

Coming To: An Old-Fashioned Tale for Hard Times

First novel wins 2011 Florida Book Awards Bronze Medal for General Fiction

ST. AUGUSTINE, FL – February 14, 2012 – With her novel, “Coming To: A Midwestern Tale”, author Caren Umbarger reveals an original voice and a powerful message about gender equality. Set on the eve of the Great Depression in Mason City, Iowa, her story chronicles the burgeoning self-awareness of Lillian Scharf, who steps outside the bounds of a traditional Jewish marriage and is confronted with cataclysmic consequences. “I wanted to write a story that not only women could relate to, but also anyone who has struggled out of oppression to make a better life for themselves,” Umbarger says.

Lillian, a college educated actress and young mother, is married to Morris, a successful businessman with a formulaic and controlling approach to life. The story ignites when Lillian tries out for a part in the local play and sparks fly with the director. When her husband’s true colors come to light in a moment of rage and physical violence, Lillian is compelled to face the reality of her situation and revise the script of her life. She seeks the counsel of friends and family to help her negotiate an increasingly perilous path. What she has no way of knowing is how far she is truly willing to go.

Umbarger’s direct writing style provides readers with a rich understanding of the inner lives of her characters.

A wave of extreme dislike rolled through her. Who was he to tell her what she could and couldn’t do? She stepped up on the first step to be at eye level with him. Before she could stop herself, long-stewed words erupted out of her.

“You treat me as though I’m a child... you tell me what I can and can’t do. It’s as though you think you own me, and...”

“Of course I own you, Mrs. Scharf. You’re my wife. As head of the household, I make the decisions, and you’ll do as I say. That’s all. Done.”

About the Author: Caren Umbarger attended Bennington College, earned a BA in violin performance from Hamline University, and has been a professional musician and string teacher for thirty years. Caren grew up in Mason City, Iowa; taught, performed and conducted in Minneapolis for three decades; and is now the artistic director of a Florida youth orchestra program. She and her husband live in St. Augustine.

“Coming To: A Midwestern Tale”

Available from: Amazon.com, Kindle, BN.com, Nook

ISBN: 9781463786021 – 8 x 5.25 – Paperback – 242 pages – \$14.99

EDITORS: For review copies or interview requests, contact:

Caren Umbarger, author

Tel: 904-501-3640

Email: caren@umbart.com

(When requesting a review copy, please provide a street address)