**Margaret Panofsky short bio**

[Margaret Panofsky](http://www.lastshadetree.com/full-biography) grew up surrounded by Northern California’s live oak trees and golden wild-oat grass, but abandoned what’s left of that idyllic beauty to live in New York City. She is a musician who plays the viola da gamba and is founder and director of New York University’s [The Teares of the Muses](http://tearesofthemuses.com/), a consort of viols. After years of playing Renaissance and Baroque music, she believes that her first novel has a definite musical lilt.

**Margaret Panofsky long bio**

Margaret Panofsky grew up in Los Altos, California, surrounded by live oak trees and golden wild-oat grass. Her young life always revolved around one art or another; she prepared for a career in ballet with music and art on the side—but music won out. The first book she remembers falling in love with was James Thurber’s *The 13 Clocks* with its enticingly morbid backdrops, inscrutable humans, and sonorous rhythm. But soon it met serious competition from other favorites: *Crime and Punishment*,*Wuthering Heights*, Karel Čapek’s *War with the Newts*, or any tragedy by Shakespeare.

And it was the allure of Shakespeare’s world that pushed her over the edge. She attended Stanford and the New England Conservatory of Music to prepare for a career in “early music”—classical music that features repertory from Shakespeare’s time through Louis XIV’s. She plays the viola da gamba, a six-stringed bowed instrument that had its day in the castles and courts of Europe. Margaret is a professor at New York University’s Arts and Science Music Department where she teaches the viola da gamba. She founded and directs [The Teares of the Muses](http://tearesofthemuses.com/), a consort of viols. The group is proud to have made two very original sounding CDs. She has published three books, all tied to the early music field.

Margaret lives with her husband in New York City. When the constant excitement becomes overbearing, she reminisces about Northern California or make rare escapes to hike, or soak up culture elsewhere. Every once in a while she takes a ballet class. Nothing delights this mother’s heart more than visits with her two grown children. She is currently writing a sequel to *The Last Shade Tree.*

Even now, Margaret’s parents continue to shape her world. Her late father, Wolfgang K. H. Panofsky, nuclear physicist and a tireless advocate for arms control, has certainly influenced her thinking in *The Last Shade Tree,* just as her mother, lover of the immense and the minuscule in nature, has left a permanent mark. At ninety-three, she still lives in the house surrounded by golden wild-oat grass where Margaret grew up.

Margaret has watched the world lurch from bad to worse to bad and back again—more times than she can count. Right now is a definite “worse” period that makes Margaret fear for humankind’s future. Letting her book characters speak for her, she voices dismay that human beings seem incapable of learning from past atrocities. Margaret hopes that *The Last Shade Tree* will make a dent in people’s amnesia. Since researching *Shade Tree*, she has become an outspoken supporter of ICWA, the Indian Child Welfare Act, the 1978 federal law that seeks to keep American Indian children with their families, tribes, and nations.

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