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Punctuation is your Friend: Junior Editors Write for Peers

By Cathy Dausman



Chronicle Books editor Melissa Manlove explains her work to Junior Editors at Storyteller Bookshop in Lafayette. Photo Cathy Dausman

Summer "school" is not usually about reading and writing, but those attending the Junior Editors class gladly made an exception. The bi-weekly class for middle school students was led by Alameda High School Creative Writing teacher Lisa Piazza, and held after hours at Lafayette's Storyteller Bookshop June 21 through August 2. Piazza has

taught the class for 15 years, and also teaches a version for younger students, ages 7 to 10. Students read soon-to-be-published books and learned to write book reviews, which fellow students then evaluated. During their final session, students met with Chronicle Books editor Melissa Manlove. Manlove explained that it may take two years to publish a book,

and as editor "you have to fall in love with [a book]" because your job is to read it many times over. Revision, she says, "is a huge part of writing," as is listening and communicating well. As for the students, their peer-edited reviews may be submitted for in-house publication and celebrated during the fall Press Release Party.

Local Authors

Pearls of Asia, a novel by Lee Geiger

By Ellen Borrowman



Lee Geiger Photo provided

Pearls of Asia, a rather short novel of 244 pages, is set in San Francisco in the 21st

and an explicit course in Sex Education 202.

possible mistress of Paul Osher, a dancer who works at a famous (and fictional, says the author) restaurant, Pearls of Asia— where all of the beautiful "girls" are actually men. Fleet decides to investigate the restaurant and soon becomes fascinated by the transsexual entertainers.

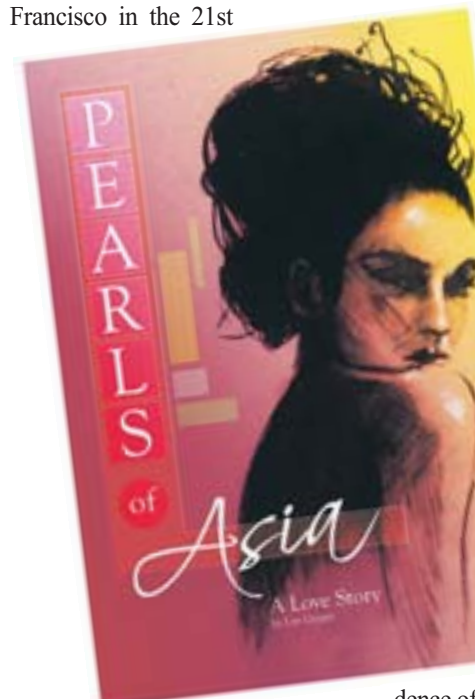
The mystery is finally solved, more through luck and help from a restaurant employee than through logic – Fleet is no Hercule Poirot – and the love story has a happy ending.

The plea for acceptance of diversity is admirable but the descriptions of transsexual love may be too explicit for some readers. If you have recently come to the Bay Area from Kansas you probably should not read the book. Geiger's interesting concept suffers, unfortunately, from inconsistent writing.

When the grisly murder of well-known and admired news anchor woman Michelle Osher, the wife of a wealthy venture capitalist who is also a personal friend of the mayor, is discovered the pressure is on the police department to find some answers immediately.

The case is assigned to department's top team of homicide investigators, Mac Fleet and Taylor Mayes. Their case is a tough one. There were no signs of a struggle or forcible entry and no evidence of theft. The victim's husband, Paul Osher, was out of town and the maid who discovered the body heard nothing but did alert the team that Michelle Osher's small dog was missing.

Subpoenaed phone records and bank statements suggest other lines of investigation. Attention is called to a



century and Moraga author Lee Geiger's knowledge of, and affection for, the City by the Bay shines throughout the book. Described by Geiger as a love story and a murder mystery, the novel truly is both, and then some. It is also a courageous plea for the acceptance of diverse lifestyles

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