

Retired FBI agent has a new book

By David Ross

Towards the end of his career as an undercover FBI agent the younger agents used to refer to Bob Hamer as the “old Mitch Rapp.”

Rapp, for those who are not fans of veteran thriller writer Vince Flynn, is the next-to-superman-like all-purpose hero of such novels as *Consent to Kill* and *Pursuit of Honor*. So it's kind of appropriate that Hamer is putting his years of expertise and adventure to good use to write about a hero of his own invention: Matt Hogan.

That's a good name for a hard-as-nails hero. “I always thought that Matt was a ‘tough’ name and my best friend in high school was named Hogan,” says Hamer.

The book, Hamer's second, is entitled: *Enemies Among Us*. It tells of an agent who goes undercover in a non-profit organization that has been infiltrated by terrorists.

The Hidden Meadows resident, who retired in 2006, wrote of his 26 years as an agent in his first book: *The Last Undercover: The True Story of an FBI Agent's Dangerous Dance With Evil*.

He had to clear the book with his former employer, but all that the FBI asked him to do was to change the names of the agents.

The second book, to be released March 1, is pure fiction, but uses Hamer's vast knowledge and experience to give it a realistic edge.

Writing his first book was fairly easy, he says. It was all in his brain. He just needed a few months to bring it out in a coherent form.

The novel, on the other hand, took a lot longer.

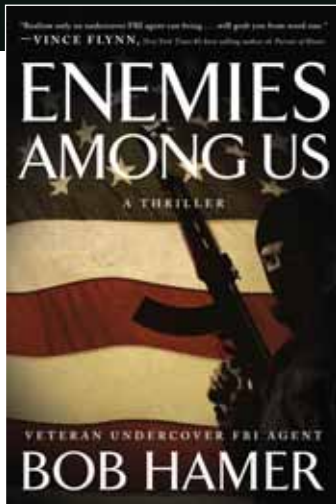
Why fiction after writing a very well-received autobiography? “I like fiction because you aren't married to the facts,” admits Hamer, who could have written more of his FBI exploits, but says, “I didn't want to pound my chest and try to tell everyone that I'm really cool.”

Enemies Among Us is being published by a publishing house that was created by Oliver North: Fidelis Books, which has also published *American Heroes*, *Saving Freedom* and *Blackbelt Patriotism*.

The bulk of Hamer's career was devoted to fighting organized crime and drug trafficking, mainly as an undercover agent.

Of the 12,700 FBI agents, a couple of hundred are certified as undercover. Hamer has posed as a contract killer, a drug dealer and as a member of the Los Angeles mafia. He has bought counterfeit bills from North Koreans and surface to air missiles from Chinese criminals.

He has dealt with gangs in South Central L.A., and as part of his final sting operation, posed as a member of NAMBLA (North American Man/Boy



Love Assn.), a national organization that promotes pedophilia. He adopted an assumed identity “Robert William Wallace,” that included pretending to be handicapped and walking with a cane. He helped to send to prison a flight attendant and a psychologist who wanted to travel to Mexico for sex with underage boys.

“We convicted one key member for distributing child pornography and the remaining members for traveling in interstate commerce to have sex with children,” recalls Hamer, who recounts being handed a disk of images by an ordained minister who was a member of the group. He swallowed his revulsion, never looked at the images on the disk, but simply handed it over to his handlers once he was back at the office.

Although he was good at pretending to be someone he wasn't, Hamer wasn't big into disguises. He relied on his acting ability.

“I loved it!” he recalls. “It was an adrenaline rush, and I enjoyed the chase—being face to face with the bad guys without being a bad guy.”

While Hollywood likes to emphasize the temptation for undercover agents to “cross the line,” Hamer says it was sometimes a challenge.

As he writes, “Part of the thrill and challenge of working undercover is posing as a bad guy but staying within certain boundaries in dealing with the criminal element.”

In this interview he added, “In my first undercover sting, mob members passed the cocaine around.

I just passed it on to someone else.” They put a gun to his head and threatened to blow his head off if he didn't do a line of cocaine. “The main target of our investigation also refused to do a line of cocaine and came to my defense. Both of us passed on using the cocaine.”

He was never asked to prove his bona fides as a contract killer by killing someone in front of someone, as is often shown the movies about undercover agents.

He did help to stage a

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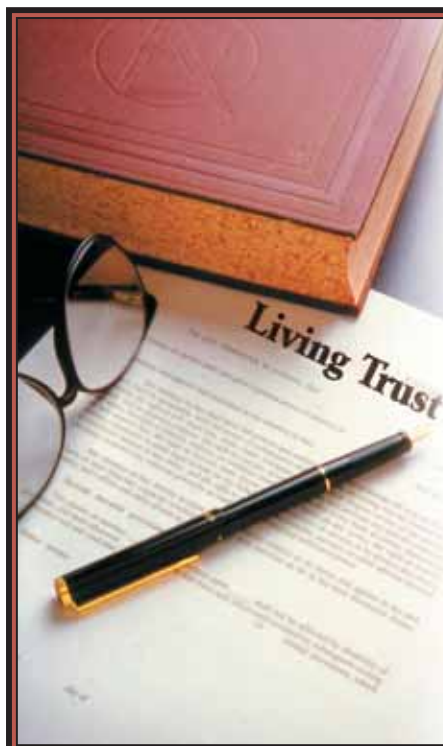
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~ ON STAGE

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~ FBI

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killing that involved taking photos of a fake corpse to prove that the hit target had been killed.

Once he used a Hollywood make-up artist to make someone look like he was covered in blood. "It was so warm that the make-up blood dripped and looked like a fresh kill!" he recalls.

He would occasionally play a private game of cat and mouse during investigations, providing "my own personal soundtrack," playing music such as Elvis's *Jailhouse Rock*, while the subjects of his investigations rode in his car!

His writing career began in 1999 on a fluke, while he was still in the bureau. His son was a ball player being courted to play professionally. He began keeping a journal about his son's journey.

"I got into the habit of writing daily and after the NAMBLA episode I decided that I wanted to write something to expose them. A lot of people think that NAMBLA is a joke, but it is perfectly serious and it has an agenda.

"The boy lover movement sees itself in the same position as the gay movement of the 60s and 70s and believes it will be mainstreamed in a decade," he says.

To make the story book length, he added episodes that fleshed it out into a story about his career.

One thing Hamer discovered, from nearly 30 years of dealing on a day-to-day basis with evil people, is just how much like you and me they can seem.

"Many people I dealt with while doing the NAMBLA case seemed like normal, high functioning members of society. One had a Ph.D in psychology. Another was a dentist who was married for many years and whose wife had no idea about his predilection. One was an ordained minister, and one was a chiropractor. Two were special education teachers, and one was a personal trainer." Several had professions that at least made it easier for them to be near children.

"You won't find too many forest rangers who are pedophiles," Hamer notes.

The reaction to *The Last Undercover* was mixed, although more positive than negative. "I got a lot of emails to my Web site. Some

accused me of being homophobic," he recalls.

What touched him most were contacts from those who had been molested as children and thanked him for going after the same types of people who had harmed them.

He has appeared on Sean Hannity's radio show, as well as the John & Ken Show and the Bill Handel radio show on KFI AM 640, out of Los Angeles.

Meanwhile, he has also been working on screenplays for a possible TV series and has served as the technical adviser for other shows—and, of course, a sequel to *Enemies Among Us*.

I asked Hamer how Hollywood "gets it wrong" in portraying the FBI. "One inaccuracy is that too often they show the FBI giving criminals an even chance. In real life the FBI shows up in overwhelming numbers. The FBI doesn't believe in fair fights. That's why the most dangerous law enforcement jobs are lone cops responding to domestic dispute calls."

Of course, the undercover agent is also in great danger at all times.

"They are working on a high wire without a net," he says.

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