Robert B. Parker Dies

Robert Parker wrote without notes, without outlines, without even a story line in his head. He would start each book, he told Bostonia in 2005, with an opening premise, hoping it would lead to chapter two and hoping chapter two would lead to chapter three. Inevitably it did, and over thirty-seven years, it led to sixty-five books.

Parker (GRS’57, ’71), who had donated his papers and drafts to BU’s Howard Gotlieb Archival Research Center, died of a heart attack on January 19, 2010, while sitting at his writing desk in his Cambridge, Massachusetts, home. He was seventy-seven.

Parker pounded out thirty-seven witty and eloquent adventures of his most popular creation: Spenser, the private eye who became the central character of the TV show Spenser: For Hire. His character Jesse Stone was the protagonist in nine books and a series of TV movies. AJ

Robert Parker earned a master’s degree and a Ph.D. in English literature at BU. His doctoral thesis, which he wrote in about two weeks, is in the collection at Mugar Memorial Library.