



## Rachel Moran

MA, MFT

Psychotherapy & Counseling

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I am pleased to announce the new location of my private psychotherapy practice in Orinda at 8 Camino Encinas, Suite 210.

My practice emphasizes a collaborative and solution focused approach for issues including depression, anxiety, substance abuse, eating disorders, and negotiation of life transitions and relationship challenges.

For more information about my experience and practice approach please visit my website at [www.rachelmoranmft.com](http://www.rachelmoranmft.com).

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## Guess Who's Coming to Book Club?

*Lafayette group invites Pulitzer Prize winner to make a house call*

By Cathy Tyson



Front row, from left: "Chapter Chicks" members Melissa Johnston, Amy Martin, and Kandice Caicedo with author George Dohrmann. Back row: Sarah David, Stephanie O'Toole, Allison Thomason, and Angie Gates. Photo Cathy Tyson

As a selection for the Springhill area book club during March Madness, "Chapter Chicks" member Kandice Caicedo recommended "Play Their Hearts Out: A Coach, His Star Recruit and the Youth Basketball Machine," written by George Dohrmann – a senior writer at Sports Illustrated who won a Pulitzer Prize for a series of stories about rampant academic fraud within the University of Minnesota men's basketball program. Not only did members read the book, but the club invited the author to their meeting. He received a warm reception from the ladies, some neighbors, and husbands on a recent Tuesday evening.

Having a famous author attend was a first for their club, but Caicedo disclosed that she and the author went to high school together in Stockton, at Lincoln High where Dohrmann was the editor of the school newspaper.

Caicedo was quick to point out, however, that she "wouldn't have recommended [the book] if I didn't like it. I laughed, I cried – it had all the elements of good non-fiction." Fellow

members chimed in that they like to read a variety of books and were ready for a change after a number of selections based on black history month.

When asked how the process of writing this book started, Dohrmann explained, "Play Their Hearts Out" was the first story he pitched at Sports Illustrated, without a publisher or an agent on board as is the usual procedure. He was sure he was on to something when ambitious hustler coach/profiteer Joe Keller scored an unprecedented shoe deal from Adidas that the 13- and 14-year-old boys clearly weren't prepared to handle.

The author ultimately followed four extremely talented young men, including Demetrius Walker, for eight years along with Coach Joe as he searched for the next basketball superstar, hoping to get a cut of a lucrative professional contract.

Over time, Dohrmann became a father figure to these boys who didn't have much parental guidance; they all went on to receive college scholar-

ships for their basketball prowess. To this day he still has a close relationship with two of the four. He even named his youngest son after Justin Hawkins, now a senior at University of Nevada, Las Vegas, who obtained a bachelor's degree in just three years and who's now working on a master's in public administration.

The book club ladies and assorted men had a variety of questions for Dohrmann and enjoyed hearing about parts of the books that were cut and juicy behind-the-scenes details, including a prison sentence for the dad of one player and unplanned pregnancies for the girlfriends of another. The final version came in at a whopping 190,000 words, so entire chapters had to be omitted.

"There's no other sport where you can look at a 12-year-old and be kind of right," about future professional prospects, said the author. Reflecting on the system that exploits these kids and the NCAA, he explained there has been no change, and no incentive to change because there's no shortage of talent in the pipeline.

## How to "See" a Foxtail

By Mona Miller, DVM



It is the season of grass awns, or foxtails, growing tall and strong in fields, waiting for the wind to disperse its slender, triangular seed structure. In our area, dogs and cats often also help the plant transport these awns, which get trapped in fur as the pet walks by. There are other areas of the pet's body that can trap a foxtail, though, which serves no useful purpose for either the plant or for the pet: the nose, ears, eyes, throat, in-between toes and burrowing into skin and then into deeper structures.

I have addressed foxtails in general in a previous article; in this, I'd like to address how we can use imaging technology to find foxtails that migrate into deep structures of the body. I recently had a case of a Brittany Spaniel dog whose foxtail burrowed into the skin on his side, then continued down into the subcutaneous and muscle tissues. It took several weeks from the start of the subcutaneous abscess to finally localize and surgically remove the foxtail. The foxtail was only about an inch long, but the amount of tissue infec-

tion and inflammation around it was approximately 6-8 inches. Clearly, imaging technology can be useful to find this "needle in a haystack."

Radiographs use radiation to pass through structures, which is then captured onto either photographic film or a digital recording device. The thicker or denser the structure, the whiter the image is on the film. There are five radiographic densities, in decreasing order of white to black: metal, bone/mineral, tissue/fluid, fat, and air. Since a foxtail is hard chitin material, it will show as a very faint white line in the midst of gray tissue/fluid reaction surrounding it. Radiology is only minimally useful to find a foxtail, but can be useful to determine surrounding abscess or cellulitis tissue, especially in lungs or in the abdomen.

By contrast, ultrasound can differentiate tissue from fluid, and is more useful than radiographs in finding a foxtail surrounded by fluid from an abscess or tissue from cellulitis. Ultrasound waves are oscillating pressure waves with a

frequency greater than what humans can hear. When these waves contact a structure, they can either be absorbed into it, pass through, or be reflected back (echo). As a side note, the sound waves can distinguish movement occurring in the structure in real time; for example, one can visualize heart contractions as they occur during a cardiac ultrasound. On an ultrasound image, fluid is black and tissue is gray. Both air and bone show up as white images. When searching for a foxtail with ultrasound, we would look for both a line of white (the foxtail itself) and a surrounding rim of black (usually the abscess fluid or the migrating tract of the foxtail).

In the case of the Brittany Spaniel mentioned above, the foxtail's location was determined in part by the combination of radiographs and ultrasound, to narrow down the search field.



Dr. Mona Miller lives in Lafayette with her young son, two cats and Luka a new puppy. She has worked at Four Seasons Animal Hospital in Lafayette since moving here in 2001. She attended Cal as an undergrad, and received her DVM from U.C. Davis. She can be reached at Four Seasons, 938-7700, or by email to [MonaSDVM@aol.com](mailto:MonaSDVM@aol.com).

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