

Short stories are passion for counselor turned author

By Bea Smith
Staff Writer

Very few writers can boast of a concrete, diversified background upon which to fall back for new and inventive ideas in order to create short stories, novels and plays.

Among these elite writers is a unique and talented woman, Patricia L. Morin, a former Unionite, who currently resides in San Francisco.

And her book of short stories, called "Mystery Montage," is derived from her myriad experiences as a retired licensed psychotherapist for 27 years, with master degrees in counseling psychology and clinical social work. She acknowledged that "as an individual practitioner, my clients range from drug-involved adolescents to adult schizophrenics. The inner complexities of the human mind play a strong part in my stories."

She is a doctoral candidate at the Pacific Graduate Institute of Psychology and also "a

certified herbalist, licensed pilot, playwright and published author." Morin explained during a recent conversation that in 2001, she "closed her psychotherapy practice to pursue my passion for writing and had moved to Hawaii, where I co-founded a holistic magazine called 'Inspiration.'"

The idea for "Mystery Montage," a collection of short stories, came about from published material in anthologies. They were compiled, Morin said, "I think mainly because they were so diverse and happened in different cultures and personalities. The stories are uniquely different as motives are explored and crimes solved. It took me about a year and a half to get it together in a book that was published this past October. My second book, by the way, which is titled 'Montages II,' is going a lot quicker. I've already completed four short stories."

How does she find the time to do all that? Morin laughed. "Right now I'm divvying up my time by writing short stories, finishing up

a play, which incidentally, is taken from one of the short stories in the book, called 'Who Killed Horatio Adams?' and working on my second book on short stories."

Actually, she admitted, "short stories are my first love, and playwriting, my second. You know," Morin said, "even when I'm in the process of writing a novel, I write a short story. The ideas just come to me. Just writing along the way and something spikes my interest and before long, it begins to blow into an idea. And I go with it."

Morin, who was born in Jersey City, lived in Union for 20 years. She graduated from Mount St. Mary's in North Plainfield. Even though she always aspired to be a writer, she became a psychotherapist, and had her first client when she was very young. She enjoyed working with children and adults. After 30 years, while in private practice, Morin decided to retire.

"I had more time on my hands back then, and I began to write. I wanted my stories to

be totally different, and most of my writing highlights culture and personalities."

From 2009 to 2010, she said she "created and implemented a middle school pilot project called The Literary Project, to help teach middle school youths, grades seven and eight about the different genres of writing, both fiction and non-fiction. This was in Silverado Middle School in Roseville, California."

Right now, she is involved in writing some short stories and a suspense novel. "I've already completed the first draft." And she mentioned that she is currently working on a "non-fiction project that combines my psychology experience with my writing abilities. The book may be titled 'The Essentials of Character Psychology for Writers' or 'Does Your Character Need A Shrink?'"

Much of Morin's published writings have won awards.

"My first love is writing short stories," she admitted. "And I will continue to do so for as long I can."