



A Pure Double Cross

John Knoerle

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Cleveland, 1945 -- OSS spy Hal Schroeder returns from two harrowing years behind German lines. The horrors of war have left him bitter and cynical. The FBI recruits him to infiltrate the Cleveland mob and conduct a series of sting operations targeting crime boss Teddy Briggslavski, alias, Mr. Big. Hal signs on, planning to double cross the feds, pocket their front money, and disappear. He struggles to walk the double cross tightrope between the G-men and the mobsters until the FBI gives him the final sting, a huge payroll heist. Hal Schroeder goes to his long-sought meeting with Mr. Big; confident he can turn the heist plan to his advantage and make off with a bundle. But he gets a very unpleasant surprise.

A Pure Double Cross Details

Date : Published October 17th 2008 by Blue Steel Press (first published August 25th 2008)

ISBN : 9780974319919

Author : John Knoerle

Format : Paperback 258 pages

Genre : Fiction, Thriller

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From Reader Review A Pure Double Cross for online ebook

Gentle says

I won this book on Goodreads. I normally am not into old spy novels, but A Pure Double Cross was quick moving and held my attention. The characters are well written and engaging.

Kim Smith says

Loved this book! Giving it away in a contest here: <http://www.murderby4.blogspot.com> check it out! contest runs through feb 25

Jen says

A PURE DOUBLE CROSS is the first book of the "American Spy Trilogy." Hal Schroeder returns to Cleveland, Ohio after two years as an OSS spy in World War II. Compound the emotions from the war with the fact that Hal's girlfriend married another man while he was at war, and you're left with a hardened and bitter man.

When the FBI recruit Hal to go undercover in the Cleveland mob, Hal sees the opportunity as a chance to turn a double cross and make enough of a fortune to sail off into the sunset. But, things don't turn out to be quite as easy as that.

Of course the first thing that attracted me to this particular book was the fact that it was set in Cleveland, Ohio. But, not only is it set in Cleveland, it's 1945 Cleveland. Knoerle does an exemplary job of depicting the city. I am by no means a Cleveland historian, so if there are minor inaccurate details, I wouldn't be aware of them. But I had no problems visualizing the city Knoerle describes, especially the effects of the steel mills on the city.

The characterization is interesting in this book in the fact that you aren't necessarily supposed to like the protagonist. Hal is a turncoat. He's in this job for himself and he wants to screw everyone else involved. But, while he's bitter and hardened, there's still a part of a conscience that's lurking underneath, so you can't completely dislike him. Hal, as with most all the other characters, is dynamic. There are quite a few layers built up in him and his cynicism throws in a touch of humor. There are no white hats and black hats in this caper.

But, I have to say, the strength of this novel falls squarely in the plot. The twists and double crosses in this plot keep the reader on his/her toes and turning the pages. And when you combine the complexity of the plot with the murkiness of the characters, you're challenged as a reader.

I read this book on my five-hour flight to California. It sure didn't feel like five hours!

Kelly says

I am a huge lover of spy stories. Combine a spy with organized crime, and my brain fills with images of deception and shady forms of adventure. I have also always been fond of 40s era books and film. John Knoerle definitely captures that era with his story.

It was nice walking the streets along with Schroeder and clearly visualizing every sound and almost feeling the chill in the air of Cleveland near Christmas time. Each locale whether a deli or a jazz lounge and dance parlor. These details really bring the reader into the story.

Schroeder is a man who has seen the dark side of the war and lost so much while serving his country as a spy. There are no accolades for spies and he has experienced loss that has pushed him to a decision to look out for number one. He is recruited by the FBI to infiltrate a mob, and he is going to do just that, but he is going to get his as well.

This story had so many ups and downs for Hal. I never knew myself what side he was on and what side the FBI was on. Where they really there to even support him in what they hired him to do? This definitely helped you move along the story with some knowledge of what Hal Schroeder was going through. I was kept wondering if he would follow through on his plan or would he be caught by the mob, FBI or both.

Pros - Great, solid characters, excellent plot, fabulous locations, and a good laugh here and there. I enjoyed the story very much.

Cons - It did take me a while to read, and that is not usually the case. At times there were some details that seemed to extend scenes longer than necessary.

All in all, I enjoyed reading A Pure Double Cross. It was a nice escape from the mysteries that I have read lately that have had a romantic component to them. Sometimes I just want to focus on the suspense.

Karen E. Garcia says

I won a free copy of this book in a Goodreads contest. I truly enjoyed reading this book, it always left me wanting to continue reading. Being a spy during a war has resulted in many losses. Now given a task by the FBI, Hal the former spy, is done with the lies and plans to come out by himself with the prize. Just when I thought I had it all figured out, a new twist arrived and threw me for a loop many times. You are constantly left wondering whose side will come out being the victory, and if there would even be a winner in the end. A great thriller, mystery, a small dash of romance, and a great story overall.

Vykki says

This book was a kick from the beginning to end. I love the gangster and the spy. This book read like a old time detective novel. Its a fun ride. I won this book on Goodreads. Thank you

Cheryl says

The year was 1945. Hal Schroeder used to be a spy for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). Upon his return from behind enemy lines in Germany, Hal is so ready to relax; though he will miss the excitement that only a spy could relate to. Hal will have to wait to retire just a little longer. The FBI wants to recruit Hal for a bank heist. Yes, you did read right...the FBI is planning a bank heist, in fact a couple of bank heists. The plan is for Hal to integrate himself into the mob and steal the money. This way the FBI has some evidence to pin on crime boss Teddy Briggslavski otherwise known as Mr. Big.

At first Hal is reluctant to partake in any of the FBI's dealings but after they sweeten the deal, Hal agrees. What the FBI or the mob doesn't know is that Hal is about to engage in a risky bet and play both sides. Some people would call this a double cross. Will Hal's plans pay off or has Hal gotten himself in over his head?

A Pure Double Cross is book one of the American Spy Trilogy. I really enjoyed reading this story. Hal was brilliant in his tactics and how he played both sides. One of the best parts was the twist at the end. Mr. Knoerle did a great job with this novel. He is a true, classic mystery fan's dream. A Pure Double Cross brought me back to the good old times and helped remind me of why I love this genre. I plan to check out the rest of the books in this trilogy.

Simon Koenig says

This is the First in a trilogy in the American Spy series. While not on the level of Philip Kerr's Berlin Noir this fast paced story is a 1st class novel. Engaging characters, excellent dialog and a plausible story line make this a worthwhile read. Knowing that there will be at least 2 other books to follow did not lessen the impact of the first in the series. Set in post war Cleveland (1945) Hal Schroeder, former OSS agent is recruited to assist the FBI to help bring down a mob crime boss. I can recommend this work without hesitation and say that I'm looking forward to the next two books.

Rob Dhillon says

A great read - I couldn't put it down. It helps that the setting - Cleveland - is out my back door.

Kimberly Hortman says

I received this good in a first-reads giveaway & really enjoyed it. Mysteries are not my favorite genre, but I liked the characters in this book and it was fast paced, but easy to follow!

Diana Senn says

Enjoyed the book, took a little while to get into story and build the the characters.

got lost a couple of times and had to go back and find the missing pieces.
but over all I would recommend this book and hopefully the next book will move a little smoother now that I know who the characters are

Judie says

If you like spies, gangsters and good prose, then this is the book for you. Definitely enjoyed it.

I received this book compliments of goodreads First Read for my honest review.

Barbara says

A Pure Double Cross by John Knoerle
Goodreads Author

HAL SCHROEDER WORKS FOR THE FBI IN A BIG STING OPERATION. THE STORY KEEPS YOU ON EDGE. YOU WONDER WHAT CAN HAL GET HIMSELF INTO NEXT. CAN'T PUT THIS BOOK DOWN.

Mark says

This was a great read. I love books that are set in a past time period. The characters & storyline where excellent. I look forward to reading the second book in this series in the near future.
