

Laura Ann (Hankins) DiSilverio was born into a military family and following college served 20 years in intelligence for the United States Air Force before embarking on a serious writing career. On her Facebook page, she refers to herself as “Ex-spy. Current mystery writer. Spying was easier.”

She was noted for producing national bestsellers and her 2015 suspense novel, *The Reckoning Stones*, won the 2016 Colorado Book Award for Mystery Writing and was *Library Journal*’s Pick of the Month. The story follows famous jewelry designer Iris Dashwood who must find a way to restore her life when her past returns to haunt her. When Iris was fifteen, and known as Mercy, no one believed her when she said a pastor had raped her. Then when someone beat the pastor into a coma, Mercy ran. Now, twenty-three years later, the pastor is awake and Iris chooses to return to her hometown to confront the man who ruined her life.

Her novel, *Swift Run* was nominated for the Lefty Award for Most Humorous Mystery in 2013 and *Swift Justice* was nominated for the Lefty in the same category in 2011. The “Lefty Awards” are presented at the annual Left Coast Crime convention.

Her three book “Swift Investigations” mysteries follow the crime fighting duo of Charlotte “Charlie” Swift and Gigi Goldman. Charlie is a former Air Force investigator who turned private eye and liked working alone until her silent partner left the country and his wife, Gigi, with half interest in Swift Investigations.

Her 2016 stand-alone thriller, *Close Call*, was named one of the Top 5 Mysteries of 2016 by the *Library Journal*. When the protagonist, Sydney Ellison, stops at a deli on the way home from work, she bumps into a stranger and accidentally picks up the man’s burner phone. She then discovers an assassination plot against a senator.

DiSilverio's "Readaholics" series of six cozy mysteries follows the antics of a sleuthing book club whose members not only read classic mysteries but when dead bodies show up, they engage in their own investigations.

As an author, she was disciplined and juggled writing time with family time. After she rose at six in the morning, did her devotions, and walked the dog, she readied her girls for school, then with a cup of tea at 7:30 started writing with the goal of 2,000 words a day. Her afternoons would be spent exercising, taking care of her writing business, and would turn off her computer when the girls came home. "...when they get home I devote myself to helping with homework and piano practice, talking about their day and just being a mommy."

At one point, her two daughters coaxed DiSilverio into writing a young adult novel, which ended up as a three-part dystopian series about repossessed kids raised in the future where the government licenses all human reproduction. The first in the trilogy, *Incubation*, was an Amazon bestseller.

DiSilverio also wrote the Ballroom Dance Mysteries under the pseudonym Ella Barrick and the Southern Beauty Shop Mysteries as Lila Dare. She said, "Getting ideas is not hard. Deciding which ideas will make a good story or novel and matching it up with a compelling character is tough. Putting it together so someone wants to read it is the real challenge."

DiSilverio served as a past president of Sisters in Crime (2013-2014) and co-founded Career Authors, a resource site which offers craft advice to authors. Friends say she devoted countless hours to teaching novice writers about the craft through public speaking as a keynote speaker at conferences, and essays on writing. In addition to writing and teaching, she also provided developmental and line editorial services to her clients.

On her author website, a fan asked her how she juggled writing multiple series at one time. She answered with: "I treat writing like a job. I work eight hours a day and give myself only the occasional day off or vacation with my family, like an employer would. Also, I'm lucky I'm healthy."

Ironically, Laura DiSilverio passed away on June 14, 2024 at the age of 61 in Colorado Springs, Colorado after a near six-year battle with ocular melanoma. She is survived by her husband, two daughters, her mother and two brothers.



Laura DiSilverio
Photo credit: www.lauradisilverio.com