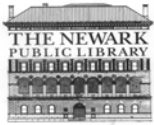


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PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release
Contact: **Heidi Cramer**, hcramer@npl.org or **973-733-7837**

***Newark Public Library Hosts Mystery Author Brad Parks
Former Star Ledger Reporter Finds Unique Source for His New Book***

The inspiration for New Jersey native Brad Parks’s latest book began with discarded mattresses.

In the winter of 2008, on his daily drive to work as a reporter with *Star Ledger*, Parks suddenly started seeing mattresses everywhere—leaning up against porches, discarded on sidewalks, tossed near dumpsters. So he started asking around —“What’s with all the mattresses?”

“Again and again I was told it was foreclosures,” said Parks. “People were defaulting on their loans and being ordered out of their houses. They tended to be folks who didn’t have cars, or only owned small ones, and therefore couldn’t take along their mattresses.”

Little did anyone guess, but those mattresses foretold the beginnings of the subprime mortgage scandal – and, as it turned out, also led to the latest installment in Parks’s award-winning mystery series, *Eyes of the Innocent*, being published this month by St. Martin’s / Minotaur.

Parks will be at the Newark Public Library, 5 Washington Street, on Friday, February 11 at 1:00 p.m. to discuss and sign his new book. Copies of *Eyes of the Innocent* will be available for purchase. To RSVP or for further information, please call 973-733-7793.

As one of the first reporters to cover what has now become a worldwide financial meltdown, Parks delved deep into the foreclosures spreading across Newark in 2008.

“Houses left empty by foreclosure are magnets for trouble,” says Parks. “And all those years of speculation and house-flipping left a messy legacy, especially for the people who dove in it over their heads and were left standing when the music stopped and the market crashed. Those two elements –what happens to the houses and the people victimized by the subprime mortgage scandal – informed and inspired the book.”

In *EYES OF THE INNOCENT*, the mother of two young Newark boys who were killed in a house fire gives investigative reporter Carter Ross a tale of woe—a mortgage rate reset forced her to work two jobs and leave the boys without childcare. But Carter soon discovers she isn't what she seems, and neither is the fire. And when her boyfriend, a Newark councilman, is reported missing by his scorned wife, Carter plunges into the murky world of subprime mortgage foreclosure, urban house-flipping and political corruption.

EYES OF THE INNOCENT has already received praise from bestselling author Michael Connelly, who called it, “the complete package. With wonderful prose, witty observations and a relentless drive, *EYES OF THE INNOCENT* held me hostage until the last page.” And *Library Journal* gave it a starred review, saying with its “zany characters, witty dialog and a plot that races to a bang-up finish... Parks’s sequel to his acclaimed debut, *Faces of the Gone*, is as good if not better.”

Brad Parks’s debut, *Faces of the Gone*, made him the first author in history to win two of crime fiction's most coveted awards—the Shamus and the Nero—for the same book. Michael Connelly, Laura Lippman and Dennis Lehane head the short list of writers who have won both over the course of their careers.

“Winning the Shamus and Nero awards was really a crowning achievement in my young career,” Parks said.

Besides the *Star-Ledger*, Parks has also written for *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The New York Post* and other outlets. More about his writing can be found at www.bradparksbooks.com.

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