



# From the Stacks

review by Mary  
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## *House Call* by Darden North, M. D.

Darden North, M. D., may become to the medical mystery genre what “Grisham” is to the legal thriller. A Jackson, Mississippi, obstetrician and gynecologist, North has penned his first novel which was released for sale in October of 2005. As Grisham did, North has been actively selling his first book. When I first heard about the book, I thought — “another vanity biography from a Mississippi doctor.” I was wrong.

My sister, who is one of Dr. North’s patients and an avid reader, called to encourage me to read the book. Her call spiked my interest because Elizabeth enjoys

good books and seldom steers me wrong. *House Call* is a murder mystery that keeps the pages turning from the “get-go” through the twists and turns of the tension-filled story to the surprising conclusion.

No one in Mississippi ever would have made the connection between the two: a young female obstetrics nurse with her throat cut found floating in her bathtub, and a distinguished older physician who drowns after tumbling from his deer stand. However, North weaves a fabric of secret self-indulgences, reverse discrimination, diverse sexual interests, and murder that drapes

across his fictional southern community.

True to the custom of southern discretion, the rages of these diverse orientations are private and generally tasteful but, nevertheless, a demonstration of the uninhibited. Lurking on the periphery, indirectly touching nearly every colorful character in this first-time novel, is a demonic killer whose victims share the wounds of a twisted psyche. To parallel the bumbling, but eventually successful police investigation of the nurse’s slaughter, is the spreading poison of corporate financial greed that defiles the very core of the medical community.

No medical thriller can be complete without this venom. Shown in the form of scientific experimentation clouded in physical, self-image issues, this aspect of medical

consumerism gone awry explodes when the widow of the deceased hunter suffers seizures presumably due to drug withdrawal.

Darden North, M. D., practices obstetrics and gynecology in partnership at the Jackson Healthcare for Women Clinic in Jackson, Mississippi, where he lives with his wife and two children. In addition to practicing medicine and writing fiction, North enjoys hunting, gardening, and following the Ole Miss Rebels. He participates in the local Southern Writers Group and attended the 2005 Oxford Conference of the Book.



Mary Emrick is the owner of *Turning Pages in Natchez, Mississippi*.

