

Mofina, Rick

BOOKS

Belleville-raised writer of *If Angel's Fall* makes his 'rookie-run reading'

By Jeremy Ashley *Still March 5/00*

The Intelligencer

Silence filled the impatient room.

His eyes peered out cleverly from behind the manuscript, quickly darting back as he began to read.

"Danny saw the girl again.

As the subway train eased out of the Coliseum station, he looked up, captivated by her frozen smile, her vacant stare, and the fact that she never spoke.

Never.

She was dead."

Not a whisper could be heard from the crowd as Rick Mofina read the initial lines from his first book, *'If Angel's Fall'*.

The Quinte-area native made his first, "rookie-run reading," at Chapters Saturday, verbally unveiling work from the creator himself.

"In a nutshell, it's a crime-suspense story about an unsolved child murder and abductions in San Francisco," explained the 42-year-old Mofina, who grew up on Sidney Street in Belleville.

The book highlights a relationship stemming from crimes investigated by a homicide police officer alongside a newspaper reporter.

Published in early February of this year by Kensington Publishing out of New York, the book is widely available in stores throughout North America, and on such mainstream websites as Amazon.com, Chapters.ca and Indigo.com.

However, he modestly admits to being "very, very lucky," by getting the book read by an American editor and subsequently picked up by a publisher.

After graduating from Quinte Secondary School, Mofina eventually attended Carleton University in Ottawa, studying English literature and journalism. He landed his first full-time job at the Calgary Herald in 1987, "covering just about everything, but mostly crime".

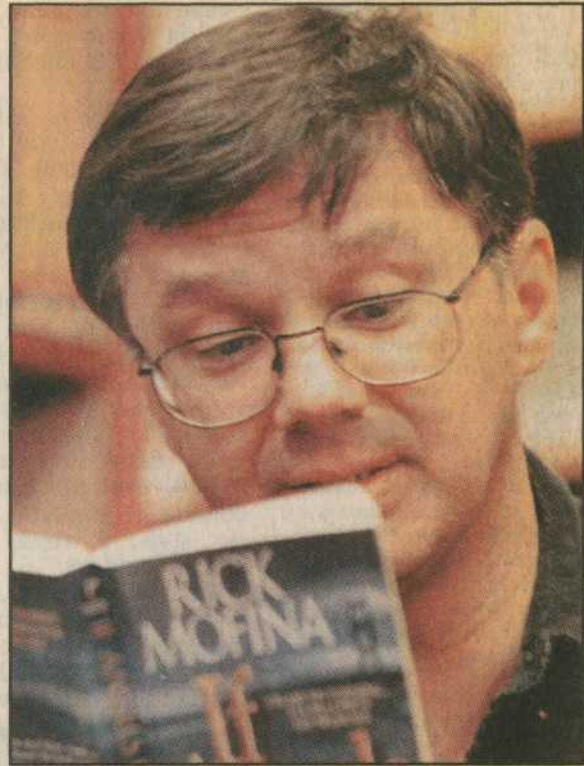
Mofina received an award from the Alberta branch of the Bar Association for excellence in legal reporting "for the triumph of a sexual assault victim which turned into an international piece for Reader's Digest."

Recently he took a position as a wire-reporter for the Southam news service bureau in Ottawa.

Mofina said the six-year *'If Angel's Fall'* project drew heavily from his experiences as an investigative reporter for the Calgary Herald.

"This (book) may be a little bit exaggerated, a little bit over the top, but I've covered scores of cases where tragic things have happened."

Some of the most valuable advice came from New York publisher Bill Thompson, who is accredited with helping launch the career of horror-master Stephen King. Up to that point, the book had been based in Toronto surroundings. Thompson told him that if his goal was to reach the largest possible audience, he should move the story settings to a city in the United



Intelligencer photo by Jeremy Ashley

Belleville native Rick Mofina read from his first book, *'If Angels Fall'*, at Chapters book store Saturday.

States. San Francisco was chosen.

For over two years he extensively read San Francisco newspapers, and viewed many travel and social documentaries on the city. He also had some assistance from members of the San Francisco Homicidal department, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation branch in San Francisco.

Mofina maintains that journalism and fiction are "two entirely different types of writing," and he had no problem working for the Herald while putting together the pieces of his fictitious publication.

Only a few minor changes were made to the piece, slightly Americanizing it for the tastebuds of the New York editors.

"There were a few 'Canadianisms' in my manuscript that the editors had a chuckle over, and they were, of course, immediately removed."

"But now that I am published, it does seem like a community effort," he said of the efforts made by his agent and publisher to get him to come out with another manuscript.

"The plan would probably be to have another book standing beside this one in about a year's time."

Perhaps going back to his educational roots, Mofina quipped that he "kind of wrote the book for reporters," going on to admit that, "in a way it's kind of a tribute to journalists and police. And I certainly hope I've done justice to both."

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