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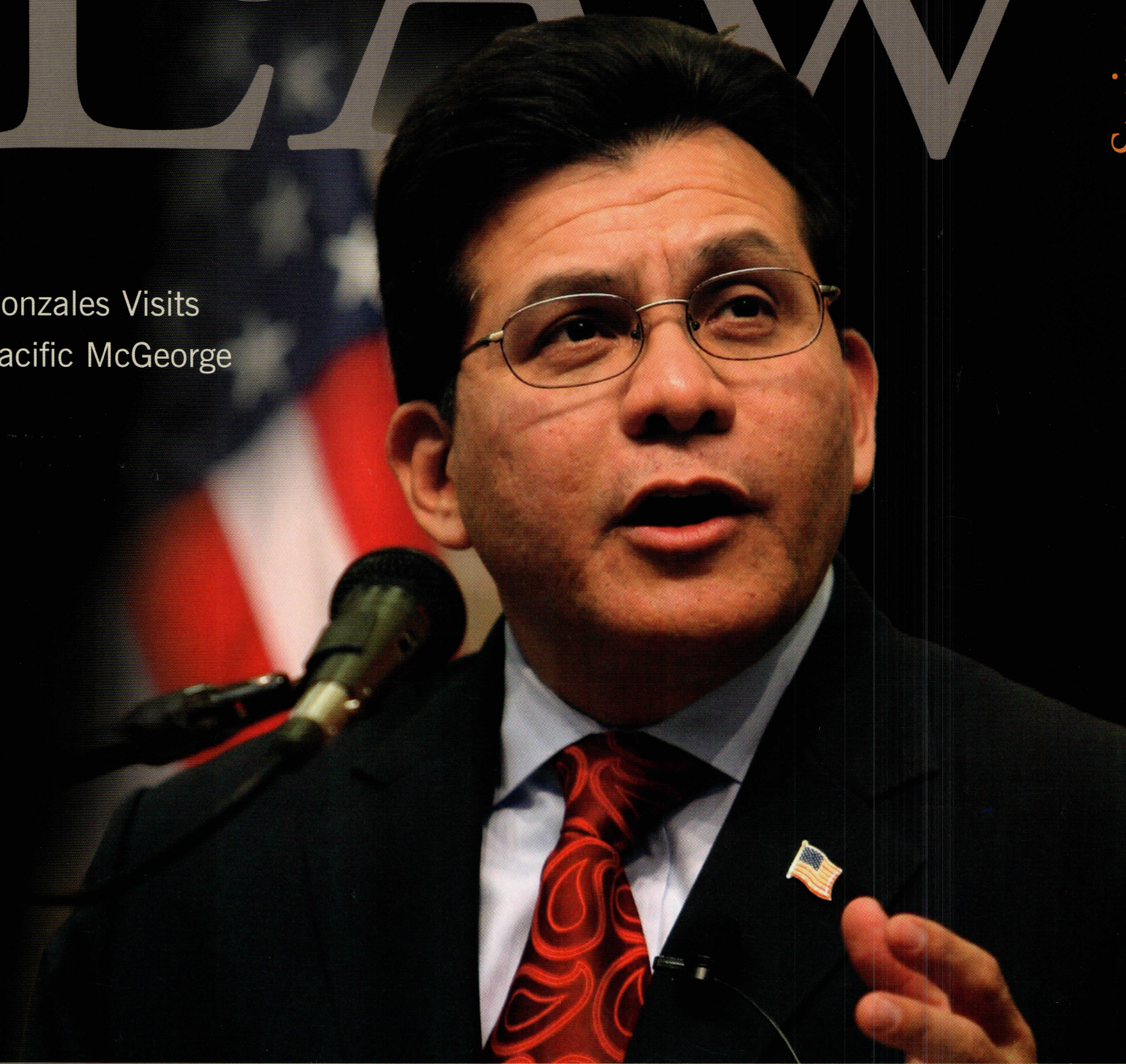
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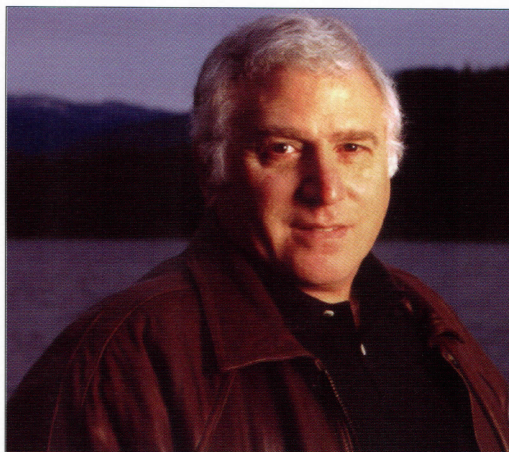
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Best-selling Author Martini Still Relies On Legal Background

by Cynthia Scanlon

“All of my books have a legal basis. It would be very difficult to write those books without my legal background and the education I received from McGeorge,” says bestselling writer Steve Martini, ’74. “Having been a lawyer was pivotal for what I write.”

Martini long ago established himself as one of the leading popular fiction writers in the country. In fact, two of his legal-thriller genre novels were made into TV mini-series that brought his works to the attention of millions more readers.

Martini attended law school at night, while working as a journalist by day. “I worked for the Sacramento bureau of the *Los Angeles Daily Journal*, a legal newspaper that circulates statewide,” says Martini. “Shortly after I graduated, I went to work for a small law firm in Sacramento and practiced law in that area for 17 years.”

As a reporter, Martini covered some high-profile cases, including the Charles Manson trial. “I interviewed lawyers who were steeped in the law and at the cutting edge of very prominent cases,” he says. “You can’t help but be impressed, and I still draw on those recollections from time-to-time.”

In his early forties, Martini decided to take a crack at writing his first novel, an effort that took four years and resulted in *The Simeon Chamber*. “The thought of being a novelist was in the back of my mind, even when I was going to law school,” says Martini. “I wrote at night and on weekends and managed to sell that story to a small publisher in New York. That’s how I broke into the business.”

Martini moved to Bellingham, Washington in 1991 and has now published a dozen novels. He writes every day, usually in the morning. When approaching a deadline, he will write 10 to 12 hours a day. “Some of my best writing is done in that compressed timeframe,” he says. “Once I get started, I try not to get away from it because you can lose the thread of the story.”

The full-time novelist finds writing to be rewarding, but admits that it never gets any easier. “You have to go back to the well every time, and every time you go back, you confront the concept of transforming an idea into a story,” he says. “It’s like climbing a mountain. It’s just as hard on the tenth, twelfth or fourteenth book as it was on the first.”

But Martini’s loyal readers will be happy to know he’s at it again, working on a novel that will be published later this year.