

Peggy Vincent's very victorious cover letter. **May yours merit equal success !!**

Sept. 23, 2000: The author attended "**Marketing Your Book -- to Agents, Publishers, Booksellers and the Public**" (different title; same as W.L.T. course)

10/12/00: Peggy's agent sold book to Scribner's for superb six-figure advance.

April 1, 2002: BABY CATCHER was published.

May 10, 2003: Movie rights sold to Elliot Gould

=====

Dear (Prospective Agent),

.. strongly advised me to put you at the top of my list of agents. Her enthusiastic recommendation and your statement in Jeff Herman's book about liking to work with new, West Coast writers with something fresh to say have prompted me to submit my memoir, BABY CATCHER, a hilarious, poignant, eye-opening romp through my fifteen years as a certified nurse midwife in Berkeley, California.

The story begins with Zelda, a pregnant black woman in "Mr. Duke's Hospital" in 1962 (excerpt attached). Similar in organization and anecdotal style of writing to James Herriot's memoirs, each chapter in BABY CATCHER can stand alone. Taken from my experiences in delivering over two thousand babies, the stories are arranged like a crazy quilt of births in all their marvelous, often dramatic and sometimes frightening individuality. I sew the pieces together with the thread of my belief that women's bodies know more about having babies than their brains do. Given freedom and support, laboring women will find their own best way to give birth. I've laughed and danced with women and listened to them sing Golden Oldies through their labors. I've watched them clap their hands, bang on the walls, and backpedal crab-wise into a closet moments before giving birth. I've delivered the baby of a redheaded Scot in a thunderstorm on a leaky sailboat and cupped the bum of a breech baby in my palm in the back seat of a speeding car. But nothing in my conservative upbringing in the Midwest prepared me for midwifing a tattooed, multi-pierced centerfold model for an S&M magazine.

In spite of midwifery being known as "the second oldest profession for women," very few books by or about midwives exist. The huge success of Gay Courter's THE MIDWIFE, and Chris Bohjalian's novel, MIDWIVES, chosen as an Oprah book, demonstrates that there is a wide audience. BABY CATCHER will fill the neglected niche of non-fiction writing on the subject. The two midwifery memoirs still in print and selling well are DIARY OF A MIDWIFE by Juliana Van Olphen-Fehr and A MIDWIFE'S STORY by Penny Armstrong. In a class by itself is the "Amazing Birthing Tales" section of SPIRITUAL MIDWIFERY by Ina May Gaskin. For 25 years women have loved reading these birth stories, but many were turned off by the hippie language and culture that the book espoused. BABY CATCHER, written by a midwife with one foot firmly planted in traditional Western medical philosophy and set within an urban culture, will have an even broader appeal.

Essayist Philip Lopate read three chapters of BABY CATCHER, described them as "superb and engaging," and has agreed to provide a quote for the book jacket when it is published. Adair Lara, columnist for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, and Cathy Luchetti, author of MEDICINE WOMEN, have also promised endorsements.

Yours truly, Peggy Vincent