



“Bob’s Interview”



By Crime Writers of Canada Associate Bob Harris

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Meet Susan Goldenberg



Susan Goldenberg is the author of two true crime books and nine narrative non-fiction books ranging from history to biography and unvarnished business sagas. She has won both a Canadian Author’s Award and a Canadian Business Press Editors’ Award.

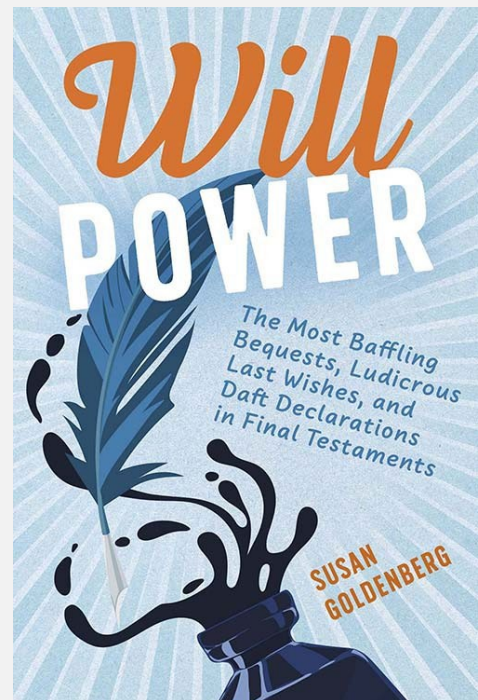
She has written for Canadian and American newspapers and magazines including the *Sunday New York Times*, the *Financial Post*, the *Financial Times of Canada*, *Dallas [Texas] Morning News*, and *Canada’s History Magazine*.

www.goldensusan.com

Bob resides in Vancouver's West End. He is a writer, book promoter, publicist, and event producer.

Currently, Susan writes a heritage column on the district of Toronto where she lives in addition to books.

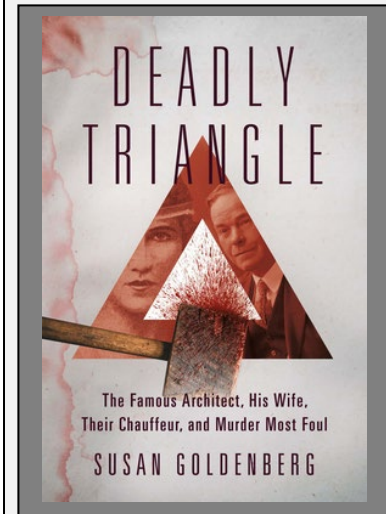
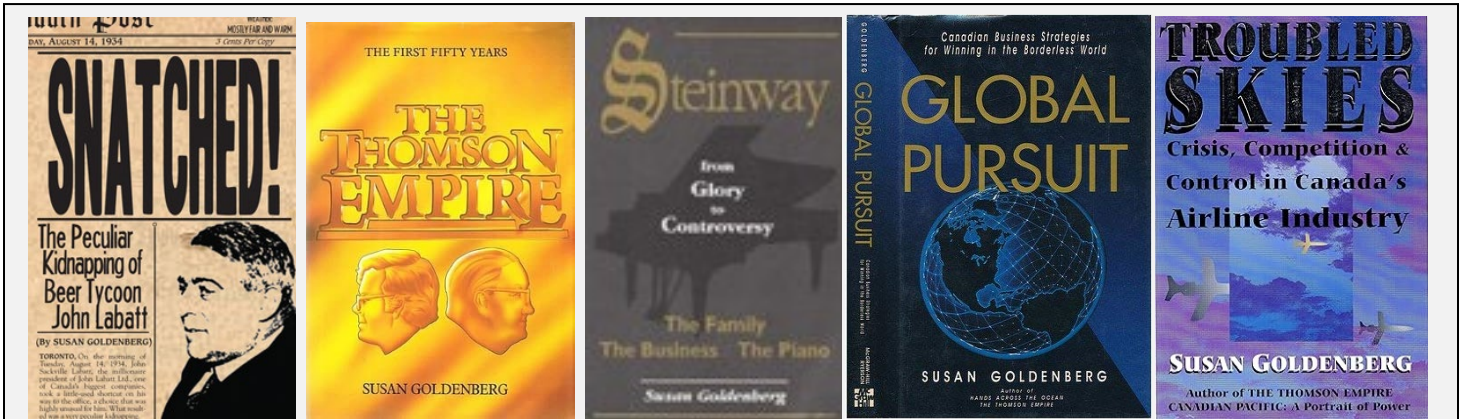
Her latest book release is **Will Power: The Most Baffling Bequests, Ludicrous Last Wishes, and Daft Declarations in Final Testaments**. Published by Dundurn Press, Toronto, February 3, 2026.



At your favourite bookstore, Indigo (in-store/online), and Amazon Books Online.

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"Thank you very much Bob for your support of my writing, including this Q & A. Impressive, thorough, comprehensive questions as you always ask in your interviews." – Susan Goldenberg



A Will Power Review

The delightful collection of case studies illustrates the range of wishes by benefactors in distributing their fortunes, from very modest to enormous. Through outstanding research, the author has unearthed stories of charming generosity alongside examples of shocking racism and gender discrimination, as her subjects sought to honour or punish their families and colleagues. At the same time, the reader and future will-designer learns much about legal principles that govern the settling of wills in Canada. This is a timely and entertaining account of the role that wills have played in Canadians' lives.

— Sharon Anne Cook, author of *The Castleton Massacre*

My conversation with Susan Goldenberg:

Hello Susan, thank you for making time to chat with me today. Let's begin by giving me a brief overview of your background.

I live in Toronto; have for most of my life. I have a B.A. in history and economics from the University of Toronto and a Master of Science in Journalism from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University, Chicago. I weave historical information into all my books.

What led you to writing non-fiction and true crime?

Reporters often move on to writing books. For me the appeal is that there is more space and time to do in-depth coverage. More freedom to express opinions.

I write narrative non-fiction, not textbooks. I try to make them entertaining and provocative as well as informative.

I like to do non-fiction, including true crime, because I find real-life drama compelling: the personalities; current and past motives and actions; social, family, and legal issues that are relevant to the world at large; the unexpected; repercussions. Also, many of the public/readers are endlessly fascinated by true crimes.

The Writer and Researcher

When did you realize that writing and journalism was your destiny?

When at high school. I screwed up the courage to ask a small neighborhood paper if I could write for it from time to time and the very kind editor gave me the chance.

WILL POWER

"The most astonishing and extraordinary bequests and last requests in people's wills, recent and past. Unusually unique, eccentric, vindictive, family conflicts."

What inspired the book?

I think my inspiration is unique for a book as I was inspired by a parrot! I'd suggested, researched, and written a story on a Victoria, B.C. parrot who inherited a mansion and its grounds, that was published in "Canada's History Magazine." This got me thinking that there must be more unusual stories about wills, enough for a book.

I am grateful for the research opportunity you extended to me. My afternoon sourcing wills in the BC Archives at the BC Royal Museum in Victoria was a new and interesting experience.

I'm very grateful to you for doing this. As you know I've thanked you in the Acknowledgements.

Please give me a brief overview of your journey in compiling material for your manuscript.

To the best of my knowledge this is the first book in Canada on this topic. Which made it fun to do. I made it a point to include one [sometimes, more] will for every province and territory for cross-Canada representation and to include both "well-known" and "ordinary people." A lot of research to find suitable examples. Read wills; online record of cases in detail - Canadian Legal Information Institute. <https://www.canlii.org/> Also researched social, legal, biographical, archival, and community context.

How long did it take to complete *Will Power* from concept to Dundurn's release on February 3, 2026?

Two years.

DEADLY TRIANGLE (Dundurn Press, October 22,2022)

"The 1935 murder of architect Francis Mawson Rattenbury, famous for his design of the iconic Parliament Buildings and Empress Hotel in Victoria, British Columbia, and the arrest and lurid trial of his 30-years-younger second wife, Alma, and the family chauffeur, George Percy Stoner, her lover, riveted people."

What creative spark caused you to add this story to your canon of work?

I chanced across it. I thought it suitable for a book because of scandal and murder plus issues that still are relevant today, including the double standard, class divide, extreme power of the press, questionable police tactics, partisan judge, disputed trial outcome.

Reflecting on your writing career, who influenced you the most and why?

My parents foremost. Also: encouraging teachers. In my early career: a newspaper managing editor and the editor of a small magazine. An encouraging editor at a publishing house. Tragically, he died young.

As an author and journalist, what would you like pass on to emerging writers and journalists?

These are important: thoroughness; listening; observing; fairness; accuracy; setting up and sticking to a routine; patience; determination; tenacity; perseverance; resilience. And enjoy!

Thank you for this interview, Susan. In closing, kindly give me flash answers to:

Your favourite beverage: Black tea [fond memories of chocolate milkshakes and lemon ice cream sodas]

Your favourite food: muffins [all flavours]

A Toronto landmark that inspires you: The fine public library system.

A memorable book from your childhood: "Black Beauty." Novel written in 1877 by English author Anna Sewell. Regarded as a classic. Chronicles the life of an "average" horse from a pleasant early existence to harsh treatment and ultimate recovery as told by the horse, "Beauty."

An unexpected and thrilling moment you experienced as Toronto bureau chief for the Dallas Morning News: That they were interested in Canada. Stories I wrote included: Texas-born heads of Canadian companies; the evangelistic fervor of a Mary Kay Cosmetics convention in Toronto; a report on an impoverished Canadian city and its admirable stalwartness.

Author Website: www.goldensusan.com

Publisher website: www.dundurn.com

Request a 45 minute Will Power PowerPoint presentation via the contact form on Susan's website.

Writing professionally as Robert H. Harris and working as a consultant to writers, Bob accepts email inquiries at: harrisbobh@hotmail.com (Profile and publicity photos available on request).