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"America's Best Selling Authors Series"

Featured Guests:



Scott Turow

America Best Selling Author & Attorney

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Steve Murphy

**Host & Executive Producer
The Law Business Insider**

Scott Turow is a writer and attorney. He is the author of seven best-selling novels: **Presumed Innocent (1987)**, **The Burden of Proof (1990)**, **Pleading Guilty (1993)**, **The Laws of Our Fathers (1996)**, **Personal Injuries (1999)**, **Reversible Errors (2002)** and **Ordinary Heroes (2005)**

In November, 2006, Picador published his latest novel, *Limitations*, which was originally commissioned and published by The New York Times Magazine. He has also written two non-fiction books—*One L* (1977) about his experience as a law student, and *Ultimate Punishment* (2003), a reflection on the death penalty, and has frequently contributed essays and op-ed pieces to publications such as The New York Times, Washington Post, Vanity Fair, The New Yorker, Playboy and The Atlantic. Mr. Turow's books have won a number of literary

awards, including the Heartland Prize in 2003 for Reversible Errors and the Robert F. Kennedy Book Award in 2004 for Ultimate Punishment. His books have been translated into more than 25 languages and have sold more than 25 million copies world-wide.

Scott continues to work as an attorney. He has been a partner in the Chicago office of Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal, a national law firm, since 1986, concentrating on white collar criminal defense, while also devoting a substantial part of his time to pro bono matters. In one such case, he represented Alejandro Hernandez in the successful appeal that preceded Hernandez's release after nearly twelve years in prison – including five on death row – for a murder he did not commit.

His new book, Limitations is a compelling new legal mystery featuring George Mason from Personal Injuries. Originally commissioned and published by The New York Times Magazine, this edition contains additional material.

Scott explains the initial impulse that led him to write "Presumed Innocent" and why he sets his novels in the fictional Kindle County.

"I seldom write from beginning to end. I'm about to begin this stage on a new book. What I will do is just write down scenes. A lawyer told me a story about a coroner's inquest and I sketched out the scene. Someday I'm going to figure out where that scene fits in the book."

I didn't want to get stuck with having a geography I couldn't alter. I find novels set in real places, involving fictionalized historical events, to be hokey. I'd rather make the fictional cut at the first level and just say this is a nonexistent place, these are nonexistent people. Now, we're all gonna sit around and agree it's real.

I don't have a lot of fixed rules. But I definitely do not have an outline until the later stages. Usually the outline is for the second or third draft.

"One of the things I wanted to do was sort of kick back and write in what I took to be my own voice, and the thing that made me feel that I could do it was meeting the chief deputy

prosecutor in Boston, who was not only a gifted trial lawyer. but also a poet."

Scott Talks about Mystery Novels

"One of the ironies is that this poor genre, the mystery, is so looked down upon, yet it enthralls people. It delivers answers that life and certainly the courtroom cannot."

If the defendant says, *"I'm not guilty,"* and goes on maintaining that until the very end, you try your case, the jury finds the facts, but all they're doing is making educated guesses in a criminal case. You know beyond a reasonable doubt, but you don't know beyond any doubt at all that that's what really occurred.

"Only in the mystery novel are we delivered final and unquestionable solutions. The joke to me is that fiction gives you a truth that reality can't deliver."

Scott Talks about Authors who have influenced him

Scott finds inspiration in the novels of Saul Bellow and Charles Dickens, calling Bellow *"a gargantuan influence,"* Dickens *"a profound influence."*

"I think Dickens is a profound influence on me. But as a younger person I didn't necessarily appreciate Dickens."

"The most enthralling American writer to me when I was much younger was Saul Bellow. He's from Chicago as I am. he has a good sense of the vernacular. He's interested in ideas."

"I don't think building suspense is terribly mysterious. The fact is that its [methods] are eternal and always work . . . Chekov said if there's a gun hanging on the wall in Act 1, it better go off in

Act 3. That's an important principle -- that you have to lay the groundwork for any dramatic developments. You have to hang the gun on the wall, and you have to do it in a way that is not terribly obtrusive."

Charles Dickens . . .

"It's a view of the novel as being governed principally by plot and bringing out the characters within the conditions that the plot proves. It's like building on the land between the streets. You'd look at Dickens and say that he's a novelist who created robust characters without giving up his principal mission as a storyteller. So I have always recognized a large Dickensian influence in my writing. Did I read a ton of Dickens? Yes, absolutely, as a child. Did I read it with particular relish or appreciation? No."

Saul Bellow

"He was a gargantuan influence. But an influence also in the sense that over time I began to identify my points of disagreement with him as a writer as well as the vast areas where I admire him. So he became influential in both senses."

Hosted by Steve Murphy.



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