



## **Everyone Pays**

*Seth Harwood*

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Before joining homicide, Detective Clara Donner spent years on vice alongside the runaways and vulnerable women who walk San Francisco's streets. She thinks she's seen the worst things people can do—until she's assigned to investigate a particularly ruthless serial killer.

As the body count rises and a pattern emerges—each victim is known for his brutal abuse of women—Donner follows the killer's trail across the city. In spite of a nagging sense that the world may be better off without these men, she pursues every lead. When Donner finds a damaged girl with links to both the killer and his prey, she wonders if this new witness is the key to unraveling these murders or another victim left in the killer's wake.

From bestselling author Seth Harwood comes a new psychological thriller set in the dark underbelly of San Francisco.

## **Everyone Pays Details**

Date : Published April 26th 2016 by Thomas & Mercer

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Author : Seth Harwood

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Genre : Mystery, Crime, Thriller, Mystery Thriller, Detective, Suspense

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# From Reader Review Everyone Pays for online ebook

## Patricia Fiorello says

### Good Read!

Kept me interested. Fast paced and with a story. Easy to follow. Hard to put down. Good mystery to start. Definitely recommend!

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## Anne Glouner says

### Excellent Read

Once I started reading, couldn't stop! Read it in one and a half days! Sure hope she hooks up with her man!

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## Sara says

This was a great, easy read. I loved the depth of the characters, their individual quirks, and their ways of interacting with one another. I appreciated and began to understand both the “good guys” and “bad guys,” and as someone who works with teens who have been in places like Emily, it definitely hit home in a powerful and meaningful way. I hope more authors will bring awareness to marginalized populations in such a creative way. I'll definitely be exploring the author's other books.

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## Susan says

A female San Francisco Police Homicide Detective and her partner catch a case of a priest on a killing spree taking revenge on men involved in beating and cutting out the tongue of a young drug addicted prostitute. Fr. Michael hears God tell him to cleanse their sins. The detectives work to help the girl who doesn't want their help and to catch the priest without catching too much political heat. Story is told in alternating voices of the detective and the priest.

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## Jay Williams says

This book has it all: suspense, warm characters, the sad side of San Francisco and a pulse-pounding story. As the story progresses, the detective (and the reader) has to question if the murders of scum that prey on the drugged-up and sad prostitutes of the Tenderloin district are more cleansing than evil. There is no shortage of violence and depravity, but the gory details are included only as necessary to advance the story. The quality of writing is evident on every page, and contributes greatly to the readability and engrossing nature of the narrative. Sometimes I wonder if the young female detective with the crusty old partner isn't becoming a cliché, but this is certainly an outstanding example of the genre.

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## **Samantha says**

Clara Donner is a young homicide detective stationed in San Francisco, California. In many ways, she is emulating her father, a hard-nosed New York detective she idolizes and who raised her as a single parent. In many ways, she is defying her father's image of a woman. In his eyes, a woman would never work homicide, but she does, she's good at it, and she loves it. She's also more than a little willing to blur the line between standard operating procedure and doing what must be done to get the perp. Her partner is a seasoned detective who aims to keep her in line but also appreciates her spirit...and her good looks. When Donner and her partner catch a particularly gruesome homicide it soon becomes apparent they are tracking a man on a mission. A mission from God, it would seem. As more bodies turn up, the mystery unravels and Donner finds herself in deep, from getting reamed by her captain to getting email from the suspect. This is my first encounter with author Seth Harwood, and I must say I am impressed. I thoroughly enjoyed reading *Everyone Pays*, getting to know the newest female homicide detective in adult fiction, and also catching a glimpse into her adversary's world in the alternating chapters told from the killer's point of view. Clara Donner and the ensemble that surrounds her have great potential to develop into a series of nail biting novels should Harwood choose this route, and I really hope he does. Clara's grit, honesty, and vulnerability create a character readers want to know more about. She struggles to balance her job and her pursuit of a love life, she and her partner have mutual respect and also an undercurrent of attraction that they openly banter about, she is confident in her job and doesn't shy away from responsibility, she tries to balance what she should do as a police officer and what she feels is the world setting itself to rights through the killer's actions. She seems real, rather than two dimensional. I highly recommend this novel for anyone who loves a good detective novel, strong heroines, and a little shifting of the moral high ground. Thanks to NetGalley who provided an ARC in exchange for a fair and honest review.

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## **Beth Peninger says**

3.5 stars

Thank you to NetGalley and Thomas & Mercer for this free readers edition. In exchange I am providing an honest review.

Harwood's a new-to-me author, his Jack Palms series is on my to read list but I haven't gotten around to it yet. This title seems to be a stand alone but I could easily see it turning into another series.

Clara Donner is a rare sight in the San Francisco PD Homicide Unit. It's a boy's world but she's working to open it up for other women. Her partner, Hendricks, and her are on call and it turns out this is going to be the busiest week yet of their careers, maybe of all time. Called out to a body found, they arrive at a grisly scene - within 24 hours there's another body found, this one in even more of a grisly state. Suddenly pieces fall together and it looks like someone out there is taking the law into their own hands. Before the body count rises Donner and Hendricks need to find the guy. But this guy isn't your typical killer - he has a particular mission and only a specific set of people he's targeting. In fact, you might say he is doing God's work - or so he believes.

This was such an easy read - and I mean that as a compliment. It moved along so quickly with just the right amount of detail that I had read half the book before I even realized it. I like Donner as a strong female character, I like that a man wrote her as one. I appreciated that Harwood didn't shrink back from details but also didn't include too many. His killer was a freaky choice, though not far fetched. He made me interested

enough in Clara Donner that I'm hoping this book becomes 1 of a series so we can continue to follow Donner on her gig as a female homicide detective.

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## **Monnie says**

It is with great pleasure that I describe this book in one word: *Riveting!*

Even though I've grown a bit weary of the back-and-forth chapter format - this time between San Francisco homicide detective Clara Donner and a serial killer - I was reeled in from the get-go and didn't get off the hook until the last page.

A killer, who brutalizes victims as payback to men who abuse women of the street in the worst possible ways, leads Donner and her partner on a not-so-merry chase. I feel obligated to say that the murders aren't for the squeamish; gruesome doesn't begin to describe what the killer does to his prey, and it's described here in every gory detail. Somehow, Donner has to track him down fast, even though she believes in her heart of hearts that the victims probably got what they deserve. Connecting the dots, though, proves challenging - at least until a drug-addicted, physically and mentally damaged wisp of a girl turns up and turns out to be connected to the victims and the killer.

Donner herself is an interesting character: a crack athlete who can hold her own against the guys on the neighborhood basketball court, the daughter of a homicide cop who's dead set on disproving his belief that women have no place in the murder business. There's a little humor in here too, especially the swipe at James Patterson's *Women's Murder Club* series (no, even though women are at the forefront, Donner isn't a fan. I am, but it was funny anyway).

From beginning to end, this one has real edge-of-seat appeal. Many thanks to the author and publisher, via NetGalley, for the opportunity to read an advance copy in exchange for a review.

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## **Heather says**

We have a gender problem here, and it's a delicate thing to have to discuss in a review. IMO, this is what happens when a man who doesn't understand women writes about one. There are plenty of men who write major female characters I love (Jim Hines would be a great example), so please don't misunderstand me—my problem is just with this one author. Clara has to immediately get in people's faces, and constantly go on about the problems she faces as a woman in Homicide, even though there don't seem to be many hardships for her there. And some of them are her own problem: she makes a snide sexual joke about her partner, but when he fires back appropriately a second female character (ME Ibaka) suggests they should report him for harassment—and all indications are that she's perfectly serious, despite having witnessed the whole altercation. Clara doesn't go through with it, but does seem to consider Ibaka's words. Added to that, Clara is pretty much unlikable as a character. It's weird to see someone writing a character that they don't seem to like or have respect for: "Maybe I liked making guys look bad," says the lead character. "Maybe I liked it a lot."

Michael, a priest who is our spree killer (don't worry, that isn't held as a secret—his own chapters have his name written right there), at one point kills someone in a manner that should have left him drenched in

blood, yet somehow no one notices. There are little holes like this all over the place. For instance, they rescue a woman whose tongue was cut out, and no one tries giving her paper and pen until much later. At that point she just writes a few cryptic words and mutely gestures at them repeatedly in an odd game of charades, despite the fact that she could just write out what she means. Then we have some oh-so-lovely plot ridiculousness when a man is being tortured by having his bones broken by a baseball bat, and yet he seems to keep up a relatively long and quite clear conversation with his torturer.

There are a number of things that keep the pace from rising toward the end. Father Michael has interminable interior monologues, as does Clara. At 90% through the book one should be speeding up, not taking breaks for more musings. The writing itself is awkward and stilted in many places.

I would not recommend this book to a friend.

Book provided free by publisher for review via NetGalley

Original review on my site: <http://www.errantdreams.com/2016/04/r...>

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## **Katy says**

*I received a free copy of this book through Goodreads First Reads giveaways*

This was my first time reading a Seth Harwood novel. The plot itself was fairly interesting; someone is torturing and killing men who take particular pleasure in torturing women. It's told from alternating perspectives of the killer and the cop who is chasing him. Sometimes I like this device, but I didn't feel it worked well here; it detracted from, rather than added to the suspense. Most of the characters were rather flat. Occasionally there was a spark of something interesting to them, but then the story would move on before it could get explored. Which isn't necessarily a bad thing, if you enjoy action-driven books, but I prefer character-driven stories. I definitely felt like the ending could have been drawn out or explored more--the ending to the main plot was satisfactory, but I would've liked to hear more how the ramifications played out. However, this felt like the set-up to a series, so that was understandable.

Overall, this was a serviceable, action-drive, thriller/suspense novel, just not to my particular tastes.

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## **toreadanovel says**

It was hard to decide what to rate this book as – I eventually went with a 3.5 but even now I'm not sure. The book wasn't bad but I was raving about it either. Would I recommend it? Maybe, but it wouldn't be at the top of the list.

As far as crime novels go, it held its own. There was at least one point in the book where I didn't want to put it down, though that didn't last all the way through the book. However, to have a reader feeling like that at some point during the novel is an accomplishment in any book (no pun intended).

Regarding the characters I don't think I connected with any of them at all! I felt like some of them were a little too one dimensional. Perhaps if there were a little bit more backstory for some of the characters, then I

might have been able to connect with them more. I think there was potential to turn the book into a series and then that way there would be more of a chance to get to know the main characters. I did find the killer very intriguing as there was a small twist when it came to finding out who he was. Because the killer was different to most killers I found that the section of the book written in their point of view was really interesting.

The story/motive behind the murders was interesting in itself, let alone the actual murders and solving the murders. The book was quite graphic when it came to describing the murders, I personally didn't mind it but if you don't like blood and gore I'd definitely recommend you skim that part!

Overall there were bits of the book I did enjoy, so I'm glad I read it. There's potential there to be a great book but I do think there were things about the book that did drag it down (if that makes sense).

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## **norcalgal says**

*NOTE: I received a free copy of the book from NetGalley for reviewing purposes. All opinions expressed are my own and are not influenced in any way!*

The dialogue in the novel read almost like a hard boiled detective novel, reminiscent of a film noir, spare and terse. Because I'm not used to this kind of dialogue, I kept wanting more – more details, more descriptions, but alas, the author employed this technique throughout the novel. Well, at least that was my impression due to the inner musings of the MC, a homicide police officer named Clara Donner.

Not that it's necessarily a bad thing, but I felt a reader could sense the author was a male just based on the conversations between characters, and from the inner workings of the minds of the characters. Well, for me at least, the manner of speaking, and topics of conversation just had the whiff of testosterone.

Because I've lived in the San Francisco Bay Area for decades, it nice to read a story that accurately depicts place names and locations in a novel's setting. Too many times, other media – television shows especially, do a poor or wildly inaccurate job of realistically depicting their locale. So, kudos to Seth Harwood.

What I thought interesting about “Everyone Pays” is how early in the novel the author lays out big clues as to the identity of the killer. Maybe I need to read more books in this genre to tell if this is an anomaly, or if it's the usual modus operandi in a mystery thriller.

The author clearly portrays Father Michael's delusions (of grandeur). As with some other demented killers, he believes he's doing God's will, that he is justified in his actions because God “spoke” to him. Father Michael's deluded conviction is well presented in the novel, if also a little time-worn. There's nothing new to this aspect of defense other psychotic killers have used.

What Seth Harwood did not do as well was develop the priest's interest in Donner. It felt completely contrived when Father Michael took a near instantaneous interest in Donner and began to obsess about her, above all the other police officers he saw at St. Boniface's church. For no discernible reason, the author took it in hand to have Father Michael focus on Donner to the exclusion of all other officers who swarmed the church. Tsk, tsk. That's bad story telling when the author doesn't lay the groundwork for tying in one major character to another.

The scene where Lieutenant Bowen chews out Sergeant Clara Donner for the police activities at St.

Boniface's – while perhaps being plausible in reality, also came across as idiotic and shocking. With all the evidence against Father Michael, it's mind boggling that politicians would side with the Catholic Church in their outrage that the church was raided, and a priest was the main suspect in the recent killings. Given the well known fact of the Catholic Church deliberately protecting pedophile priests, it's hard to imagine politicians would want to associate with a church that could be harboring a vicious killer. I felt this scene could have been excised from the novel without harm to the plot or story-telling, and in fact, would have better served the story with its absence. [The fact that the Lieutenant later reams out Hendricks to “stay away from the Church” just compounds the idiocy of inserting this bit of politics into the story].

The story veered far from reality near the middle of the novel when Father Michael goes to Russian Hill to target another name on his “hit list”. Earlier, it was shown that the priest killed a man by pulling a porcelain sink out of its fittings and smashing a guy on the head. I let that bit of herculean feat go, but now, the priest is shown again to perform physical feats too incredible to believe. If he was high on drugs, then I could still buy into the scene, but it's shown that Father Michael is not a drug user, so I just had to roll my eyes while reading those passages.

Another thing that bothered me about the Russian Hill part of the story is that Father Michael is shown to go completely crazy with the baseball bat, destroying almost everything in the apartment. Because Russian Hill is one of the elite, exclusive neighborhoods in San Francisco, it's ridiculous to me that no one in the neighborhood called the police sooner. And again, because this is a tony, posh 'hood, the police are sure to swing by at lightning speed. Thus, it's just too far-fetched that Father Michael could take as much time as he wanted to torture and eventually kill his victim, knowing the realities of Russian Hill as I do. [And that's not even taking into account how the priest just happened to know where to find an empty apartment so he could break into it and lay low for a while!]

Another thing that Seth Harwood didn't explain is why Emily? At no point does the author state why Father Michael chose to exact vengeance on Emily's attackers, rather than any of the hundreds of other people plying the skin trade. Why go all vigilante for Emily, and no one else? OK, sure, God “spoke” to him telling him to cleanse and save Emily but first “taking care” of the men who assaulted her, but again, why do this for Emily and no one else he encountered in all his time around the dregs of society?

The implausibilities in this story just keep coming, because Father Michael is successful in reaching his victims on the very first try. Apparently, unconventional work hours or long commutes or even vacations don't exist in this world. Every victim just happens to be home when Father Michael pays his special visit. Wow, how convenient for the good Father!

The entire setup using Meaders as bait at the Mission Dolores church was so preposterous! Not only was there minimal law enforcement backup, the small four-officer team didn't do their homework to scope out the church. The entire time, I had a strong feeling Father Michael was already inside the church and that an ambush was about to ensue, and sure enough – that's exactly what happened. Seth Harwood practically telegraphed everything that would occur when Donner agreed to meet Father Michael. This was just bad, sloppy writing.

All in all, as a hard-boiled novel, the language was right on, but the plot and story-telling leave much to be desired. It's doubtful I'll soon be reading anything else from this author.

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## **Linda Strong says**

Clare Donner, Homicide Detective, is charged with finding the person responsible for the murders of men known for their savage brutality of women.

Clare and her partner, Hendricks, are not too upset at who the victims are ... but being the dedicated cops they are, they run the gamut of stopping the serial killer. But the bodies keep piling up. And these victims were not discharged from life easily or painlessly.

They eventually find a link between the victims and another young girl. Is this the link they need .. or is she just another victim?

From bestselling author Seth Harwood comes a new psychological thriller set in the dark underbelly of San Francisco.

There are pros and cons with this novel. I find the character of Clare to be a little over the top. She tries way too hard to be 'one of the boys' instead of letting her solve statistics speak for her. And I really got tired of her and her partner calling each other .. partner. It would have been a nice alternative to have them call each other by name at least half the time. Just one of those little quirks for me.

The novel is structurally sound ... well-written for the most part. I enjoyed the background information on Clare ... but Hendricks didn't get the same treatment. He's a big part of the story .. but it seems his life story was mostly omitted.

Even with the cons, I mostly enjoyed the reading. It has good guys and a really evil serial killer and the chase was exciting.

Many thanks to the author / Thomas & Mercer / NetGalley who provided a digital copy in exchange for an honest, unbiased review.

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## **Lindamac says**

This kept me reading late into the night. Good plot, and the lead character is a woman which I also like.

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## **Tulay says**

### **Violent killings.**

First sentence told me who the killer was. And became very clear early in the story. Violent killings in the name of God, definitely didn't like this story.

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