



### Dr. Paul Boor

Paul Boor, M.D., is a professor at the University of Texas Medical Branch, Harvard-trained, and a practicing pathologist. Dr. Boor is a scientist, funded for over 20 years by the National Institutes of Health. His contributions to science are highly respected, as are his eloquent lectures to medical students and the scientists of tomorrow; most recently Dr. Boor serves as Chief Medical Examiner in Galveston County.

But Dr. Boor has another passion – writing. A poet from an early age, his poetry has appeared since 1976 in a host literary journals. Andrei Codrescu, poet and NPR commentator, published Dr. Boor's poetry from 1993 to 1998 in Codrescu's *Exquisite Corpse*, an especially appropriate, macabre venue. Dr. Boor has been chosen as a juried poet at The Houston Poetry Fest on five separate occasions. His poetry was anthologized in *Primary Care: More Poems by Physicians*.

Turning his hand to fiction, Dr. Boor began publishing short stories in 1990. His stories, which address the vagaries of biology and the quirky people who inhabit research labs, have appeared in a range of magazines, including *The Redneck Review of Literature*, and *Hardboiled Detective*.

THE BLOOD NOTES OF PETER MALLOW was Dr. Boor's first novel. In the narrative, Dr. Peter Mallow, an established scientist at the peak of his academic career, is hot on the trail of an emerging bird-flu. But Mallow is tortured by unfortunate, romantic issues, and a brilliant, but deeply disturbed student in his lab leads the hapless scientist into the downward spiral of his scientific career, a devastating hurricane and, eventually, the deadliest epidemic in history. In *The Blood Notes of Peter Mallow*, the most dangerous organisms in the bio-lab are the scientists themselves.

Dr. Boor goes historical in his second novel. THE ICE MERCHANT, set in 1890s Galveston, is a tale of North and South, trafficking in body parts, and the discovery of a cure for yellow fever. THE ICE MERCHANT, along with another work in progress at the time were two 1st-place winners in the 2007 Texas Writers' League Novel Contest, and in separate Historical and Thriller categories – a feat never before accomplished in the League's twenty-six-year history.

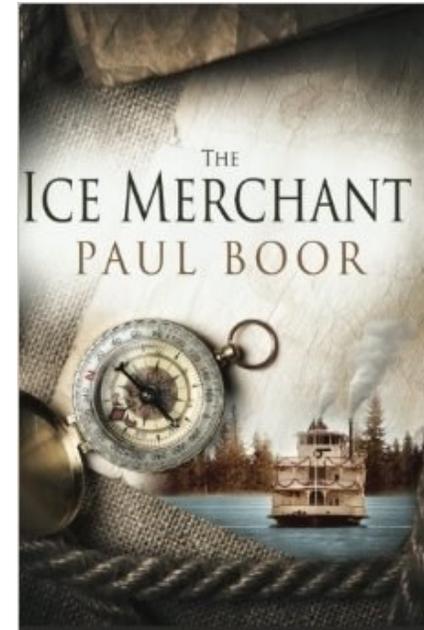
Dr. Boor lives on Galveston Island, where he continues to research, teach, and write.

## PROGRAM AGENDA

### Summer 2015

July 15 · Aug 27

- 12:00 noon Welcome & Introductions
- 12:00-12:15 Artifact Presentation
- 12:15-1:00 pm Book Discussion with the Author



**Rosenberg Library's  
Museum Book Club provides a forum for  
discovery and discussion, linking literary  
selections with art from our permanent  
collection.**



“Van Horne climbed into an open carriage at the southern entrance of Galveston's most elegant accommodation, the Majestic Beach Hotel...The avenues were broad and the houses were graced with intricate decorative work and wrapped by sprawling porches on both first and second stories...Even finer than those he'd admired in the most elegant sections of New Orleans.”

**THE BEACH HOTEL**

*Courtesy of Galveston and Texas History Center*

**–Nicolas Van Horne's observations of Galveston in 1889, p. 4-5**

**Discussion...**

Did you gain insight into the history of medical research through this book?

Did reading it change your perception of what life was like in Galveston before 1900?

In the novel, many island residents distrust the medical school and science in general. Do you think this bias still exists today?

“I perceive what others do not. My worry, Mr. Van Horne, is that the lost souls you provide the medical college...these souls may not be ready to be dissected. At least some of them...You cannot think all life's energy, all momentum, simply disappears.”

**–Madame La Porte to Nicolas Van Horne, p. 88**



**CRYSTAL BALL, EARLY 20TH CENTURY**  
*Gift of Catherine Hall, 77.021.1*

**Discussion...**

Why does Nick turn to morphine?

Did Nick start out in the cadaver trade for profit or to assist in medical discovery? Did his motivation change over time?

What was your reaction to Madame La Porte, Renee Keiller's clairvoyant mother? Were you surprised by the activities that took place in their home during the late 1800s?

Thomas Chubb calls Nick his friend at one point. Do you think Nick felt the same way?

“Cutting ice was Nicolas's life; he already pined for Upper Spy, even as he strove to put his Yankee ways to use on the tropical island. Galveston boasted newly bricked thoroughfares, modern trolleys, an electricity plant—Nicholas had even heard talk of crossing the bay with a roadway for carriages and a public water line—but it wasn't her streets or architecture that drew Nicholas Van Horne, ice merchant, to this thriving city. It was the strength and goodwill of her citizens. And a very special woman.

**Discussion...**

Were you satisfied with the novel's conclusion? What do you think might have happened to the main characters?

Will Renee and Nicolas marry one another? What do you think will become of his ice business and her medical research?



**ANTIQUE ICE PICK**  
*Found in collection, 2007.156*