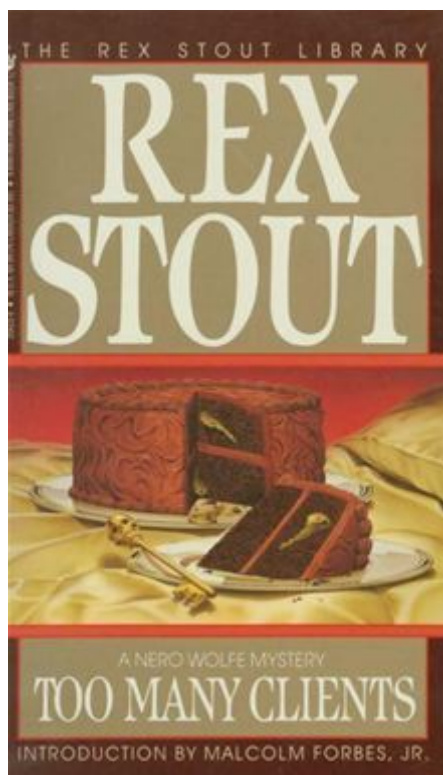




Too Many Clients

Rex Stout , Malcolm Forbes Jr. (Introduction)

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A bidding war for his services interrupts Nero Wolfe's attempts to solve the case of the businessman who died in his love nest--a case in which the police seem oddly uninterested. Reissue.

Too Many Clients Details

Date : Published October 1st 1955 by Bantam Books

ISBN : 9780553254235

Author : Rex Stout , Malcolm Forbes Jr. (Introduction)

Format : Mass Market Paperback 207 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Detective, Crime

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From Reader Review Too Many Clients for online ebook

Kim says

[

A woman is brutally beaten by her husband, and after Archie sees the husband's handiwork, he sends the husband a bottle of Dom Perignon.

(hide spoiler)]

First Second Books says

I love Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe books, mostly because Archie Goodwin is super-awesome as a narrator. I am 100% sure that I would never be able to put up with an orchid-loving, extreme foodie boss with an aversion to making money as well as he does!

Evgeny says

Nero Wolfe finances in the beginning of the novel:

To make it worse, this guy is about to come:

So Archie Goodwin tried to find a client:

The result of his search? He found this many:

The investigation led Archie to a millionaire's love nest:

Sorry, I try to keep my review rated PG.

Anyway, this is the brief synopsis of the novel with minimal spoilers. In the words of Archie himself, "When I go dig for the client, I really do my job well". So Wolfe's finances are saved, the culprit is brought to justice - Wolfe's style - and Wolfe's household got paid and became happy. The end.

The main thought in my head during the reading was, "It is good to be a millionaire". Well, except for the murder part that is. Considering this book was first published in 1955 being a millionaire does not cut in anymore, but having billions is still as good as having millions was in the good old fifties.

So in conclusion this book is on the level of practically all stories of the series which means highly entertaining with usual great character interaction and good mystery with surprising culprit.

astaliegurec says

Unfortunately, Rex Stout's 1960 novel "Too Many Clients (A Nero Wolfe Mystery Book 34)" is dragged down by his use of a multitude of irrational characters. The mystery is actually pretty darn good. But, the majority of all his non-regular characters behave in such a way that they just don't make sense. I can see an evil villain behaving like a nut-job (of course, that would give away his being the guilty party), but when almost everyone involved runs around physically attacking people at the drop of a hat or flying off the handle in standard dialog, it just gets old, fast. So, I'm dropping my rating for the book down to a mere OK 3 stars out of 5.

Jessica says

Back in the day (smile), mysteries focused only on the mystery--no sex and usually no violence. Stout is a classic mystery writer. If you love this type of book, his are must-reads.

Katie Bee says

This particular entry in the Wolfe books is almost all Archie. Archie gets the first nibble, Archie digs up the clients (so many of them!), Archie does all the hands-on detecting, and Archie basically puts it all together. There's not much Wolfe at all.

Other than that, what's notable about this book is the sex-addict angle. Not only was the victim a sex addict and his bower an ode to all that was libertine, almost all of the suspects are sharers of his carnal pursuits. None of the women are presented in a good light, except Mrs. Perez and (to an extent) Maria.

I'd rate it three stars except for the wife-beating subplot, which I found very uncomfortable. A man beats his wife black and blue for cheating on him, and Archie considers sending him champagne for doing it (!!)

If one is extremely charitable, it could be read (from previous comments by the man) as the wife needing BDSM in her sex life, her husband being unable to provide it, her seeking it elsewhere, and him finally coming up to scratch to put their marriage back together. But I'm afraid it's really just the contrast between period morals and today's morals... I think Archie thinks the wife deserves to be beaten (and it's described in horrific detail) for cheating. :(

Richard Bell says

great story

Bill Kerwin says

Somebody shows up at Wolfe's identifying himself as Mr. Yaegar of Consolidated Plastics, and he wants Archie to follow him the next day and find out if he has a tail. The next day, Mr. Yaegar ends up dead, and--

guess what?--it turns out that the guy who hired Archie is NOT Mr. Yaegar.

Archie begins to investigate, and discovers that Yaegar, who was quite a ladies' man, rented an apartment decorated and equipped as--in Wolfe's words--a "bower of carnality." Archie lurks in the "bower" to see who shows up, and soon the suspects--and the prospective clients--begin to accumulate.

This is a very good Wolfe adventure, satisfying to anyone who enjoys the series.

Karl says

First of all the description of this edition is not correct. The book is copyrighted 1960 and states "First published in 1960 by the Viking Press Inc." Second the page count is incorrect as the book has 183 pages not 184.

Nero Wolfe — The private investigator

Archie Goodwin — Wolfe's assistant, and the narrator of all Wolfe stories

This book is different from any other Nero Wolf books I have ever read. Archie actually has encounters with women. Perhaps this was Rex Stout's attempt to broaden his horizons and join the swinging 60's.

This would not be my choice for starting this series as the context would not be there. It would be best to start with Fer-de-Lance published in 1934. In fact the list of books is:

Fer-de-Lance (1934)
The League of Frightened Men (1935)
The Rubber Band (1936)
The Red Box (1937)
Too Many Cooks (1938)
Some Buried Caesar (1939)
Over My Dead Body (1940)
Where There's a Will (1940)
Black Orchids (1942)
Not Quite Dead Enough (1944)
The Silent Speaker (1946)
Too Many Women (1947)
And Be A Villain (1948)
The Second Confession (1949)
Trouble in Triplicate (1949)
Three Doors to Death (1950)
In the Best Families (1950)
Curtains for Three (1951)
Murder by the Book (1951)
Prisoner's Base (1952)
Triple Jeopardy (1952)
The Golden Spiders (1953)
The Black Mountain (1954)
Three Men Out (1954)
Before Midnight (1955)
Might As Well Be Dead (1956)

Three Witnesses (1956)
If Death Ever Slept (1957)
Three for the Chair (1957)
And Four to Go (1958)
Champagne for One (1958)
Plot It Yourself (1959)
Three at Wolfe's Door (1960)
Too Many Clients (1960)
The Final Deduction (1961)
Homicide Trinity (1962)
Gambit (1962)
The Mother Hunt (1963)
A Right To Die (1964)
The Doorbell Rang (1965)
Trio for Blunt Instruments (1965)
Death of a Doxy (1966)
The Father Hunt (1968)
Death of a Dude (1969)
Please Pass the Guilt (1973)
A Family Affair (1975)
Death Times Three (1985)
Fer-de-Lance (1934)
The League of Frightened Men (1935)
The Rubber Band (1936)
The Red Box (1937)
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Please Pass the Guilt (1973)
A Family Affair (1975)
Death Times Three (1985)

Vicki Cline says

A man comes to Archie asking to be checked out if he's being followed, gives him the starting and ending addresses and a start time. Only he never shows up. Turns out he gave a false name and the real person with that name was found dead near the ending address hours before the imposter contacted Archie. The initial client is the head of the corporation where the victim worked who wants to quell any scandal. And other potential clients follow. It takes a while to discover who the imposter was.

Marie says

Another great Nero Wolfe/Archie Goodwin read. As was stated in a clipping at the end of the book, there was more sex in this book but it wasn't enough to be distasteful.

Dakota McCoy says

I really enjoyed this one- but a note of caution: the topic was a bit more risqué than most Nero Wolfe books! I have one other comment: there is a scene where we learn that a man beat his wife. Archie's words and actions are debated (in some online message boards I've seen) but it is clear to me that he thinks this is awful.

Cathy DuPont says

Too much going on around here (neighborhood, not house) for me to be reading a book that needs careful attention to details! So this book hit the spot.

135 pages and it takes me what? Five days to read??? So much for making a last run on my yearly reading challenge of 125. "Too Many Clients" was 109, so needless to say, I will not make it again. :((Hah! Setting my goal to one for next year!")

This book would have been so much better had I read it like I normally read. It was a good storyline and I just think Archie is the greatest. I like him more every book. With that said, it's getting a fourth star because while I was preoccupied the entire time I read the book, it was still a good book.

?Emily says

Nero Wolfe's household is low on expenses, so Archie decides that Wolfe needs a client. He decides to take on a case himself which leads to "too many clients" as well as two murders. Rex Stout and Agatha Christie are two authors I go to for a quick and enjoyable read, especially after reading a lot of classics.

Jessi says

When a rich old white guy died in the '60s, it was big news. Especially when Archie Goodwin seems to somehow have known about it before the body was even found. Before the case is over, a secret love next will be found, a young girl will be murdered, and Nero Wolfe will have picked up four different clients. A lovely Wolfe story and surprising to me how well it was adapted in the 90s TV show.

Cameron Toney says

Nero Wolfe may not be in the mood to put his brain to work, but the bank account is low and a millionaire has show up dead in his secret love-nest.

This particular volume of Nero Wolfe is slightly different in structure than a lot of the others, and I find its set up to be more interesting than its actual conclusion. The murderer, when revealed, is not as satisfying a villain as I could hope for, and I think Stout might have been a little dazzled by his own set up, and spent less time focused on the actual crime.

Thats alright. A trip to Nero Wolfes brownstone is always a good time.

Gary says

The thing about reading all an author's works from a series, in order, is that you can trace certain elements, given your interests, as they develop. In this novel, about three\fifths of the way through the Nero Wolfe stories, Archie has grown to be far more intelligent than he first was, and Wolfe's role has, at least temporarily, receded somewhat. I think that the reason for this is that having Archie take on a more perceptive aspect shifts more of the explication to him, which leaves Wolfe as the genius, still, but 1.) The reader gets to respect and know a more likable Archie, 2.) The weight of explication is spread more evenly across the pages, and 3.) The Wolfe/Goodwin relationship makes more sense. There is more, and my list is not meant to exhaustive, but one hopes that this sort of thought is not without interest to others.

Linda says

Classic Nero Wolfe and Archie Goodwin.

Erin L says

I love Nero Wolfe and Archie Goodwin. It's hard not to, they work so well together and reading the stories from Archie's point of view gives us such a good look into their world. I can't help but chuckle at his personality and the way he gives the reader information.

I highly recommend these books to anyone who is looking for a classic mystery. So much fun. And the TV series was just fantastic.

Lukasz Pruski says

"We were now out about five Cs on the Yeager operation, and we had four clients and two bucks in retainers, plus a damn good chance of ending up in the coop for obstructing justice."

Too Many Clients (1960) is the seventh book in the Nero Wolfe series that I am reviewing here and the thirty-fourth installment, chronologically, in this deservedly acclaimed series of mysteries featuring the obese genius, Nero Wolfe, and his intrepid, manly, and charming helper, Archie Goodwin.

Archie is worried: with just \$14,000 bank balance and \$5,000 monthly household expenses things do not look good for the occupants of the brownstone on West 35th Street. Luckily, a Mr. Yeager, the executive VP of a large company, arrives at Wolfe's office and wants to hire Mr. Goodwin to find out who is following him. But when Archie arranges the details of the tail-the-tail operation, Mr. Yeager is found murdered. And to complicate things, Archie learns that his visitor was not in fact the deceased Mr. Yeager.

Archie commences the investigation, using - in Wolfe's words - his "discretion and sagacity." The case brings him to a house owned by the deceased; the house holds a secret, crucial for the plot. The manager and his family who live in the building play an important role in the story. Even though the purported client is dead Wolfe and Goodwin have no scarcity of clients: the president of the company, the deceased's wife, and a famous actress are among them. The problem is that while there are too many clients none of them is a paying one. Inspector Cramer of the police arrives and demands Wolfe's cooperation. There is another murder and things really begin to look bleak for the detectives.

Obviously, Wolfe and Goodwin solve the case and eventually get paid. The plot is interesting and keeps the reader's attention. The setup of the plot, with the fake Mr. Yeager, is first-rate, one of the best I remember of all Wolfe's stories. This installment of the series is not as outstanding as the unforgettable *Murder by the Book* but it is a solid and very readable mystery. I like the prose, which has some nice passages as, for instance:

"Curiosity creeps into the homes of the unfortunate under the names of duty or pity. [...]'
'Is that Pascal?'
'No, Nietzsche.'"

Three stars.

