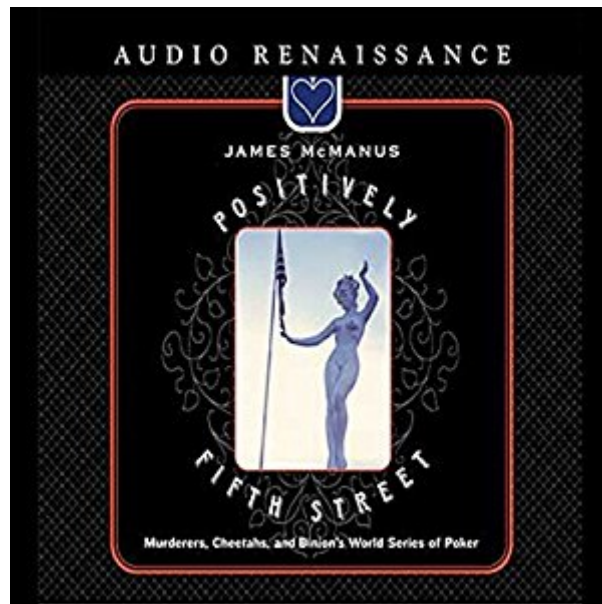


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# Positively Fifth Street: Murderers, Cheetahs, And Binion's World Series Of Poker



## Synopsis

Rough sex, black magic, murder, and the scienceâ and erosâ of gambling meet in the ultimate book about Las Vegas. James McManus was sent to Las Vegas by Harperâ™s to cover the World Series of Poker in 2000, especially the mushrooming progress of women in the \$23 million event, and the murder of Ted Binion, the tournamentâ™s prodigal host, purportedly done in by a stripper and her boyfriend with a technique so outrÃ© it took a Manhattan pathologist to identify it. Whether a jury would convict the attractive young couple was another story altogether. McManus risks his entire Harperâ™s advance in a long-shot attempt to play in the tournament himself. Only with actual table experience, he tells his skeptical wife, can he capture the hair-raising brand of poker that determines the world champion. The heart of the book is his deliciously suspenseful account of the tournament itselfâ the players, the hand-to-hand combat, and his own unlikely progress in it. Written in the tradition of *The Gambler* and *The Biggest Game in Town*, *Positively Fifth Street* is a high-stakes adventure, a penetrating study of Americaâ™s card game, and a terrifying but often hilarious account of one manâ™s effort to understand what Edward O. Wilson has called âœPleistocene exigenciesâ •â the eros and logistics of our primary competitive instincts. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I spent two days lost in this book. Quite a performance by Jim McManus, and I don't mean only the writing. For a fancy wordsmith, he is one heck of a poker player. To come to Las Vegas and play in your first tournament and make it to the final table of the World Series of Poker is one very fine

achievement. Jim McManus, 49-year-old novelist, poet, teacher, and sometime journalist on assignment in Las Vegas for Harper's Magazine takes part of his \$4,000 retainer and buys into a satellite tournament hoping to win a pass to play in the big one, the \$10,000 buy-in no limit hold'em event that annually decides the world championship of poker. Not coincidentally he is also covering the trial of Sandy Murphy, a saucy, skanky Vegas lap dancer and her linebacker beau Rick Tabish who are accused of the murder of Ted Binion, brother of Becky Behnen, host of the tournament, and one of the sons of Benny Binion, the long time owner of the sponsoring Horseshoe casino. What results is a superb example of a genre that I call "participatory journalism," the sort of thing that made George Plimpton, Gay Talese, Hunter S. Thompson and some other very fine writers famous. What happens in participatory journalism is the journalist himself joins in the action and becomes part of the story. Because of McManus's cleverness with the pasteboards (actually they're made of plastic of course), his discipline, and because he did indeed get lucky a time or two on Positively Fifth Street, his experience became more than just part of the story. As he covers the trial and the World Series of poker from the inside, he focuses intimately--sometimes perhaps too intimately--on himself and what it was like, first person singular, to play the kind of high stakes poker that most of us can only dream about. And to win.

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