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Bell's new book tackles higher education

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David Bell

Submitted

David Bell has written more than a dozen books, but his latest story set to release this summer will take aim at the lengths both students and colleges will go to survive in a resource-starved academic world.

“The Finalists” is Bell’s 14th book and is a self-described “locked-room whodunnit” about six college students who compete for a prized college scholarship.

The competition tasks the group with being locked inside an aging Victorian house for eight hours.



If any of the students leave before the time is up, they will be disqualified from earning the scholarship.

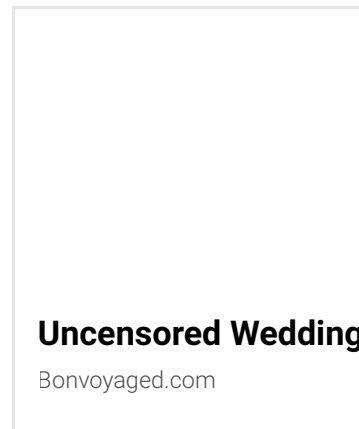
Each of the six students also fall into one of the following stereotypes: The front-runner, the brain, the rule follower, the athlete, the cowboy and the social justice warrior.

However, the selection process turns deadly as the students start to drop dead one by one.

“It’s sort of like ‘The Breakfast Club’ if Agatha Christie had written it,” Bell said of his latest thriller. “It shows how desperate the six students are to fund their schooling. What we know is that universities and students are

feeling the pressure financially, and we aren't really doing a lot to answer that as a country.”

“The Finalists” is the 14th book that Bell, a professor of English at Western Kentucky University, has written.



He said while this story is like his others in that normal characters attempt to survive an extraordinary situation, the locked-room aspect is a distinct difference from his other tales.

“I think this is a book that can be enjoyed by people from high school students and up,” he said. “My readers tend to be more adult, but anyone in school right now is

probably thinking about college and how on earth they are going to pay for it.

“It’s not a secret that many, many universities struggle financially and are always looking for ways to fund their selves,” Bell continued. “It’s also no secret that student debt is a massive problem in this country.”

He said while the primary goal of “The Finalists” is for as many people to read it and be entertained by the story, Bell wants readers to think about the current state of college education.

Bell’s latest book is published by Berkley and is available for preorder online now on Amazon. Hardcover copies are \$27 while paperback copies are \$17.

“The Finalists” is also available on Kindle for \$11.99.

“It always helps a writer when people preorder a book in advance,” Bell said. “It shows up on your doorstep on that day when you preorder.”

The book will be available to the
public July 5.

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