

### ***Practice to Deceive* by Ann Rule**

The Monday Morning Mystery Book Club at Eureka Public Library recently read *Practice to Deceive* by Ann Rule. Overall, most club members enjoyed this twisty true crime story and we had a great time discussing the case. The murder takes place in 2003 on Whidbey Island off the coast of Washington state. Russel Douglas failed to return to his estranged wife's home the day after Christmas. His body was found shot dead in his SUV on a secluded island road. The book details the step-by-step process detectives took in the days, months, and (unfortunately) years that followed as they tried to discover what happened to Russel. Author Ann Rule personally followed the case through the years and was in the actual courtroom when the final drama played out.

Ann Rule is a legacy in the true crime nonfiction genre. She wrote 35 books during her life, including her famous first book about working alongside the (then unknown) serial killer Ted Bundy in *Stranger Beside Me*. With a background in law enforcement, Ann was gifted with insight into police procedures as well as the psychology of both victims and perpetrators. She has an easy conversational writing style which makes the text flow quickly. Sometimes, it can be a bit heavy on background stories and details, but what she provides turns out to be important for understanding a development later in the investigation.

Sadly, *Practice to Deceive* was one of Ann's last books as she passed in 2015. **If you are interested in reading this book, the Mystery Book Club members advise you to NOT look at the photos included in the book (spoiler alert!).** Intrigued, but not committed to reading the book? Watch the Lifetime made-for-TV movie *Circle of Deception* (Lifetime, Hulu, Oxygen), which was released in 2021 and based on the book. Also, you can find online TV news reports and articles on the crime, including CBS' 48 Hours program.