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The Lincoln Lawyer (Mickey Haller)



Synopsis

Best-selling author Michael Connelly, whose character-driven literary mysteries have earned him a wide following, breaks from the gate in the over-crowded field of legal thrillers and leaves every other contender from Grisham to Turow in the dust with this tightly plotted, brilliantly paced, impossible-to-put-down novel. Criminal defense attorney Mickey Haller's father was a legendary lawyer whose clients included gangster Mickey Cohen (in a nice twist, Cohen's gun, given to Dad then bequeathed to his son, plays a key role in the plot). But Dad also passed on an important piece of advice that's especially relevant when Mickey takes the case of a wealthy Los Angeles realtor accused of attempted murder: "The scariest client a lawyer will ever have is an innocent client. Because if you [screw] up and he goes to prison, it'll scar you for life." Louis Roulet, Mickey's "franchise client" (so-called because he's able and willing to pay whatever his defense costs) seems to be the one his father warned him against, as well as being a few rungs higher on the socio-economic ladder than the drug dealers, homeboys, and motorcycle thugs who comprise Mickey's regular case load. But as the holes in Roulet's story tear Mickey's theory of the case to shreds, his thoughts turn more to Jesus Menendez, a former client convicted of a similar crime who's now languishing in San Quentin. Connelly tellingly delineates the code of legal ethics Mickey lives by: "It didn't matter...whether the defendant 'did it' or not. What mattered was the evidence against him--the proof--and if and how it could be neutralized. My job was to bury the proof, to color the proof a shade of gray. Gray was the color of reasonable doubt." But by the time his client goes to trial, Mickey's feeling a few very reasonable doubts of his own. While Mickey's courtroom pyrotechnics dazzle, his behind-the-scenes machinations and manipulations are even more incendiary in this taut, gripping novel, which showcases all of Connelly's literary gifts. There's not an excess sentence or padded paragraph in it--what there is, happily, is a character who, like Harry Bosch, deserves a franchise series of his own. --Jane Adams

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Customer Reviews

This #1 bestselling legal thriller from Michael Connelly is a stunning display of novelistic mastery - as human, as gripping, and as whiplash-surprising as any novel yet from the writer Publishers Weekly has called "today's Dostoevsky of crime literature." Mickey Haller is a Lincoln Lawyer, a criminal defense attorney who operates out of the backseat of his Lincoln Town Car, traveling between the far-flung courthouses of Los Angeles to defend clients of every kind. Bikers, con artists, drunk drivers, drug dealers - they're all on Mickey Haller's client list. For him, the law is rarely about guilt or innocence, it's about negotiation and manipulation. Sometimes it's even about justice. A Beverly Hills playboy arrested for attacking a woman he picked up in a bar chooses Haller to defend him, and Mickey has his first high-paying client in years. It is a defense attorney's dream, what they call a franchise case. And as the evidence stacks up, Haller comes to believe this may be the easiest case of his career. Then someone close to him is murdered and Haller discovers that his search for innocence has brought him face-to-face with evil as pure as a flame. To escape without being burned, he must deploy every tactic, feint, and instinct in his arsenal - this time to save his own life.

Q&A with Michael Connelly

Q: The Lincoln Lawyer is your second book to be made into a movie. How does that feel?

A: I am very fortunate to have this experience even once. I wish every writer got a chance to see the written work translated to the visual. It is quite thrilling.

Q: You've said that Matthew McConaughey nails the character of Mickey Haller. In what ways?

A: I would say it is in many subtle ways that add up to a big performance. Mickey is a guy who is always looking for an angle. He is a bit cynical and cocky. At different times in the movie McConaughey seems to convey these character aspects without dialogue. Then when it comes to dialogue and action he delivers flawlessly. The story is about a cool, calm man being put into a desperate situation. McConaughey makes that leap convincingly.

Q: What was your involvement in the making of the movie?

A: Almost none. I looked at the first and last versions of the script, took a few phone calls from producers and location scouts, and that was about it. I think my biggest contribution outside of writing the book was giving my trust to Tom Rosenberg and Gary Lucchesi, the producers. They promised me six years ago that they would keep the gritty realism of the story â “

the-law-in-the-trenches aspect of it. I trusted them to do that and with Brad Furman, the director, they came through. Q: What were your immediate thoughts when you first read the script? When you heard about each cast member? A: Depends on which script. It was a long-running work in progress. I went from not liking the first effort to being blown away by the last version. I am a huge believer in rewriting in my own work so I knew that the more time they spent with the script, the better it would become. As far as casting goes, I don't write with anybody in mind. But I saw *Tropic Thunder* with Matthew McConaughey in it and immediately thought he would be good at being Mickey Haller. A year later he was cast, so I was happy from the start. The rest of the cast is just fantastic. As each was announced, I became more and more excited. John Leguizamo was in Brad Furman's previous film and was just excellent. When I heard he was aboard, it was a great day. Same with all the rest. Bryan Cranston happens to be the star of my favorite show, *Breaking Bad*. So I couldn't be happier with him in the cast. Q: What was your inspiration for *The Lincoln Lawyer*? Is Mickey Haller based on someone you know? A: I met an attorney who worked out of his car, not because he was not doing well but because he believed it was the best way to do the job in L.A. That was the spark, and it went from there. Q: Are there any scenes in the film that you wish were in the book? A: There are definitely a few lines I wish were in the book. There is a scene where Mickey drops his sleeping daughter off at his ex-wife's home. It is a poignant scene that I really love and could have used in the book. Q: Did you visit the set while they were filming the movie? What was that experience like? A: I went four different times and scheduled the visits to coincide with the shooting of some significant scenes. I loved what I was seeing on both sides of the camera: a lot of dedication to the project. Everyone on the crew felt like they were making something good. It was great to witness.

Starred Review. Connelly's first legal thriller has gotten virtually universal raves for its courage, plotting and humorâand those qualities also make the audio version a triumph. Grupper vividly brings to life Connelly's large cast of characters: from the shrewd, hard-working criminal defense lawyer Mickey Hallerâwhose office is the back seat of his Lincoln Town Car and who spends his advertising budget in the Yellow Pagesâto the sleazy collection of biker outlaws, con artists and prostitutes who make up most of his clients. Grupper is especially subtle as he reads the words of Louis Ross Roulet, a Beverly Hills real estate agent charged with attempted murderâa character whose guilt and motives darken at every appearance. Haller distrusts Roulet almost immediately, but he also sees the man's wealthy mother as the source of the long-running financial franchise every criminal lawyer longs for. Grupper's take on Connelly's scenes between Haller and Roulet is

taut and fascinating: an audio tour-de-force of the highest order. Equally compelling are Haller's scenes with his two ex-wives; his friend and investigator; and a compelling client from the past who went to prison because Mickey couldn't believe he was innocent. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

I started reading the Bosch series after watching the shows on TV and loving them. So I started reading the Bosch series and along the way, one of the Kindle versions had a bonus book that has Mickey Haller and Bosch together. At first I thought, there's no way that Connelly can make me interested in a lawyer. I'm not a fan of any of the law shows, never have, likely never will. But something about it *no spoilers* made me like it. Let's just say Bosch and Haller are tied together. I gave the Lincoln Lawyer a shot and now I've got yet another series of books that I'll be binge reading. Thank Connelly. Now you are going to be getting even more of my cash. We weren't even married for crying out loud.

Compulsive reading. I have started reading the whole series again, having just finished "The Wrong Side of Goodbye" (5 stars on its own) and will probably re-start again! Michael Connelly has found a winning format with Mickey Haller and Harry Bosch, the interaction between the two makes for good reading. The only book in the series I did not enjoy as much as the others was "The Brass Verdict" - a question of law a bit alien to a foreigner like me but each book's court scenes always grip the reader. Keep going MC, we love your books be they HB on his own or in company of MH. Instant best-sellers and they are selling well, in French, on the Cote d'Azur where I live.

Chicken and the Egg. I saw Bosch on TV - interesting stuff. I remembered TV series CASTLE had real writers on the Richard Castle mystery writers poker games - Michael Connelly was one of them, but I'd not read any of his books. I remembered the Lincoln Lawyer movie was based on Connelly's book - saw the movie then read the book. The screenplay takes 99% of the dialog in the book - very true to the author's work. There are places the book is better, other places the movie is more satisfying. Taken together you get a deeper look into the world that Connelly portrays - the seamy underbelly of LA. I don't know LA to say this is a true representation. It is very visceral. I hope it isn't accurate.

Michael Connelly is one of my favorite authors. I've read all his "Harry Bosch" books so while waiting for his new one to come out I decided to read The Lincoln Lawyer, which was his first in his

"Mickey Haller" series. I must admit that I really enjoyed reading it too, as Connelly's writing style is much the same, and very enjoyable, as with his Harry Bosch books. While I wait for Connelly's new Harry Bosch book to come out I'll be happy reading more of Connelly's books in the Mickey Haller series.

Loved it. was so caught up by the second half I read the balance of the book in half a day. Could not put it down. Saw the movie and it was very close to the book. I have become a Bosch and Haller fan I am in the middle of the series especially when they are together in one story.

My husband and I enjoyed this book and the entire Lincoln Lawyer series, we love that at times, Harry Bosch makes appearances in Mickey's stories. Was surprised to find out that Harry and Mickey are half brothers, hence the appearances. It was good to find out some of the details of Harry's past along with Mickey's. What can I say, Michael wrote it so we enjoyed it. Will continue to read his books as long as he continues to write. Thanks again Michael.

I read THE LINCOLN LAWYER and THE POET simultaneously: THE LINCOLN LAWYER in the morning, THE POET later in the day. Before adopting that procedure, I had read about a hundred pages of THE LINCOLN LAWYER, and I quit. I had told myself, "Wait a minute! This guy [criminal defense attorney Michael Haller] is immoral. He helps the bad guys." But I was impressed with Michael Connelly's style. It was streamlined, contemporary, and easy to read while still addressing mature audiences. He displayed general knowledge and his details about Los Angeles and its court system were accurate. I knew because that's where I live, and I have served as a juror. Also, Connelly seemed wise, but his points of wisdom were tactically inserted to avoid sounding moralistic. After quitting THE LINCOLN LAWYER, therefore, I tried THE POET. The morals of its newspaper journalist, Jack McEvoy, did not seem sterling, but he was acceptable as a hero. Top heavy with twists, turns, and surprises, the story is nevertheless a good read. So if Stephen King's praising introduction encourages you to read it, consider yourself lucky. While reading THE POET, I kept thinking, "Michael Connelly is a good writer." I reconsidered my decision to quit THE LINCOLN LAWYER. I rationalized: "Well, hell. Defense lawyers are socially accepted. Who am I to preach to Michael Haller? Who am I to tell him that he should walk away from a job that puts more than a good helping of food on his table?" Then, without abandoning THE POET, I continued my reading of THE LINCOLN LAWYER. Fortunately. THE LINCOLN LAWYER and THE POET are about as good as any two novels I have read. Yet if you read only mysteries and suspense, you may consider

them unexceptional. But that would not be because they are poorly written. You are satiated. You need to experience variety's spice. With that in mind, if you are not satiated with the genre and if you are looking for a good read, either of these books will do. Notes: THE POET stands well as a solitary book, but it leaves a dangling thread. Though THE LINCOLN LAWYER is the first in a series, it stands alone better than THE POET. Its brightly colored movie is attractive. But the book puts you much deeper into the main character, and the story's sequences are far more convincing.

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