

About the Authors

A concern for gun violence in America motivated ten authors to write American Roulette. Most are award winners. All are standouts in their field. Together they agreed to create a narrative and donate their time. The proceeds from the book will go to gun violence prevention via The Charles Bruce Foundation, a 501(c) 3 charitable organization.

Matthew Best wrote the Chris Dietrich chapters. Rev. Best serves as pastor of Christ Lutheran Church in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, as well as the executive director of Health Ministries at Christ Lutheran, which provide free medical and dental care for the poorest of the poor in the region. Rev. Best serves in leadership positions for several community, church, and statewide organizations in Pennsylvania that advocate for those experiencing houselessness and poverty. He also has an extensive background in campaign politics and government. You can read his writings on a variety of topics related to politics and theology, as well as his sermons, book reviews, and other writings, at his blog.

Robert Bradshaw wrote the Steven Bradley chapters. Robert is Managing Partner of Contingency Management Consulting Group, a crisis and emergency management consulting firm. He has more than thirty years' experience in crisis and emergency management, including international work in such countries as Egypt, Chile, France, and the Philippines.

Robert has responded to numerous major disasters, including oil spills, severe storms, corporate business crises, and the Fukushima nuclear accident. Among the most noteworthy items in his portfolio is the September 11th attacks, when he established and managed an emergency operations center for American Airlines in response to Flight 77 after it crashed into the Pentagon. Mr. Bradshaw has written technical articles and papers on emergency management and has trained US and international teams on how to respond to crises.

Robert and his team also develop active shooter emergency procedures and provide training and administer emergency drills on active shooter/active assailant response to schools, corporations, and other high-profile clients.

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Andrew Carey, PhD, wrote the Will Humphreys chapters. Before transitioning from university professor to mental health counseling, Andy taught coast to coast for more than thirty years at five different universities. His therapeutic experiences include university and community counseling centers, private practice, churches, and a correctional institution. Previous co-editor of the Pennsylvania Counseling Association Journal, he has published numerous academic articles, one in the American Counseling Association's flagship journal. Andy has traveled the US, presenting for various counseling conferences. He now apportions his time between his public health practice, writing novels, and traveling with his wife, Kathy.

James Dodds wrote the Roger Elliot chapters. Originally a creative writing student in college, James turned to technical writing as a more reliable career. After decades of crafting user manuals, he was finally able to return to storytelling. His first attempt resulted in an award, and his tales have since appeared in *The Avenue*, Issue VII: Freedom; *Christmas Gothic Short Stories*; *Bullshit Lit Anthology 01*; and *2100: A Health Odyssey*. He enjoys the quiet countryside west of Spokane, Washington.

Sherry Knowlton wrote the Earl Bricker chapters. She is the award-winning author of the Alexa Williams suspense novels. She has also written the two-volume *Beyond the Sunset* travel memoirs.

Sherry spent much of her early career in state government policy and administration, working with social and human services programs, including services for abused children, rape crisis, domestic violence, and family planning. In the 1990s, she served as Pennsylvania's Deputy Secretary for Medical Assistance. Following public service, Sherry moved to the private sector and focused on Medicaid and Medicare managed care. While running her own consulting business, she put pen to paper in pursuit of her lifelong interest in writing both fiction and nonfiction.

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Sherry and her husband, Mike, started traveling in the days of peace and music. They traversed the country in a hippie van. Running out of money several months into the trip, Sherry waitressed the night shift at a cowboy hangout in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, and Mike washed dishes in a bakery. Undeterred, they embraced the travel experience and continue to explore far-flung places around the globe. So much so that she's written two travel volumes peppered with photos both she and Mike took on the road. Sherry lives in the mountains of south-central Pennsylvania, which doubles as the setting for her suspense novels.

Pat LaMarche wrote the Emma Franz chapters. Pat is an award-winning broadcaster, journalist, and author. She has focused her energies writing and speaking about poverty. Following her 2004 run for vice president of the United States—a year of her life she dedicated to homelessness and its victims—Pat became a shelter director caring directly for those experiencing housing and food insecurity. Pat has a particular interest on the far ends of the homeless spectrum—elder orphans and unhoused babies.

Having authored eight books dealing with poverty and human struggles, Pat still works as a freelance journalist. Educated as a historian, Pat's written a history book, a fantasy novel filled with historic figures, and even a comic book about veterans. Pat relies on any and every method available to direct the attention of the mainstream public toward issues of great importance. American Roulette is another of those attempts to focus on humanity's preventable tragedies.

Pat's most recent advocacy project, The Homeless Remembrance Blanket, covered 18,000 square feet of the US Capitol's west lawn. Type #memorialblanket into your favorite social media for more information on upcoming projects to raise awareness and help those experiencing homelessness.

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Phyllis Orenyo wrote the Caitlin Browning chapters. As far back as she can remember Phyllis wanted to be a writer. As a child she created limericks, poems, and wrote for the school newspapers. Throughout her career, first as a paralegal and subsequently as a mortgage banker, her duties included a great deal of writing. Those writings reflected fact-driven situations. She felt her creativity was limited unless she could find new and interesting ways to express information.

No longer writing expository documents, Phyllis has turned her talents to children's literature. Two of her kids' books have been published. She has donated all of her proceeds to the Charles Bruce Foundation, a charity that supports writers, artists, and musicians. There are two more kids' books in the process of being illustrated for publication.

She currently has refocused her writing, gearing it more for adults. She's working on a short cautionary tale (novella) as well as a murder mystery. Phyllis lives in south-central Pennsylvania where she shares her home with her husband and two cats.

J.M. West wrote the Leah McCall chapters. Author of the award-winning *Madam Bessie Jones, Her Life and Times*, West also penned the fact-based *Carlisle Crime Cases* featuring Homicide Detectives Christopher Snow and Erin McCoy.

A Professor Emerita of English Studies at Harrisburg Area Community College, The Gettysburg Campus, she also taught at Messiah and Shippensburg Universities and served as Assistant Director of the Learning Center (SU). For four years, West cohosted the "Milford House Mysteries," author interviews, and writing tips on the Bookspeak Network at www.blogtalkradio.com.

She and her husband live in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. They have two sons, two grandsons, and a Border Collie mix. In her spare time, West participates in a book club and writing group, and reads voraciously.

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Cheryl Woodruff Brooks wrote the introduction. Cheryl Woodruff Brooks, MBA/MA, completed her first book, *Chicken Bone Beach: A Pictorial History of Atlantic City's Missouri Avenue Beach*, in 2017, which was nominated for a 2017 Literary Award with the Schomburg Center in New York City. The book has likewise been used in classrooms, at Purdue University, referenced in *The Oxford Handbook of American Folklore and Folklife Studies*, and has been catalogued at libraries in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Cheryl's second book, *Golden Beauty Boss: The Story of Madame Sara Spencer Washington and the Apex Empire*, released three weeks after the pandemic, is the first biography written about an African American woman becoming a self-made millionaire in the 1940s. Cheryl released a children's version of both of her books and contributed writing to *After the Pandemic*. Cheryl's most recent and first independent release, *When I Look into the Sea*, is a rhyming children's book designed to encourage kids to believe in themselves and their dreams.

Cheryl Dunn Bychek wove the timelines of these characters into whole cloth. She also edited, proofread, and contributed ideas which helped create this compelling story. Cheryl spent the bulk of her career in professional theater as a public relations and marketing director. A voracious reader since age four, she takes great pleasure in improving the world through her proofreading and editing skills. Cheryl has also been a lifelong activist, earning her first kudos for standing up against bullying in second grade. Her passions are too numerous to mention but include decades of advocating for the LGBTQ+ community (she is the mother of a transgender woman), crusading for peace in the world, and raising awareness and funds to fight cancer, and dementia-related diseases, and AIDS. She is entering her thirtieth year as a judge for the Carbonell Awards for excellence in professional theater in Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade counties in Florida. In her spare time, Cheryl loves to travel.