

Introduction to Dennis Lehane. 1:53 min. Interview: Raymond Elman. Camera: Necee Regis. Video Editing: Karen Morales. Production: Christina Hester.

# Dennis Lehane: Screenwriter, Author, Producer

By Elman + Regis + Morales + Hester

**DENNIS LEHANE** grew up in Boston. Since his first novel, *A Drink Before the War*, won the Shamus Award, he has published twelve more novels that have been translated into more than 30 languages and become international bestsellers: *Darkness*; *Take My Hand*; *Sacred*; *Gone, Baby, Gone*; *Prayers for Rain*; *Mystic River*; *Shutter Island*; *The Given Day*; *Moonlight Mile*; *Live by Night*; and *World Gone By*.

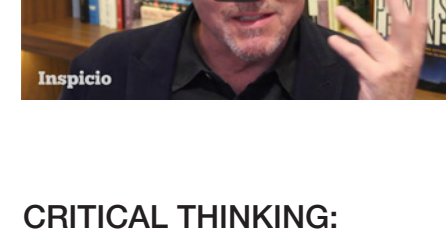
Dennis Lehane's novel, *The Drop*, was inspired by his earlier short story entitled *Animal Rescue*. *The Drop* has also been released as a movie featuring James Gandolfini in his last role, alongside actors Noomi Rapace and Tom Hardy. Lehane was a staff writer on the acclaimed HBO series *The Wire* and a writer-producer on the 4th season of HBO's *Boardwalk Empire*. Lehane currently is a writer and producer on the television adaptation of Stephen King's *Mr. Mercedes* and has two dramatic series in development for DirecTV.

Four of his other novels – *Live by Night*, *Mystic River*, *Gone, Baby, Gone*, and *Shutter Island* – have been adapted into films. In addition, *Mystic River* was a finalist for the 2001 PEN/Winslip Award and won the Anthony Award and the Barry Award for Best Novel, the Dilys Award from the Independent Mystery Booksellers Association and the Massachusetts Book Award in Fiction from the Massachusetts Center for the Book. *Live by Night* was awarded the 2013 Edgar Award for Best Novel of the Year. In addition, *Live by Night* was awarded the gold medal for general fiction in the annual Florida Book Awards, and was in the top 3 of Readers Choice Awards at The House Of Crime and Mystery. In 2017, *Live by Night* was released as a major motion picture directed by and starring Ben Affleck. Dennis Lehane's most recent work is a stand-alone novel, *Since We Fell* (May 9, 2017, Ecco).

Lehane was born and raised in Dorchester, Massachusetts. He attended several universities, and is an alumus of the graduate creative writing program at Florida International University. Before becoming a full-time writer, he worked as a counselor with intellectually challenged and abused children, waited tables, parked cars, drove limos, worked in bookstores, and loaded tractor-trailers. Lehane and his family live in California. — [Dennis Lehane website](#)

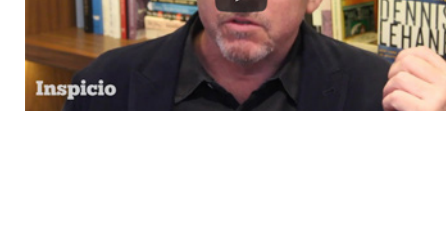
The videos below are organized by topic and run between 30 seconds and 4 minutes. Click on any video. You must be connected to the Internet to view the videos.

## UNDERSTANDS THE BUSINESS OF ART: 1:59 min.



What are some of the differences between writing a novel and writing a screenplay?

## CRITICAL THINKING: 0:50 min.



When you write novels, do you simultaneously think about how they would be structured as movies?

## CREATIVE FLEXIBILITY: 1:27 min.



When you use Boston or Brooklyn accents in your novels and films, do you structure them so they will convey emotions like humor or charm or menace?

## INSIGHT & INSPIRATION: 1:24 min.



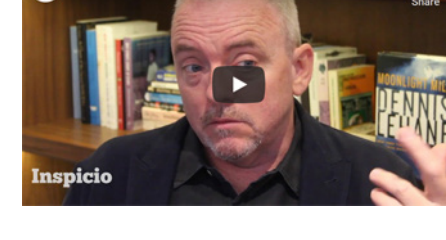
George V. Higgins, the great Boston crime novelist, died when you were 34. Did you know him?

## EXPOSURE TO BROAD INFLUENCES: 1:57 min.



What is your earliest memory of art of any discipline?

## SELF-CONFIDENCE: 1:15 min.



When did you first realize that you were good at writing?

## OVERCOMES CHALLENGES TO SUCCEED: 2:02 min.



Why did you drop out of Emerson College?

## SEIZES OPPORTUNITIES: 1:43 min.



How did you find out about Eckerd College?

## EXPOSURE TO BROAD INFLUENCES: 1:40 sec.



How did attending college in the tropics of Florida and then returning to New England effect your writing?

## SERENDIPITY: 2:10 min.



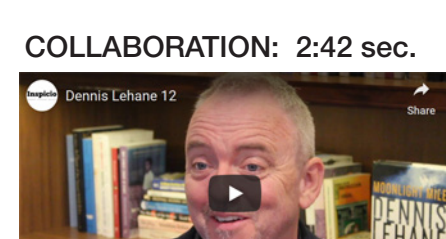
What is the role of serendipity in your work?

## RESILIENCE: 1:46 sec.



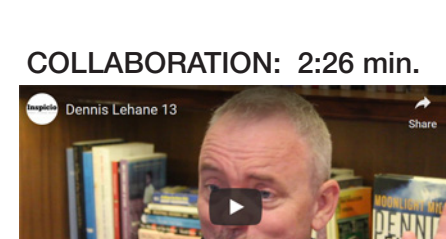
Working primarily alone when writing a novel, and negotiating the labyrinth of collaboration required to produce something in Hollywood seem like such antithetical skill sets. How do you manage to do both?

## COLLABORATION: 2:42 sec.



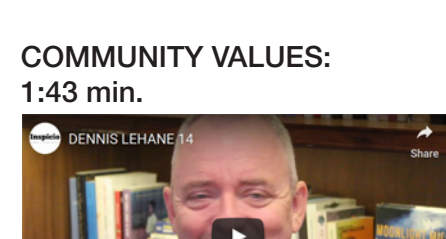
You have been with the same publisher since 1995. Do you have the same level of trust and confidence with the people you work with in Hollywood?

## COLLABORATION: 2:26 min.



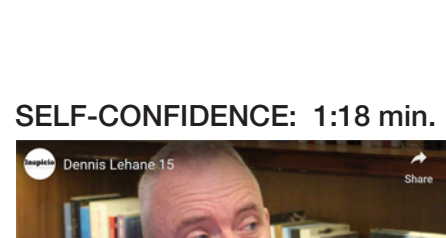
So you like the isolation of writing when writing novels, but do you also enjoy collaboration when working on films?

## COMMUNITY VALUES: 1:43 min.



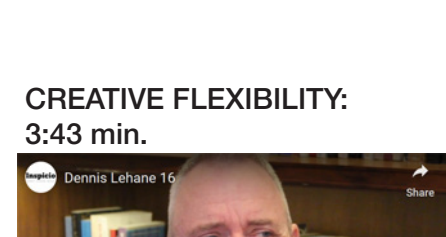
Is there a comradery between you, Matt Damon, and Ben Affleck, given that you all grew up in the Boston area around the same time?

## SELF-CONFIDENCE: 1:18 min.



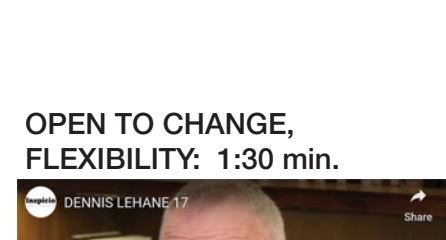
What skills do you value most as a writer?

## CREATIVE FLEXIBILITY: 3:43 min.



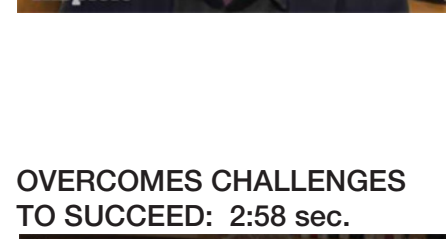
When you're writing a novel, what does a typical day look like?

## OPEN TO CHANGE, FLEXIBILITY: 1:30 min.



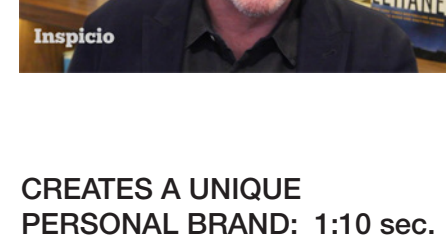
How do you adjust between the sacredness of your words in novels, and the flexibility of your words in screenplays?

## OVERCOMES CHALLENGES TO SUCCEED: 2:58 sec.



Describe a difficult situation with a successful outcome?

## CREATES A UNIQUE PERSONAL BRAND: 1:10 sec.



Is there anything important that people just don't understand about you?

## COMMUNITY VALUES:

2:02 sec.



*How much involvement do you have with the Miami literary community?*

## COMMUNITY VALUES:

1:30 min..



*There doesn't seem to be a lot of connectivity between the diverse arts communities in Miami. I am hoping that "Inspicio" can help build bridges. In the Provincetown art colony, all the writers go to art openings and the artists go to readings.*