags.
3. The most important – describing what your character sees/does/feels – through their eyes, not the author's.

REMOVE UNNECESSARY WORDS

Redundant words get in the way of your prose and slow the reader down. Because they don't contribute any forward movement or essential information, you are better off removing them whenever you can.

Some commonly used unnecessary words are: but, then, to the, and, almost, instead, continued, began, back, considered, regarded, wondered, saw, heard, hoped, realised, smelled, watched, touched, felt, knew, decided, just, really, to be, reaching, suddenly, that, you know, up, down, in, out, anyway, even, quite, rather. (Okay to use in dialogue).

REMOVE SPEECH TAGS

Example

Jim stopped the car in the middle of the road. 'I want to go bungee jumping,' his eyes sparkled with the fervour of knowing.

'Okay, I'll watch but I'm not doing it with you.'

Jim looked into his wife's eyes and smiled, a knowing smile – he would change her mind.

REMOVE THE AUTHOR'S VOICE

Examples –

Deep POV – First Person

I've always been a bad manager of time. It just seems to speed up when I'm not watching, the seconds tick faster than other peoples'. When I skulk in late, I can see it on my team's faces, I can feel it in their stares. I know how they see me; a complete arse, arrogant enough to expect the world to wait, when really, I'm just optimistic with time. (Source [Kylie Kaden](#) author of *Losing Kate* and *Missing You*).

Deep POV – Third Person

She ran to class, and barged through the door. The only thing that mattered was seeing him. Seeing his smile and his amazing face. When she did, she knew; he was her world.

Another example –

This is Not Deep POV:

Cate felt pain shoot up her leg and wondered how long it would take the venom to reach her heart. Onlookers watching the zookeeper could see she was in trouble. A quick-thinking bystander called an ambulance, while another ran to the park's entry to raise the alarm. (This is the author describing the scene).

This is Deep POV:

Pain shot up her leg. Her hands clamped around her thigh and a groan burst from her mouth. The poison burned an insidious path towards her heart. Her eyes widened, pupils dilated. *She needed an ambulance. Now.*

(This is the character's view. It's what's happening to her body as it happens, and then her thoughts as they go through her mind).

Hope I've inspired you to explore writing in Deep POV because one day your editor might read your manuscript and reply 'love it, but could you re-write your whole book in Deep Point of View please'.

Carolyn Martinez is the author of [Finding Love Again](#), and [Inspiring IVF Stories](#).

Our Most Popular Facebook Posts on Finding Love Again

Who you spend your time with will have a great impact on your life. Spend time with the right people.

Let your smile change the world, but don't let the world change your smile.

People think being alone makes you lonely, but I don't think that's true. Being surrounded by the wrong people is the loneliest thing in the world.

You deserve someone who tells you, 'you are the best thing that ever happened to them' and they mean it.

If life can remove someone you never dreamt of losing, it can replace them with someone you never dreamt of having.

*Finding Love Again is a public group on Facebook encouraging the benefits of choosing your next partner with your **head** and your **heart**. Your choice of life partner is one of the most important decisions you make in this life.*