

Chris Orcutt Bio

CHRIS ORCUTT was born in Augusta, Maine in 1970. He grew up in New England and Dutchess County, New York, and graduated from Millbrook High School in 1988.

In 1992, while reporter for the *Millbrook Round Table* (his first job after college), Orcutt received a New York Press Association Award. Subsequently, he worked briefly as a freelancer for the *Poughkeepsie Journal*.

In the following years, Orcutt taught high school American Studies (American history and English), as well as European history, in Freeport, Maine; he co-founded a software startup (Actis, Inc.); he was a web usability and information architecture consultant for Merrill Lynch and J.P. Morgan, and then was hired by Merrill Lynch at the World Financial Center as a vice president of client communications.

After 9/11, Orcutt took a severance package, traveled out west for a while, then taught as an adjunct lecturer at Baruch College (City University of New York). He taught Freshman Composition, Introduction to Literature, and Business Communication for 5 years, and received the college's Distinguished Teaching Award. During this period, Orcutt was writing fiction full-time and being published by a number of literary journals including *Potomac Review*. He also wrote nonfiction articles that appeared in magazines including *Writer's Digest*. In 2004, he won the 55 Fiction World's Shortest Stories Contest.

In 2006, Orcutt moved back to his hometown of Millbrook, NY, and while working on his Dakota Stevens Mystery series, provided freelance writing and web design services for artists, non-profits and Fortune 100 corporate clients. He has written executive speeches, scripts for corporate industrial films and multimedia presentations, and annual investment reports.

While writing a multimedia performance piece for Pepsi Bottling Group, Orcutt discovered that he had a talent for short plays, and the first three that he wrote were performed at the Penobscot Theatre Company in Bangor, Maine. A couple of years later, one of his 10-minute plays was performed by the Half Moon Theatre Company in Poughkeepsie, NY.

He started publishing his book-length fiction in November 2011 on Kindle, beginning with his first PI/mystery novel, *A Real Piece of Work*, featuring Manhattan–Millbrook detective Dakota Stevens. This novel quickly achieved a #1 top-rated ranking in Literary Fiction for Kindle, and #4 in Mystery. The second Dakota mystery novel, *The Rich Are Different*, came out in June 2012; a collection of short stories, *The Man, The Myth, The Legend*, in July 2013 (voted by Indiereader as a Best Book of 2013); a modern pastoral novel, *One Hundred Miles from Manhattan*, in April 2014 (voted by IndieReader as a Best Book of 2014); and the third Dakota mystery, *A Truth Stranger Than Fiction*, in January 2015. All of his books are available as ebooks or in trade paperback.

Sales of the first Dakota novel were so strong that they financed two long trips abroad for himself and his wife, Alexas. In the fall of 2012, they traveled to Paris and Normandy; and in the fall of 2013, they did a road trip through England, all the way up to his ancestral homeland in Highland Scotland.

Chris lives in Millbrook, NY and is a full-time writer.