

Politics, plotlines make great bedfellows

Hillary. Barack. McCain. You have to admit they'd all make great characters in a suspense novel.

Imagine a plot with presidential hopeful Hillary smiling sweetly to the cameras while behind the scenes maneuvering to steal the election from her opponent by any means possible.

Or Barack, the great orator, learning that an old family friend has been outed as a crazed, anti-American lunatic — a fact that threatens to blow his latest inspirational speech off the front pages and explode his campaign into chaos.

As for McCain, well, suppose that the man who has stood for middle-of-the-road reasoning was threatened at gunpoint to make a hard right turn on his politics, making him into a puppet of conservative power brokers.

Oh. Silly me. Those things have already happened. (OK, so I made up the whole gunpoint thing with

McCain. Can I help it if the man's campaign needs an injection of excitement?)

The point is this: When it comes to politics, the plots practically write themselves. Which may be why so many authors are featuring political

shenanigans in their summer releases. Last week, **Ethan Canin's** tale of a powerful family and political scandal, **America America**, joined a parade of scandalous sizzlers.

Here's a few others just out or on the way:

■ **American Savior**, by Roland Merulio: Here's a tantalizing premise: What if Jesus suddenly appeared and announced that he was running for U.S. president? In this story, Jesus' opponents "scramble to discredit him" — as if we couldn't have guessed. (Out in August)

■ **The Man in the Blizzard**, by Bart Schneider: A private eye gets sucked into a case involving "neo-Nazi violin collectors, mind-control

specialists and thousands of anti-abortion activists" gathering at a rally coinciding with the Republican National Convention. Music and mind-meld? How can it miss? (Au-

gust)

■ **House Rules**, by Mike Lawson: After a terrorist attack, the U.S. Congress considers mass deportations of all non-citizen Muslims — an idea the House speaker is vehemently against. But he has trouble speaking out after learning that one of the terrorists is the son of an old friend and campaign contributor. (June)

Personally, I think the Jesus plotline is a no-miss. But let's face it — for gripping political stories, there's really no need to buy a book at all.

Just keep your eye on the headlines.

They're as good as anything Grisham could write.

Kudos

The Colorado Center for the Book at Colorado Humanities recently released the list of finalists for the 2008 Colorado Book Awards. Among the honorees:

■ **Children's literature: T.A. Barron**, *The Day the Stones Walked*; **Steve Jenkins**, *Living Color*; **Claudia Cangilla McAdam**, *Maria's Mysterious Mission*

■ **Creative Nonfiction: Kim Reid**, *No Place Safe: A Family Memoir*; **Jim Sheeler**, *Obit: Inspiring Stories of Ordinary People Who Led Extraordinary Lives*; **Guillermo Vincente**

RockyMountainNews.com

■ For the full list of book award finalists and information on the October awards ceremony, go to RockyMountainNews.com/extras.

Vidal, *Boxing for Cuba*

■ **Fiction: aaron a. abeyta**, *Rise, Do Not Be Afraid*; **Jennifer S. Davis**, *Our Former Lives in Art: Stories*; **Teresa R. Funke**, *Dancing in Combat Boots: and Other Stories of American Women in World War II*; **Gary Schanbacher**, *Migration Patterns: Stories*

■ **Nonfiction: Carol Ekarius Storey's** *Illustrated Guide to Poultry Breeds*; **Joy Hakim**, *The Story of Science: Einstein Adds a New Dimension*; **Thomas J. Noel**, *Guide to Colorado Historic Places*; **Kirk Johnson**, *Cruisin' the Fossil Freeway*

■ **Popular Fiction: Margaret Coel**, *The Girl with Braided Hair*; **Carol Berg**, *Flesh and Spirit*; **Melissa Mayhue**, *Thirty Nights with a Highland Husband*

Rocky Mountain
News
Denver, CO
Circ. 263425
From Page:
25d
7/4/2008
145395





Patti Thorn



Rocky Mountain
News
Denver, CO
Circ. 263425
From Page:
25d
7/4/2008
145395