



October 4, 2005

### **Get Your Funeral On**

Okay, so we readily admit some ambivalence when it comes to [chick lit](#). But every once in a while we find a book so labelled that catches our eye and causes us to curse the marketing strategy of genre-fying everything. (And the legs and the shoes! UGH.) [Lynn Isenberg's \*The Funeral Planner\*](#) is an "entrepreneurial comedy novel" about an ambitious woman who gets in the business of planning funerals after attending the funeral of a college classmate.

We're attracted to the dark quirkiness, but we're especially intrigued by the chain of inspiration: Isenberg got the idea for the novel from "an unusual outstanding solo performance" at her brother's funeral, then started *her own* [funeral-planning business](#) inspired by the novel. And by "funeral-planning business," we're not talking about caskets and six-foot holes in the ground, but a full-scale multimedia production company. For "affluent pre-need clients." In working with Lights Out Enterprises, you shape how your loved ones remember you and simultaneously work through your own fear of death and grief. And, if you don't pass within a reasonable amount of time after your funeral production has been planned, it can be "repurposed" for your next birthday party! Facetiousness aside, we admire Isenberg's vision ("to challenge convention and shift America's perception to honor a life and celebrate the impact we have on each other") and the whole po-mo life imitates art imitates life-ness of it all.

Isenberg will be at the Clybourn Ave. Barnes & Noble tomorrow night at 7:30 to read, sign, and chat along with Laura Caldwell, Loyola Chicago law professor and author of *The Night I Got Lucky*. (Must not judge book by cover, must not judge book by cover, must not judge book by cover.) Seriously, even if you're not into the books, there is bound to be some fascinating discussion here.