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Silver Creek

THE BOOK

Author	A.H.Holt
Published	2003
Pages	198
ISBN-10	0-8034-9600-1
Price	$19.95

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(Review 3 - by Sue Black, UK)

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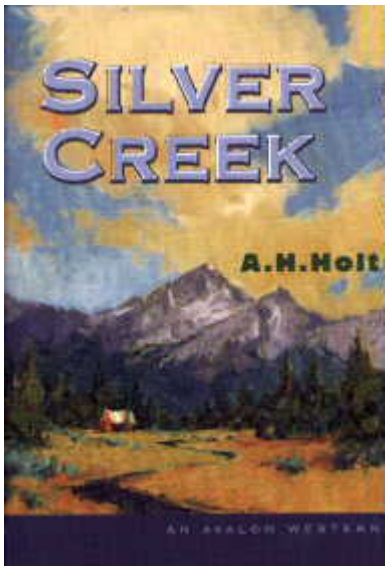
FEATURED BOOK : REVIEWS

NO MEAN FEAT

Rating : 5.0

★★★★★☆☆☆☆☆

Silver Creek *by* A.H.Holt, Hard Cover, jacket, archival paper, library binding, 5" x 8"
Avalon Books, A division of Thomas Bouregy and Co., Inc., 160 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016. E-mail:aholt@garnet.acns.fsu.edu: Publication Date 2003. 198 pages, ISBN 0-8034-9600-1. Price $19.95



Now I have to admit that when I was asked to review this text, I was somewhat surprised - especially when the request came from a forensic practitioner and his excellent forensic website. I thought that maybe, just maybe, there was something of forensic relevance in the story - a gruesome murder, a mystery, some deep intrigue. If there wasn't, then I was going to struggle to make any connection or sense of the request.

I have to be honest and say that I have never been a great reader of westerns and I suspected from the outset that it probably wasn't going to be my 'cup of tea'. However, I was willing to be convinced that perhaps I have been missing something all these years and that the world of stirrups has a place outside obstetrics and cowboys are more than just your average plumber. I was also very aware that this is the author's first book and it is a remarkable achievement at any age but perhaps particularly so at 68.

> *...I was willing to be convinced that perhaps I have been missing something all these years and that the world of stirrups has a place outside obstetrics and cowboys are more than just your average plumber...*

This is a very gentle tale and a previous reviewer had indeed described it as an 'old fashioned' western with good guys in white hats and bad guys in black hats and a smattering of intrigue, treachery and romance. Now perhaps I am just tainted by the miseries and violence of forensic life, but I found it just a little bit too 'gentle' for me. I kept turning the pages hoping to find that magical and mystical moment when you realise by surprise that you are so wrapped up in the story that you care how it ends. I didn't find it and I didn't care! There is no edge to the story, the treachery would pass for mild gossip in your average academic department and the romance is strictly one foot on the floor and all elastic unstretched. Not a heaving bosom or a bulging cod-piece in sight.

Old fashioned is perhaps an apt description as it is a wholesome piece (nothing wrong with that) but with very little original story to drive it forward to its rather predictable ending. The characters have promise but very little depth and you never really either get to love or hate them. They simply float through the pages with insufficient substance to leave any lasting impression.

> *...I see this book as appealing to the gentler aspects of society who hanker after a world long gone .....My congratulations to the author for completing her novel which is no mean feat...*

I see this book as appealing to the gentler aspects of society who hanker after a world long gone and part of me feels that maybe that is not such a bad thing after all. Being exposed to the forensic world on a daily basis leaves you jaded, suspicious and malcontent. Perhaps this is the kind of book we should all read to make us feel better. Not every book needs to have sex, violence, bad language and flawed characters, but I do feel that Ms Holt's world is about as far from the reality of the west as a politician is from ever giving a straight answer. It is a sanitised conservatory read for a summer's day with a G&T in one hand and a Panama hat to keep the rays off your bald spot.

My congratulations to the author for completing her novel which is no mean feat, but I'm afraid it is unlikely that I would read a second. This is not a criticism of the piece but it was just 'not for me'. Obviously other reviewers have been much more 'in tune' with the genre of the piece and I respect their opinions and their taste. My advice would be, look at the book in the library first and see if it is the kind of thing you enjoy reading. Just a light flick through the pages will tell you if you are intrigued by something that is both light and forgettable. Sorry!



-Sue Black

Professor Sue Black is currently working with Division of Anatomy, School of Life Sciences at the University of Dundee, UK. She is the co-author of the best seller "Developmental Juvenile Osteology" (Academic Press, 2000). She can be contacted at SUEBLACK1@aol.com.

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Interview with Anne Holt, the author of this book.

-Editor-in-Chief