

POPULAR ALASKANA FICTION: An Annotated Bibliography

Popular = readable, enjoyable by genre readers; literary merit not a prime criteria

Alaskana = related to the Alaska experience, both historical and current; not necessarily written by an Alaskan

Titles suggested by other than the compiler are so credited, as are other's annotations

GENERAL FICTION

Beach, Rex E., The Iron Trail: An Alaskan Romance, 1913. I read a great book for an Alaskan Literature class once, many years ago. I really enjoyed it. It had to do with building the railroad, and especially a bridge. Plus there was the romance part of it. (Jeanie Williamson, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library) Triumph, corruption, and romance during the building of the Copper River Railroad. (*Alaskana for Libraries: A Core List of Books*, 1993)

The Silver Horde, 1909. Novel about salmon breeding and fishing in the Bristol Bay area. (*Alaskana for Libraries: A Core List of Books*, 1993)

The Spoilers, 1906. The hero and his sidekick return to Nome to try and regain their gold mining claim. A romantic interest is met on the ship and their lives intertwine as they deal with the rogues and villains running Nome in the early 1900's. Richard Parry's Winter Wolf covers the same subject. (Judy Countryman, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library) (also listed in *Alaskana for Libraries: A Core List of Books*, 1993)

Ferber, Edna, Ice Palace, 1958. I don't often read straight fiction about Alaska, other than Edna Ferber's old war horse, (which did, in fact, give a sense, a feel for life here in the 60s). It's not like that much any more, though. (Marie Lundstrom, Dimond High School, Anchorage) Novel about a young girl raised by two grandfathers of strongly opposing views in the mythical city of Baranof, Alaska. (*Alaskana for Libraries: A Core List of Books*, 1993)

Huntington, James, On The Edge Of Nowhere, 1992. Based on a true story, a young native woman who has witnessed her husband's murder at the hands of another trader is summoned to Nome to appear in court. The trial is postponed for months and the young woman, who has left her babies with their grandmother, starts out on foot across the Interior in winter, heading for her family. The wisdom learned over years of traveling with her father and her husband guide her home. It's been a long time since I read this, so the details may be fuzzed a bit, but it was sure a good book about an amazing woman. (Brita Rice, Alaska Department of Education, Juneau)

London, Jack, White Fang, 1906. White Fang is captivating from page one. First the reader learns how wolves operate, and how wolves and dogs sometimes breed and spawn creatures half-wolf, half-dog. The story takes place in Alaska where life is hard and cruel and only the strong (humans and creatures) and tenacious survive. White Fang is part-wolf, part-dog. His life starts out wonderfully, in which he is cared for by a very loving mother. But his life changes drastically and his toughness and desire to survive is severely tested. The adventures and people White Fang experience will stretch your emotions to incredible lengths. (reader's review, amazon.com) (also listed in *Alaskana for Libraries: A Core List of Books*, 1993)

Martin, Martha, O Rugged Land of Gold, 1989. A combination of real experiences and imagination, this story is of a female Robinson Crusoe, stranded alone and injured for one winter on a rugged island in Southeast Alaska. It is not hard to imagine the impetus behind this story. There is something in all of us that wonders, could I do it alone, absolutely alone? What are my inner strengths? (*Fairbanks Daily News-Miner*)

McCart, Janet, Forgiving Rose: An Alaska Novel of Mystery, Friendship, and Romance, 1998. ...takes the baby boomer back to the singles life; it gives us a chance to reflect on the fun times and the sad times, relationships we have lost and revisited since that time. Watching these women bump up against each other after a long absence give the reader the feeling that we should reach back into our past lives and reconnect with those with whom we have lost touch. (amazon.com review by a reader from Anchorage)

McCloskey, William B., Highliners, 1979. I read the book when it was first published....I was at the time a commercial fisherman myself, living in Kodiak, and this was one of the few books around that talked about the "life and times" of Alaskan fishermen. (Dave Weil, amazon.com review) In Alaska's fishing industry, the highliners, or skippers and crews, challenge the elements; includes information on different kinds of fishing. (*Alaskana for Libraries: A Core List of Books*, 1993)

Randles, Slim, The Long Dark. I took actual true stories from the Bush in Alaska and fictionalized them. In my ten years as columnist for The Anchorage Daily News and my eight years living twelve miles from a road near Talkeetna, I came across real happenings that seem unbelievable. (the author) An incredible tale of the foibles and adventures of the residents of a small village near Denali. Some chapters are comically funny and other reveal the dark side of human nature. ...This short and sweet book is possibly the best introduction to life in Alaska's bush country one will find. (amazon.com review by a reader from Anchorage)

Shaine, Benjamin, Alaska Dragon, 1991. Rooted in the extraordinary landscape of the North, this book goes to the heart of the human relationship with wildness. Outwardly an intrigue of small town environmental politics – a struggle over mining in a national park – more profoundly, the novel probes the meaning of our species' origins in the shadow of the ice ages. The Alaskan experience explores fundamental themes: the power of nature to reshape our lives, the primal connection of people to place, and the spiritual journey. (amazon.com book description) The author has a PhD in Environmental Studies and 24 years of experience leading research groups in the Wrangells.

Wallis, Velma, Bird Girl and the Man Who Followed the Sun : An Athabaskan Legend from Alaska, 1997 This is another classic Alaskan Indian legend about two adventurers who break the taboos of their community and set out on dangerous quests for freedom and knowledge. (Patience Frederiksen, Alaska State Library, Anchorage)

Two Old Women : An Alaska Legend of Betrayal, Courage and Survival, 1994. The Athabaskan people of Alaska have long told the legend of two old women intentionally left behind by their tribe during a winter of severe starvation. (Patience Frederiksen, Alaska State Library, Anchorage)

Willoughby, Barrett ...wrote several excellent books (not for dates, but for information) about Alaskan people. (Nancy Warren Ferrell, Juneau Public)

The Golden Totem, 1945. Romance/adventure set in the mining times and town of Juneau. (Nancy Warren Ferrell, Juneau Public)

River House, 1936. Romance / adventure set in a hunting lodge up the Stikine River outside Wrangell. (Nancy Warren Ferrell, Juneau Public)

Rocking Moon, 1925. A romance on Kodiak Island, focus on the Russian influence. (Nancy Warren Ferrell, Juneau Public) A romance set on a Kodiak Island fox farm. (*Alaskana for Libraries: A Core List of Books*, 1993)

Sondra O'Moore, 1939. Romance/adventure smuggling set in the Sitka area. (Nancy Warren Ferrell, Juneau Public)

Spawn of the North, 1932. Salmon industry and fish pirates in the Ketchikan area. This was made into a Hollywood movie. (Nancy Warren Ferrell, Juneau Public) (also *Alaskana for Libraries: A Core List of Books*, 1993)

The Trail Eater: A Romance of the All-Alaska Sweepstakes, 1929. Dog racing in the Nome area. (Nancy Warren Ferrell, Juneau Public) (also *Alaskana for Libraries: A Core List of Books*, 1993)

Where the Sun Swings North, 1922. Family marooned on an island off Alaska's coast, and their survival. (Nancy Warren Ferrell, Juneau Public) A novel of adventure on a "lost" Alaskan island. (*Alaskana for Libraries: A Core List of Books*, 1993)

FANTASY

Lindholm, Megan, Cloven Hooves, 1991. Lindholm grew up in Fairbanks, as does the protagonist. It's a little strange having a fantasy set in your own back yard! (Sharron Albert, SF/Fantasy Book Group, Noel Wien Public Library, Fairbanks) The protagonist is an independent-minded, tomboyish woman with a young son and an ailing marriage. After a long period of fruitlessly striving to make her life work, she walks away from civilization to mate with, and bear a child to, a satyr, a half-goat, half-man creature. Despite its wildly implausible biological assumptions, Lindholm's tale is oddly convincing and genuinely moving. (Eric S. Raymond, *Raymond's Reviews* #171)

Scarborough, Elizabeth, The Goldcamp Vampire – or – The Sanguinary Sourdough, 1987. In 1897, Valentine Lovelace joins her recently deceased father's mistress on a trip to the Yukon where she hopes to write about the life of the gold miners. Mysterious events and unusual deaths abound. Vampires and werewolves wreak havoc on the miners and other folks who come to the Yukon searching for the mother lode. I would not call this book Alaskana – perhaps Candiana. It has good detail for descriptions of geography, lifestyle of women working in Dawson, clothing, etc. (Jeannie Williamson, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

HISTORICAL FICTION

Bell, Margaret E., Totem Casts a Shadow, 1949. Florence Monroe lived with her pioneer family in a remote Alaskan settlement where the sole neighbors were Haida Indians. (Adele Virgin, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Watch for a Tall White Sail, 1948. The story is about a young girl who moves with her family to an isolated area where the only contact with the outside world is by sailing schooner that stopped two or three times a year with supplies, news and mail brought by a handsome young captain. (swinterhawk@getty.edu amazon.com reader's review) As a junior high student I read this book and fell in love with southeast Alaska. I now make my home in Craig, Alaska. This small fishing village was named after the handsome sailboat captain. When I moved to Craig, as a library volunteer, I was able to read all the books that she wrote. I'd also bet this book was the start of my love for historical romances. Books are what make winters in these small worlds open up to beautiful dreams. (amazon.com reader's review)

Dailey, Janet, The Great Alone, 1986. I was dubious because it looked like a romance (not my usual choice of reading material), but it was actually a very good read. It begins with the arrival of Cossack fur traders in the Aleutians, describing their impact on the Aleut people. The book follows the descendants of an Aleut woman and her children by a Cossack, from her first contact through the Russian settlement of Kodiak, then Sitka, on to the gold boom of Nome and the early growth of Anchorage. I'd recommend it. (Pamela Handrich, Kenai, Peninsula College, Kachemak Bay Campus Library, Homer)

Doig, Ivan, The Sea Runners, 1982. Novel about the escape of four indentured Scandinavians from Russian America in 1858 and their canoe journey to Oregon. (*Alaskana for Libraries: A Core List*

of Books, 1993) Descriptions of the Pacific Northwest are accurate and beautiful. The rhythm of the book captures the frustration of its characters and makes it part of your life. I felt I was on the sea paddling for seemingly forever. What kind of character is required to make a superhuman effort? What kind of relationships are developed by disparate humans when pitted against great odds? Doig helps to answer these questions. This is a MUST READ for understanding the Pacific Northwest. (Colleen Davenport, Wrangell in amazon.com review)

Gutenberg, Elyse ...historical novels with accurate and beautiful northern settings. (Eric Heyne, University of Alaska Fairbanks English Department)

Daughter of the Shaman, 1997. Sequel to Summer Light. Follows Elik as she travels farther north to live among strangers in her new husband's home. (the author, amazon.com)

Summer Light, 1995. Elik struggles to find a proper place in her pre-historic Eskimo village, but her dreams lead her away from a life as a hunter's wife and toward becoming a shaman, forcing her to choose between safety and the truth of her visions. (June Pinnell-Stephens, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Harrison, Sue, Brother Wind, 1994. Sequel to My Sister the Moon. Expert carver, Kiin ...is returned to the Walrus People after sinister shaman Raven kills her husband. She must leave behind Samiq, her dead husband's brother and her true love, who is the father of her twin sons. Meanwhile, Kukutux has also suffered the loss of her husband, who died on a whale-hunting expedition, leaving her with their son, a ulaq (hillside dwelling), and just enough food to survive the winter. Her only hope is that another hunter will take her as his wife. (*Kirkus*, July 15, 1994)

Mother Earth, Father Sky, 1990. First book in a pre-history trilogy set in ice age Aleutian Islands around 7000 B.C. ...womanhood comes cruelly and suddenly to beautiful, young Chagak. Surviving the brutal massacre of her tribe, she sets out across the icy waters of America's northwest coast on an astonishing odyssey that will reveal to Chagak powerful secrets of the earth and sky... and the mysteries of love and loss. (book jacket)

My Sister the Moon, 1992. Sequel to Mother Earth, Father Sky. An abused, unwanted daughter of the First Men tribe knows the harsh realities of life in a frozen land at the top of the world. For young Kiin's destiny is tied to the brave sons of the orphaned Chagak – one to whom she is promised, the other for whom she yearns. (amazon.com synopsis)

Song of the River, 1998. I'm not normally a fan of historical fiction, but this book not only kept my interest, it also evoked wonderful memories of home – and another world! (Deanna Swaney, Wasilla, amazon.com review) Eighty centuries before our time, in the frozen, snow bound interior of a place that will someday be called Alaska, a beautiful young woman called K'os, of the cousin River Village, is brutally attacked and ravaged by men from the Near River Village. With ruthless passion she vows vengeance on those who have wronged her. (amazon.com book description) Sequel is Cry of the Wind, 2000

Markstein, George, Tara Kane, 1978. Tara arrives in Alaska after a long horrible trip from San Francisco. She is following her husband Daniel who had caught the gold bug. Upon arrival in Skagway, penniless and alone, she encounters Jefferson Smith who becomes her benefactor. As Tara fruitlessly searches for Daniel, Smith continues to pursue her. She comes to trust and even care for the handsome scoundrel. (recommended by Sue Sherif, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Michener, James A., Alaska, 1988. Historical novel by a master of the genre. (*Alaskana for Libraries: A Core List of Books*, 1993) Having lived in Alaska myself, I found the narrative to be refreshingly accurate in portraying much of the history and landmarks. (scott.Burkett@paonline.com, amazon.com review)

Roesch, E. P., Ashana, 1990. I always send Ashana to people new to Alaska. (Bev Griffin, formerly at the Regional Center, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library) Ashana was a bride on the coast of what we call Alaska. This is the story of her life as hostage to the Russian fur traders who levied Alaskan slaves to bring in the valuable furs coveted by 19th century Russians. Clearly Russians measured civilization in different terms than these proud and isolated Alaskans. The guns gave them power. This is the story of Alaskans' inner strengths – the power of their masks and visions with which they struggled to survive the Russian invasion. (webpage: *Nancy Keane's Booktalks – Quick and Simple*)

MYSTERY

de Laguna, Frederica, Fog on the Mountain, 1938. Set in Kachemak Bay, near Homer, this is an interesting antique from 1938, revived--another mystery. (Marie Lundstrom, Dimond High School, Anchorage) It is the late 1930's, and young ethnologist Wallace Howard is happily collecting Alutiiq songs and legends in a remote town on Kachemack Bay in Alaska. When his friend and teller of legends, Chief Totemoff, is killed, Wallace takes it upon himself to find the murdered – and learns that the murder is not the only criminal activity taking place in the picturesque little town. The description of the locale is quite realistic, but there are occasional lapses as when she mentions "herds of moose". (Sylvia Burns, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Froetschel, Susan, Alaska Gray, 1996. Jane McBride is a woman with secrets and sadness – and Alaska seems just about as far away as she can get from her past. When she gets to Sitka, Jane learns that her new job has been eliminated, but she is determined to stay – even after she surprises an intruder ransacking her room. The death of a young woman seemingly has no connections – or does it? (amazon.com synopsis) Accurate representation of Sitka. (Mary Gauthier, Kettleton Memorial Library, Sitka)

Henry, Sue

Right now my favorite are the mystery books by Sue Henry of APU. I like them because they are an "easy read" and she talks about real places, so there's no need to try to guess where the parts of the story are taking place. The mystery has the necessary twists & turns to keep one guessing "whodunit". The main characters seem like very real people. Most of all, because it is about Alaska. Don't have to read them in sequence, but it helps in regard to the "hero's" personal life. (BJ Vinson) I've also enjoyed Sue Henry's mysteries. (Marie Lundstrom, Dimond High School, Anchorage)

Deadfall : an Alaska Mystery, 1998. To avoid the dangerous stranger who's stalking her, an Iditarod musher seeks refuge on a desolate island in Kachemak Bay – and winds up playing a terrifying game of hide-and-seek with a killer. (Annotation from *Some Books About Alaska, 1998*) (Sylvia Burns, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Murder on the Iditarod Trail, 1991. Frostbite, exhaustion, and hallucinations are all expected when racing in the grueling Iditarod Race, but bizarre murders are not. Female musher, Jessie Arnold, encounters more excitement than she had planned on, and part of it is because of a very special Alaska State Trooper. (Sylvia Burns, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Murder on the Yukon Quest, 1999. Dog musher Jessie Arnold faces more than the challenges of the trail while competing in the thousand mile Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race when a fellow musher is kidnapped, a dog handler is murdered, and Jessie finds she must deliver the ransom, pursue her diabolical captors, and rescue the victim. The world of professional distance sled dog racing is rendered in great detail. Many scenes are evocative of the Upper Yukon valley where the story takes place. Some of the details are not quite accurate, but for the most part are convincing. (Jean Trainor, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Jones, Stan, White Sky, Black Ice, 1999. Born in a native village but raised in a big city, a young Alaskan State Trooper is posted to the town where he was born. He is faced with solving a puzzling

series of suicides while trying to balance himself between two cultures....I was a Chief Deputy U.S. Marshal in Alaska during its final territorial and early statehood years. What impressed me most about this book was its absolute authenticity. The natives, the way they live, their unique speech patterns, the land they live in, and the climate they endure are all true to life. Just as realistic are the problems facing a police officer in the rural areas of Alaska. (James H. Chenoweth, amazon.com review)

Quinn, Elizabeth. I've enjoyed (her) mysteries. (Marie Lundstrom, Dimond High School, Anchorage) Lauren Maxwell, an investigator for the Wild America Society in Anchorage, Alaska, is featured in: Murder Most Grizzly (1993), A Wolf in Death's Clothing (1995), Lamb to the Slaughter (1996), Killer Whale (1997), Dead by a Whisker (1999) (www.stopyourekillingme.com)

Robinson, Richard W., Light All Night, 1998. Written by an author who has lived in Alaska since 1950, this is a mystery about the search for the causes of the Exxon Valdez oil spill in 1989. (Judie Triplehorn, Geophysical Institute, University of Alaska Fairbanks)

Rust, Megan Mallory, Coffin Corner, 2000. In this third book in the Taylor Morgan series, the plot really heats up. These tales of high flying in the Alaska Bush are Megan Rust's forte, and she paints a series of twists and turns into numerous medevac flights. And all of that wrapped into a tricky, and suspenseful murder mystery. Having actually flown all over Alaska for 25 years myself, I can vouch for the authentic feel to the entire story. It really had me sweating in the pilot's seat! (amazon.com review by Randy Brandon, Girdwood)

Dead Stick, 1999. I loved this book. It's set in my own neighborhood and she did a good job of representing the way life really is here. Of all the Alaskan sleuths I've read this one is the most realistic in the small details. At least she is more like the women in my neighborhood and I think more representative of the...real Alaska women I know. I really hate flying, especially in smaller planes and especially in Alaska, but the story of this medevac pilot had me totally engrossed. And the writer treated me fairly, putting the clues out there for me and giving me a fair chance at finding them and provided enough red herrings alternative suspects and motives to make it a challenge....It was a nailbiter with a surprisingly creative ending. (a reader from Anchorage on amazon.com)

Simpson, Marcia, Crow in Stolen Colors, 2000. Alaskan librarian and delivery boat operator Liza Romero rescues a small Native American boy from chill waters; then, while investigating a corpse on the rocks nearby, she is nearly murdered. (*Library Journal*, May 1, 2000) The plot races on from that point. Most of the action takes place on boats out in the sometimes treacherous coastal waters around Wrangell. (Ingrid Clauson, North Pole Branch Library)

Stabenow, Dana, her mysteries featuring Kate Shugak or Liam Campbell. Any one, or all, are excellent, very accurate Alaskan, especially as relates to the "Bush" and "native" experience. I HIGHLY recommend them as a good read also! (I have lived in Alaska, all over, for 25 years). (B. J. Gardner, Egan Library, University of Alaska Southeast, Juneau)

Blood Will Tell, 1996. Kate Shugak, formerly an investigator, is looking forward to winter on her rural homestead. Those plans are interrupted when Kate's grandmother asks her to attend the Alaska Federation of Natives Convention and investigate suspicious activities involving tribal lands. Kate had customarily avoided tribal politics, but her passion for her family and heritage lead her to meet the challenge. Kate's life is threatened as she gets close to the truth, but she remains determined to the end. Mutt, Kate's dog, is a hero on more than once occasion. The reader also learns about Kate's developing relationship with Jack Morgan who is fighting for custody of his son. Kate manages to find time to help tip the scales in that battle. A definite Alaskan setting with considerable detail. (Mary Ellen Baker, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Breakup, 1997. A hoot and a half! All of her other Kate Shugak mysteries that I've read (not the latest one) are entertaining. (Marie Lundstrom, Dimond High School Library, Anchorage) During the restlessness of an Alaskan spring thaw, wilderness woman Kate Shugak finds herself smack in the middle of bear encounters, a plane crash, family feuds and possibly even murder. A reluctant but natural leader, Kate faces these daunting situations and must also decide whether to accept the responsibility of tribal leadership. (Tina Shih, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Straley, John. His mysteries with the wonderful titles (The Curious Eat Themselves, The Woman Who Married a Bear, etc.) are dark, dark, but entirely recommendable. (Marie Lundstrom, Dimond High School, Anchorage)

The Curious Eat Themselves, 1993. Crime happens even in the mystical rains of Southeastern Alaska. Cecil Younger, private investigator, weaves his way through an unusual assortment of humanity to find the killer of a young woman who was fighting a corporate cover-up. (Sylvia Burns, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Death and the Language of Happiness, 1997. Old William Flynn, confused and living in the Sitka Pioneer's Home, wants to hire private investigator Cecil Younger to kill someone – someone that the old man thinks murdered a woman who used to visit him at the Home. The ensuing search discovers the truth about the murder, as well as the truth about a 1919 tragedy, decades old but still disrupting lives. (Sylvia Burns, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

The Music of What Happens, 1996. Cecil Younger is not your typical hero; he is an all-too-human recovering substance abuser. Hired by an old Juneau friend, he becomes involved in an ugly child custody case which turns yet uglier when his client is accused of murder. (Sylvia Burns, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

ROMANCE

Barrett, Jean, Man of the Midnight Sun, 1996. Harlequin Intrigue; received four stars from *Romantic Times*. Cathryn McLean escapes failed police protection in New Orleans, substituting for her cousin, a would be mail-order bride to Alaskan "bushkin", Ben Adams – but there are things about Ben Adams that just don't match up with the letters he sent her cousin. Nice use of bush living and terrain plus snippets of small town life in the Anchorage – Fairbanks corridor. Heroine is a research librarian, and her ability to gather information helps her survive.

Browning, Pamela, Kisses in the Rain, 1987. A Harlequin American Romance that gives a good picture of life in Ketchikan. (Charlotte Glover, Ketchikan Public Library) Martha Rose accepts a new job and within days finds herself in Ketchikan, setting up a new Bagel Barn franchise on the docks just before the annual influx of tourists begins. As Martha begins to adapt to and settle into her temporary home, it is Nick Novak, the bachelor with a fishing / canning business and a shy, troubled young "son", who capture her heart.

Campbell, Bethany, The Ends of the Earth, 1990. A Harlequin Romance. I enjoyed this. It includes the rescue of the two gray whales we read about in the *News Miner* in 1988. (Kristina Ahlmas, University of Alaska Fairbanks)

Dailey, Janet, Northern Magic, 1982. Harlequin; "Janet Dailey Americana" series. Shannon arrives in Anchorage to join her fiancé, who has just found a job as a bush pilot. When he wasn't there and his apartment had been rented to someone else, Shannon sought help from Rick's supposed employer, Cody Steel.

Darty, Peggy, Wailing Winds of Juneau Abbey, 1990. In 1895, Abby Whitaker, travels to and settles in Juneau for a short time to take care of matters regarding her Uncle Joshua's estate upon learning of his death. Abby also investigates the circumstances surrounding her Uncle's death, which she

learned was a suicide, and becomes romantically involved with a neighbor who was a gold miner. (Ellen Cashen, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Early, Margot, There is a Season, 1999. Harlequin Superromance about a midwife and a bush pilot, who meet, love, and marry in 1960's Talkeetna despite her family's enmity. Vietnam, alcoholism, and infidelity lead to divorce. Thirty years later, the disappearance of Francesca Wolcott's good friend and fellow midwife brings her back to Talkeetna, her estranged family, and Charlie Marcus, the man she never stopped loving. An involving story with a choppy flashback / multiple voices format that probably would have been better served with another hundred or so pages. The Talkeetna setting for both time periods is particularly well drawn; the author credits several long-time area residents in her introduction.

Evanovich, Janet, Manhunt, 1989. Loveswept Romance. Eastern urbanite trades homes with grizzly Fairbanksan, intending both to take over his catch-all store and find herself a man. Success is not without misadventure. It's a thoroughly enjoyable hoot all the way through. We've passed a couple of personal copies around the staff here in Fairbanks and the old-timers say Evanovich paints a good picture of Fairbanks in the late '80's. One of our staff e-mailed Evanovich about the book, and we learned that her husband was a visiting professor at UAF and that their daughter (the one who maintains her web page) actually came back here to attend UAF.

Goldstrand, Theresa, Alaskan Magic, 1998. When accountant Lauren Cole leaves her ex-fiance in San Diego to go to Alaska to help her twin brother Mark on his salmon-fishing boat in the summer, danger and romance await her. (*Some Books About Alaska*, 1998)

Harte, Amanda, Midnight Sun, 1999. Leisure Historical Romance. Amelia Sheldon has come from Philadelphia to Gold Landing determined to practice medicine. It's 1909 and miner William Gunning arrogantly believes that women are not meant to be doctors. Listed in *Some Books About Alaska*, 1999, this received three stars (out of five) from *Romantic Times*, but a "D" from *All About Romance*. Everyone praises the history, but not everyone likes either the characters or the way the storyline develops. However, a reader poll demanded a sequel to tell the story of Sam Barrow, a secondary character in MS; Rainbows at Midnight is to be published in October 2001.

Macomber, Debbie – *her husband worked on the pipeline; they've traveled to Alaska to research her books; she has written several sweet (kisses) to mildly sensual contemporary category romances featuring Alaskans.*

Borrowed Dreams, 1985. Silhouette. Widowed bush pilot, Brand St. Clair is ready to marry again and settle down. Now all he has to do is prove that to Carly Grieves, new to Alaska and to his heart.

Bride Wanted, 1993. A Silhouette Special Edition, this is a variation of the mail-order bride theme. Chase Goodman of a woman-shy town in northern Alaska, hopes a Seattle billboard will help him find a bride, but it's a mugger that brings him and "once bitten" librarian Lesley Campbell together. She finds adjusting to life in the far north easier than learning to trust her new husband.

"Midnight Sons" series of six Harlequins about the O'Halloran brothers, who run a bush-plane charter service, and their campaign to bring women to Hard Luck, population 150 (mostly men), located 50 miles north of the Arctic Circle. Macomber based Hard Luck on Bettles. Popular series, published singly and republished as duos. Single titles, in order of publication: Brides for Brothers (1995)(heroine in this is an assistant librarian); The Marriage Risk (1995); Daddy's Little Helper (1995); Because of the Baby (1996); Falling for Him (1996); Ending in Marriage (1996)

That Wintry Feeling, 1984. A Silhouette Romance. Teacher Cathy Thompson moves to Alaska to help forget a painful past. Alaskan bush pilot, Grady Jones, is finding it difficult to raise his

daughter alone. Can a marriage of convenience become a marriage of love? Fairbanks setting quite well drawn.

Munn, Vella, Midnight Sun, 1993. This Kismet series contemporary romance is set in the heavy construction industry of Anchorage and, mainly, Skagway. The protagonists are Brand Lockwood, a contractor with a strong ethical commitment to safety, and Kara Richardson, a particularly skilled large equipment operator and daughter of a contractor whose company is under investigation, an investigation instigated by Lockwood. Conflicting strong loyalties and a growing respect and sensual attraction between two likeable people, true Alaskan secondary characters, and an interesting look at history, tourism, and the realities of construction in the rugged North make this a quick, engaging read.

Osborne, Maggie, I Do, I Do, I Do, 2000. Juliette March, Clara Klaus, and Zoe Wilder have only one thing in common – they had married – and were still married to Jean Jacques Villette, only the rat had taken off for the Yukon to search for gold. Determined to find and confront their “husband”, the three women band together to make the arduous trek north from Seattle and over the infamous Chilkoot Trail. Each finds adventure, strength, and a more suitable male along the way in a quick-paced and often humorous, though historically accurate, romp through Gold Rush history.

Peterson, Tracie, Alaska: Four Inspirational Love Stories in America's Final Frontier, 1998. The bleak wilderness of America's 49th state challenges three women in different eras: Julie, a nurse, who must serve victims of a 1925 diphtheria epidemic; Beth, whose Canadian-born husband is killed in World War II; and Rita, who takes on the ultimate test of endurance, the Iditarod dog sled race. Each must surmount the obstacles of her life, and perhaps, with God's help, find true love as well. (amazon.com book description) I do not read a lot, but I could not put this book down. I live in Alaska and have been in the same place as the character in the book... (amazon.com review by Rusty Drexler, North Pole)

SCIENCE FICTION

Anderson, Poul, Orion Shall Rise, 1983. Key action takes place in Cook Inlet. (John Cunningham, Science Fiction/Fantasy Book Group, Noel Wien Public Library, Fairbanks) Story follows the efforts of a small republic on the North American northwest coast to develop space travel, which is opposed by the major world powers whose mantra is ecological balance at all costs in Europe and Australia. Characters from all sides converge, meet, and fight for what they each feel is right. Takes place two or more centuries after nuclear war. (*Readers Robot Science Fiction*)

Armstrong, Michael, After the Zap, 1987. ...an incredibly manic after-the-bomb tale like none other I've read...I can't remember when I've been so entertained...a frenetic and accomplished magical act that somehow works. (Edward Bryant, TSR) ...five years after The Zap a group of nukers roam Alaska in an old Wonder Bread blimp, handing out what they claim are small nuclear devices and installing nuclear bomb triggers in the checks of the recipients' loved ones. (*Nuclear Holocausts: Atomic War in Fiction: A supplement*)

Agviq: the Whale, 1990. The Inupiaq and a white archaeologist, survivors in Barrow after a nuclear war, need each other's knowledge to survive. (Eric Heyne, UAF English Department)

Howard, Hayden, Eskimo Invasion, 1967. What could possibly be wrong with a harmless, loveable group of Eskimos? A very odd, but quite effective treatment of the overpopulation theme involving fast-breeding Eskimos. Nebula finalist for best novel in 1967. (recommended by Sharron Albert, Science Fiction / Fantasy Book Group, Noel Wien Library, Fairbanks)

Jablokov, Alexander, A Deeper Sea, 1992. Russians communicating with dolphins in the Bering Sea. (John Cunningham, Science Fiction/Fantasy Book Group, Noel Wien Public Library, Fairbanks)

When Ilya Stasov, a Russian scientist, begins experimenting with human-dolphin communication, human destiny is altered irrevocably as dolphins begin using Stasov's research to satisfy their own agenda. (amazon.com synopsis)

Pollen, Michael, [Through the Eye of the Glacier](#), 1999. One thousand B.C. In the receding ice age of the vast Tanana River Valley of interior Alaska, mammoth hunters encounter a mysterious and beautiful treasure. Rediscovered deep within a glacier during the heyday of Trans-Alaska Pipeline construction two Athabaskan students from the University of Alaska share an adventure of scientific and cultural discovery in the midst of stunning ethereal beauty of Alaska. (amazon.com book description) As a scientist at the Geophysical Institute, University of Alaska Fairbanks, I am struck by the clever combination of science and plausible science fiction, and am impressed with the sensitivity and obvious love for Alaska and its Native people that pours through the pages. (Glenn E. Shaw, Professor of Physics, UAF) (first recommended by Barbara Sokolov, University of Alaska Anchorage, retired)

Van Vogt, A. E., [The War Against the Rull](#), 1959. A segment of this Science Fiction novel has an Alaskan connection -- and fairly remote connections, at that. (Marie Lundstrom, Dimond High School, Anchorage) Our hero is Trevor Jamieson, chief scientist of the Interstellar Military Commission, on the front lines of humanity's war with a shape-shifting race of insectoid aliens known as the Rull. (Paul Hughes, amazon.com)

Wood, Samuel H., [Emergence](#), 1994. Two Alaskan hikers discover an alien spacecraft at the base of an Alaskan glacier -- and then discover their own latent mental and telepathic powers. (*Alaska Small Press Catalog*) A true Alaska author demonstrates his SCI FI acumen! Sam Wood provides a science fiction thriller set in the beautiful Alaskan wilderness. (Sky A. Tudor, Anchorage, on his homepage: www.alaskalife.net/tudor/bkpage.htm) Very good book: fast paced, changing from scene to scene like a movie. You gotta read this book. (Theresa Dean, Eagle Public Library)

THRILLER

Davidson, Lionel, [Kolymsky Heights](#), 1994. A former Rhodes scholar, part Inuit, Johnny Porter, sneaks into a secret Siberian research facility and eventually escapes over land/ice to Alaska. This is a very fast-paced technothriller type of book. (Ricki Nordmeyer, Skokie Public Library, Illinois on Fiction_L) Several amazon.com reviewers compared this favorably to Martin Cruz Smith's [Polar Star](#), for readability and credibility of both the story and the main character.

Parry, Richard, [Ice Warrior](#), 1991. An espionage-thriller a la Tom Clancy. (Eric Heyne, UAF English Department) In 1983, Fairbanks plastic surgeon Rick Benson must draw on the skills that made him a highly effective commando in Vietnam if he is to track down and rescue his eight-year-old daughter from the Russians and Vietnamese who have kidnapped her for the map her double-agent Vietnamese mother tattooed on her head. Wrapped around the Iditarod, the story ranges from Fairbanks to Anchorage and then along the Iditarod trail. Key secondary characters include a rookie musher, a Yup'ik shaman, and a New Yorker who is looking for her first real break into the elite world of true journalism by writing about women mushers -- but this is Rick Benson's story all the way. Parry was a practicing plastic surgeon in Fairbanks when he wrote this book and his character's life as a surgeon, bachelor father, and Fairbanksan ring true.

Randles, Slim, [Raven's Prey](#), 1999. Jepson "Jeep" George, son of an Athabaskan mother and Norwegian father, is a hunter's guide working out of Anchorage. His best friend is one of four men murdered in the Talkeetna Mountains and he goes out into the barrens alone to find the killer -- a man who knows the Alaskan backcountry as well, maybe better, as his pursuer. Following signs that ordinary men would never discover, devising ways to capture his foe, Jeep is captured by the madman, his provision and pack burned, and he is left to die -- or survive, tapping into everything he has ever learned about the trackless wilderness, including the wisdom of his Indian heritage. (Dale L. Walker, *Out West Books*) The good guy, a half-native Alaskan musher and reputable Alaskan hunting guide, must call on all his backwoods knowledge about Alaska and the

skills he's learned in a lifetime in Alaska to track down an Alaskan who murdered his best friend, who was also an Alaskan. It takes a while, but the successful outcome is never in doubt. This is an action adventure story soaked, saturated, and jam-packed with a surfeit of Alaskan. This is one of those novels that can appear overly obvious to Alaskans and wonderfully informative to Outsiders. A huge effort is made to make Alaska a Central character. (Greg Hill, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Simmons, Diane, Let the Bastards Freeze in the Dark: a Novel, 1980. Hijackers take over the Fairbanks power plant in the dead of winter, holding the entire community hostage with the threat of death by cold. Author formerly worked for the Fairbanks Daily News-Miner. (recommended by Sue Sherif, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Smith, Martin Cruz, Polar Star, 1989. Arkady Renko, the obsessed, dedicated cop of Gorky Park, has lost his party membership. He now toils in obscurity on a Russian factory ship working with American trawlers in the middle of the Bering Sea. But when he is ordered by his captain to investigate an "accident" that has all the marks of murder, Renko once again finds himself face-to-face with the Soviet bureaucracy. (amazon.com synopsis) (Sue Sherif, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Stein, Garth. Raven Stole the Moon: a Novel, 1998. In this haunting debut, Garth Stein brilliantly invokes his Native American heritage and its folklore to create an electrifying supernatural thriller. When a grieving mother returns to the remote Alaskan town where her young son drowned, she discovers that the truth about her son's death is shrouded in legend—and buried in a terrifying wrinkle between life and death. (Annotation from *Some Books About Alaska, 1998*) (Sylvia Burns, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

WESTERN

Cushman, Dan, In Alaska With Shipwreck Kelly, 1996. A big hit with TLC (Traveling Library Center) patrons, this is the story of Patrick Kelly and his adventures in the Yukon of 1897. Set against the Alaskan Gold Rush, Kelly and his business partners race to the headwaters of the Yukon River to set up a gambling casino. Will they beat Diamond Jack McGowan to the punch? (Tom Joselyn, King County Library System, Washington) Also listed on the skagway.com Reading List.

Hron, Tom, Whispers of the Mountain, 1996. When a young native girl emerges alone from the desolate Alaskan woods, telling a tale of a savage stranger who butchered her father and kidnapped her mother, Marshal Eli Bonnet and a companion set out on their trail. (amazon.com synopsis) (Wendy Anderson, Skagway Public Library)

Whispers of the River, 1996. Lured by promises of wealth to the harsh terrain of Alaska, Eli Bonnet, a legendary lawman, and Hanna Twigg, a woman who pursues freedom despite the danger, become partners in a saga of the Yukon's golden days. (amazon.com synopsis) (Wendy Anderson, Skagway Public Library)

Whispers of the Wind, 1997. In the third in the author's series of thrillers set in the Alaskan wilderness, the legendary Wyatt Earp helps a U. S. Marshall search for his kidnapped daughter and tries to run land-grabbers out of the territory. (amazon.com synopsis) (Wendy Anderson, Skagway Public Library)

L'Amour, Louis, Sitka, 1957. Battle-hardened Jean LaBarge came of age on the American frontier and is always in search of bold adventure. He'll find more than he bargains for in the rugged Alaskan territory, where he'll meet his match in Baron Zinnovy. Now he must defeat this savage, empire-hungry Russian to save his country's right to claim this frozen landscape and to win over the heart of the beautiful princess he loves! (amazon.com synopsis)

Ledbetter, Suzann, Klondike Fever, 1997. Based on the real-life adventures of Nellie Cashman, the subject of Ledbetter's Western Writers of America Spur Award-winning biography. Ledbetter's humor has been likened to that of Evanovich. (author's web page) ...an exciting Anglo-Americana historical fiction starring a wonderful female protagonist and a great supporting cast. However, what makes Suzann Ledbetter's novel an intriguing, very refreshing reading experience is the various changing relationships between several of the characters. Readers who delight in late nineteenth century historical fiction will enjoy this tale... (Harriet Klausner, amazon.com)

Parry, Richard, Winter Wolf, 1996. It's 1897, and the days of the OK Corral are a memory, but notoriety is still a burden for hard-up Wyatt Earp. He and his second wife, Josie, are heading north to Alaska to make their fortune in the gold rush. Circumstances conspire against him, however, and he must settle for law-related jobs. At every turn, he's wary that an old nemesis may be coming up behind him, but the greatest danger zeroing in on Earp is the son he didn't know he had. (from *Booklist*) (Judy Countryman, Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library)

Wolf's Cub, 1997. An immensely entertaining and eventful return engagement for Nathan Blaylock, Wyatt Earp's bastard son, and Jim Riley, his hard-bitten partner, in turn-of-the-century Alaska and environs. (*Kirkus Reviews*, September 1, 1997) Parry puts new spin on Fairbanks' earliest days. The Wolf 's Cub, the second of a historical fiction trilogy by Dr. Richard Parry, puts an interesting spin on the Barnette story. Parry places Nathan Blaylock, the illegitimate son of Wyatt Earp, in the hills north of Fairbanks, where he and his partner—Jim Riley--witness the *Lavelle Young* trying to maneuver up the Chena. Barnette hires the duo to supply his new camp with meat. Nathan, however, finds it is he who is hunted. Isabelle Barnette, resentful of her husband's inattention, settles on Nathan as a love interest. It seems that E.T. was not the swashbuckling woodsman she imagined while reading James Fenimore Cooper's "Leatherstocking Tales." Barnette suspects Blaylock of taking liberties with his wife, but worries more about the gunman's knowledge of his shady past. How might this affect his investors? These books are great fun. Nathan and Riley--both fictional characters--have a habit of running into real historical figures. They cross paths with Jack London, Soapy Smith, Sam Steele, Bishop Rowe and Judge Noyes and the spoilers in Nome. Blaylock, who was raised in an orphanage in Denver, came to Alaska to hunt down his famous father. Before his mother's death, she placed \$20,000 in a bank account for Nathan under one condition: he won't get a dime until he murders his father. Blaylock and Earp meet in Parry's first book, The Winter Wolf. In Alaska, Blaylock finds a home. This Alaskan Western reminds me of the witty dialogue and great characters of Lonesome Dove. (extracted from a review by Debbie Carter in the *Fairbanks Daily News Miner*)

Additions and corrections are welcome. Send to georgine.olson@fnsb.lib.ak.us

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