

COPS, CROOKS, & CSI: writing your cop scenes with authority
A one-day Mystery Writers of America/NorCal workshop
with Lee Lofland & friends
Sept 23, 10:00-3:30, Lafayette Public Library
A free ticketed event, open to the public

Readers are more knowledgeable about cops than ever before. They expect at least that same level of knowledge from their favorite authors. So, like it or not, it's time go that extra mile—and you can begin by strapping on your gun belts and body armor, polishing your badges and shoes, because you're about to take a wild (and fun!) ride into a side of law enforcement not normally seen by the average citizen. Please join me in signing 10-41: On-duty!

Cops, Crooks, and CSI. You've been writing about cops for years, thinking you know what makes them tick and why they do what they do. Sure, you and your characters each believe you have what it takes to bring life to the officers in your latest book. But do you *really* know what you're writing? How much research have you done other than watching an episode or two of CSI? Have you actually talked to cops? Visited a police station? Ridden in a police car—in the front seat, without handcuffs?

Start with the outside. Do you know how it feels to wrap your arms around someone in uniform? Does their badge poke into you? Why do cops sometimes wince when they slide in and out of their patrol cars? Is body armor different for female officers? Is it okay for a female officer to strip-search a male prisoner?

And the job's inside. Is it okay for undercover officers to smoke marijuana while they're working an assignment? Can they drink alcohol? Who gets a search warrant? How long does it take? Who's in charge, a police chief or a sheriff?

What about the FBI? Do they ride into town on white horses and assume control of any case they choose? Is it mandatory for the FBI to work all kidnapping cases?

Why don't cops just shoot the bad guy in the leg instead of blasting a big hole in the center of his chest? Better yet, why don't they simply give the thug a big karate chop on the back of the neck and take away that machine gun? That would be safer, right?

Why not forget the search warrant and the fact that your hero has been suspended from duty. Just have him open the door and go inside anyway, even though he's no longer an active-duty officer. The courts and your readers won't care, right?

Are You Going to Eat *That*? In this session, Dr. Denene Lofland addresses toxins of biological origin – weapons made from natural sources that could easily be placed in food and drink.

And what about sex? In a patrol car? Does that really happen? What about all that gear? Does it all come off, or ...?

Inquiring minds want to know, all this and more. Find out Sept 23 at the Lafayette Library, when the Mystery Writers of America learn how to **write cops right**. For more information visit the MWA NorCal events page: <http://mwanorcal.org/events/>

Limited seating; open to the public. Free tickets here: <http://tinyurl.com/m3g8d4d>