

EARLY REVIEW OF “Free Range Institution.”

Booklist Review (January 1, 2011)

This title will publish in February 2011

Free Range Institution. Haskins, Michael (Author)

Feb 2011. 382 p. Five Star, hardcover, \$25.95. (9781594149290).

Mick Murphy, the news hawk hero of Haskins’ latest Key West mystery, makes a classic reporter goof. He pretends to be a little closer to the action than he really is. Both good and bad guys take him at his word, and the chase is on. At the heart of it all is a plot to bring a particularly cheap and addictive drug called *paco* into the U.S. As the good guys assemble behind Mick and check their guns, echoes of Miami Vice reverberate, with both its pastel glitz and its underlying despair. The cartels have more money and guns; the best the rest of us can do is hold together. Things get lively as the confrontation approaches, but this really isn’t a high-concept action novel or even a stripped-down thriller. It’s about adult relationships, and **its generous use of the Key West setting will appeal to readers who like local color**. Since it’s the Keys, a lot of beer and rum goes down, and there’s much eating of cheeseburgers, dolphin sandwiches, and breakfast eggs with hot sauce.

— *Don Crinklaw*