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Recession blues? Laugh them away with three new books

Authors form a three-way "humor bookfest" after connecting on a writers' blog

SOMERSET COUNTY, N.J. - Humor is a personal taste. What's funny to one may not be funny to all. It is also a serious business for authors who need to promote themselves in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Three writers who took on the challenge discovered common ground after connecting on an Amazon.com blog. They have since joined forces to discuss their work: *Into the Sunset* by Donald Capone; ***Dancing with Jou Jou*** (published by Kindle and [iUniverse](#)) by Barbara Louise Leiding; and *Something to Read on the Plane: A Bit of Light Literature, Short Stories & Other Fun Stuff*.

Leiding's novel, ***Dancing with Jou Jou***, was a winner at the 2009 Annual Hawaii Writers Conference, taking second place. The story is a madcap tale about a sweet-talking con artist who ropes his trusting girlfriend into swindling a pair of lottery winners out of a fortune. She is also the author of the parable, *Would You Eat a Rotten Tomato for a Million Dollars? A Slightly Quirky Tale of Greed*, which was awarded "Editor's Choice" in 2004.

Capone and Leiding began exchanging emails after Leiding read Capone's witty novel and found his personal email address on Amazon.com. Meanwhile, Hurst-Nicholson was reading their blogs from her home in Durban, South Africa, when she decided to reach out to Leiding. Hurst-Nicholson got the idea to publish a compilation of her humorous articles and short stories while volunteering at a charity bookshop. She often helped customers who were looking for "something to read on the plane."

"There are stories to suit all tastes, from humour to crime," Hurst-Nicholson said. "And we made the book pocket-sized, with a decent font, and even used some illustrations for people who only read books with pictures," she added, laughing.

The writing styles of the three authors are as varied as the ways humor can arise. Whether it's from a premise, narrative voice, mistaken identity, or through dialogue, especially during a conflict when expectations collide, their approaches are very different.

"The characters in ***Dancing with Jou Jou*** thrive on mayhem that's spurred by lust and greed," Leiding said. "The story is intended to capture the cheerful pandemonium of a classic, madcap comedy, but in the form of a novel set in the current day. If I had written it for television, the show would be a contemporary take on *I Love Lucy* with multiple love triangles tossed in."

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