



SISTERS in CRIME  
**CROAK & DAGGER**  
 ALBUQUERQUE CHAPTER



# THE NOOSELETTER

Volume II, Number 2—March 2006

## †Expert Testimony†

From the Prez

If you're reading this, I know you're already a mystery fan who looks forward to each issue of *The Nooseletter*. I got to wondering how many Croakers also enjoy *InSinC*, *The Sisters in Crime Newsletter*, published quarterly by the national organization. Both newsletters are offered as benefits of membership in their respective groups, and both keep us apprised of many noteworthy and entertaining events.

One of the many articles that caught my eye in the March issue of *InSinC* featured the Crime Lab Project, an organization started three years ago by author and fellow SinC member, Jan Burke. Its purpose is to illuminate the reality of forensic-science labs, which are often underfunded, understaffed, and overwhelmed (as opposed to the fantasy labs on television that get results in thirty minutes).

In a fascinating interview with SinC president, Libby Hellman, Jan outlined several ways we can get involved in furthering their cause. I wanted to quote more of it here, but knew I'd run short of space. For those of you who aren't already members of the national organization, I'll bring copies of this newsletter to our February meeting. I hope the variety of articles will inspire you to join! ✓

—Margaret Tessler

### Don't Miss It!

Saturday, March 25, 1:00 p.m.

**Shirley Raye Redmond**, our March speaker, lives in Los Alamos. She will speak on writing children's and young adult books, writing her suspense novel, and her contract to write a Nancy Drew mystery.

## A Stand-Up Stand-In

Our January speaker, Dirk Gibson, UNM professor and author of *Clues from Killers*, missed our meeting due to a death in his wife's family. The replacement speaker was Sergeant Terre Molander, Field Services Bureau, Albuquerque Police Department. On short notice, Sergeant Molander entertained us with accounts of his experiences as a police officer and with his perspective on guns, robbers, and sex crime perpetrators. Our thanks to him. Dirk Gibson will be scheduled for a future meeting. ✓

—Sarah Schwartz

## Croak & Dagger Lineup

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# The Cairn of Albertvs

*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*

“Who will watch the watchmen?”

Did the Romans even have watchmen?  
Policemen? Firefighters?

Could citizens or emperors hire Columbo-like detectives such as Marcus Didius Falco in the Lindsey Davis novels?

Were juries of *duodecim bonus homines* called up to perform their civic duty?

Did Latin interrogative sentences have question marks?

**Police.** Police didn't exist as we know them; the modern designation comes from *polis*, a Greek word for city. Whenever the well-to-do left their urban or country villas, they were accompanied by a band of toughs. These wielded batons, shouting, “Make way! Make way!” Julius Citizen stepped aside. Later, night watchmen were organized. They were known as *vigiles*, the root adjective being *vigil*: awake, watching, alert. From that we get the English “vigilant,” the Spanish *vigilantes*, and the present surname “Vigil.”

**Legal codes.** Early written Roman laws were the Twelve Tablets, approved in 450 BC and set up in the forum for plebs to deface and patricians to hire lawyers about. In Cicero's time, 400 years later, schoolboys still memorized them. The senate advised magistrates on new laws, which might or might not be enacted. From Augustus Caesar on, emperors pretty much dictated law, although Constantine I, Theodosius II, and Justinian revised legal codes. Jurists, practicing and academic lawyers who untangled the sticky details of law and points of order, advised these 4th-, 5th-, and 6th-century emperors. Later barbarian codes, such as *Lex Visigothorum*, influenced medieval legislation and thus our own through English common law. At first the Roman state did not involve itself investigating and prosecuting criminal conduct. The aggrieved and their families and friends hired lawyers to argue their case before a magistrate. The merits might be secondary; the best orator usually won. Local disturbances were resolved by residents with the dubious help of idlers eager to take sides, *id est* until it was time to collect their free bread ration and matinee tickets to *Ben Hur* and *Gladiator*.

Cassius Dio, a historian (27 BC–AD 14), reported the first firefighting unit. After an AD 6 fire destroyed parts of Rome, Augustus Caesar recruited a Corps of Vigiles, 7,000 freedmen, former slaves, to

put out fires. They performed so well that the emperor opened their ranks to other classes, erected barracks for them, and paid their salaries from the public treasury. There were specialists within the corps:

**Aquarii**—Men who organized bucket chains that passed water along to each other, and also supplied water to siphons and pumps from tanks.

**Siphonarii**—Men who supervised the operation of water pumps. Ctesibius, a 3rd-century BC mathematician, invented a piston suction pump that, then and now, was/is used in fire engines.

**Uncinarii**—“Hook men,” who carried a long pole with a crook at one end for pulling down burning roofs in danger of collapsing onto nearby structures. Other equipment included knives, axes, and shovels. In remote areas, soldiers from army legions were used as firefighters.

**Question marks? LIKETHISSENTENCE EARLYLATINMANUSCRIPTSDIDNTEVENHAVE SPACES BETWEEN WORDS, much less commas, periods, colons, and semicolons; the bane of some editors! (Or exclamation marks!) READINGTHEMREQUIREDGREATSKILLAND PRACTICE.**

**Vale! Vade in pace**—Farewell! Go in peace 'til the next *Nooseletter*. ✓

—Albert Noyer

## IN THE LOOP

If you haven't joined already, all members are invited to join the *Croak & Dagger* community group, an online gathering place. Exchange information about mystery books, movies, and TV shows; share news about local and national mystery events; and participate in occasional online classes. Join in!

Contact Nancy Varian, thule21@att.net, for further instructions.

## Croak and Dagger

### Coming Events—

We are pleased to announce that **Dirk Gibson** has rescheduled for **April 25**. A UNM professor and author of *Clues from Killers*, which deals with numerous serial killer cases, he is a true crime writer and technical expert in one.

## The Southern Sisters Conference: “Murder in the Magic City”

This year, rather than go to Bristol, England, for Left Coast Crime, I decided to attend several smaller U.S. mystery conventions. I’d heard from other authors and fans that smaller cons were intimate—and fulfilling—in a way that LCC, Malice Domestic, and Bouchercon could never be.

Still, the decision to go to Birmingham, Alabama—and Wetumpka, Alabama—did feel a little odd. I’ll admit I worried a bit about seeming too exotic or weird. I needn’t have worried.

Murder in the Magic City is a one-day conference held at the Homewood Public Library. It’s hosted by the Southern Sisters—the Alabama chapter of Sisters in Crime—and attendance is limited to about 135. Margaret Fenton will go on my list as one of the top conference organizers ever, period. She, along with her hardworking committee, made every author and guest feel appreciated, cherished, and important.

The conference’s format gives each author maximum exposure because the panels run in sequence rather than consecutively. So the audience hears every single person rather than having to choose.

The day started off with Susan McBride and her Bad Boys (Sean Doolittle, Victor Gischler, Harry Hunsicker, and Duane Swierczynski), who shouldn’t be allowed in public without a warning that extreme laughter will ensue. Their panel had the task of creating and plotting a mystery novel. I think McBride still has the results on her Web site or at her blog, *The Lipstick Chronicles*.

My panel was next. Hans Watford, Joyce and Jim Lavene, Chester Campbell, and Marlis Day: we all had to live our character’s personas for the hour. Sasha couldn’t handle the stress and opted to take a few tokes of the whipped cream can that Margaret had graciously provided.

Sarah Stewart Taylor’s group rewrote a passage of their work in another genre. Jeff Shelby’s brilliant turn at romance alluded to proclivities we never knew about James Born. Who knew that sweet Harley Jane Kozak could write such a tough, weapon-rich thriller? James Born treated us to a science fiction rendition that will certainly add several choice phrases to the common vernacular.

I could listen to Cathy Pickens weave Southern tales all day; her dry humor and wonderful voice warmed each word. Pickens moderated the

Southern Writers panel. Kathryn Wall, John Floyd, and Claire Hamner Matturo offered rich perspectives on that very important and popular subgenre. One thing I found particularly interesting is that they, too, experience the sometimes irritating and sometimes wonderful moniker of “regional.”

Jan Burke and Steve Hamilton—both nationally celebrated authors—were the guests of honor. Each one treated us to a marvelous, unforgettable talk. If you want to make Burke smile, get involved in the **Crime Lab Project**—an advocacy group dedicated to helping improve funding and the conditions of crime labs across the country. If you want to make Hamilton quiver, mention the Dresden Book Signing. Every author believes he or she has had the worst signing ever. Not so. Hamilton’s story beats all of ours by light years.

The next morning, a group of 19 authors caravanned one and a half hours south to the small town of Wetumpka to participate in Murder on the Menu—a fundraiser for the local library. We were served an elegant lunch and then became the main entertainment for patrons. Each author sat at a different table while these generous people ate their lunch. After 15 minutes or so, Tammie Lynn, the local independent bookstore owner (and great library supporter and all-around wonderful person) would ring a bell, and the authors would switch to another table. In all, we visited six a piece. This event, too, was well run, and everyone had a good time.

I came away from my Alabama experience totally enthused. Let me shout it from the rooftop: I urge all of you—authors and readers—to make Murder in the Magic City one of the must-dos in your life. It was that good. ✓

—Pari Noskin Taichert

The logo for Sisters in Crime, featuring the words "Sisters in Crime" in a stylized, handwritten font. The word "Sisters" is at the top, "in" is in the middle, and "Crime" is at the bottom, with a small dagger symbol to the right of "Crime".

Sisters in Crime was founded in 1986. **The purpose of Sisters in Crime shall be** “to combat discrimination against women in the mystery field, educate publishers and the general public as to the inequities in the treatment of female authors, raise the level of awareness of their contribution to the field, and promote the professional advancement of women who write mysteries.”

## SinC Links

SinC authors, check out this resource:  
[www.gunlaws.com](http://www.gunlaws.com).

## LOCAL APPARITIONS

**Woodharvest Workshops for Writers** is starting their spring workshops in Santa Fe in late March. Presenters and topics (including three SinC members) are:

- March 25: Marketing and Public Relations for Authors: Get the Attention You Deserve with Pari Noskin Taichert
- April 1: Writing Your Story: Autobiography and Beyond with Anya Achtenberg
- April 8: Strong Fiction: Who Tells the Story and Why, a workshop on point of view with Lynn Stegner
- April 15: Writing Marketable Children's Books with Shirley Raye Redmond
- April 29: The Art of Self-Editing: How to Be Readable, Publishable, and Saleable with Susan Slater

## Inaugural Sea-SI Crime Scene Cruise

Join D. P. Lyle, MD (author of *Murder and Mayhem: A Doctor Answers Medical and Forensic Questions for Mystery Writers* and winner of a Macavity Award for *Forensics for Dummies*) and Jan Burke (author of the Irene Kelly mystery series and winner of the Edgar for Best Novel for *Bones*) on the inaugural Sea-SI Crime Scene Cruise to Alaska aboard Norwegian Cruise Lines' *M/S Oosterdam*. The dates are July 15–22, 2006, and the trip departs from and returns to Seattle, Washington. Doug and Jan will offer a multipart presentation on all things forensic, in both the real and fictional world. For details visit: [www.innovativejourneys.com](http://www.innovativejourneys.com) or call Oscar Syligan at Worldview Travel at 714-882-4654.

## A Web Site? What? Who? Me?

One hears a lot of interesting things at the Croak & Dagger board of directors meetings, many of which shall remain unrevealed here because . . . ya know, it is a meeting of the board of a group dedicated to murder mysteries, crime fiction, and thrillers. You don't like to go around spilling the beans on *that* crowd.

Or not all of the beans, anyway. I will spill a few, though, so listen up.

I heard something while making a recent report to the board about our new Web site that struck me as worthy of spending a few hundred words on. So here they are.

The discussion at that meeting moved from my report that the new site is up and looking rather spiffy, to my suggestion that all Croak & Dagger members who are writers, whether they are published or waiting for the industry to get a grip and recognize gold when they see it, should have a Web site.

Several folks raised a question I'll paraphrase this way: "If the rules state that only Croak & Dagger members who are published in the mystery, crime, or thriller genres can have their link included on the site . . . why should I have a Web site before I'm published?"

### Long Answer, Short

Because you need to let your audience know you're on the way.

### Short Answer, Longer

As many readers know, their favorite authors have learned that a good way to keep in touch with them is through Web sites. Some of us go whole hog and include bios, photos, contests to win a copy of the latest release; we'll list new titles, news about rereleased titles, and let readers know when a short story is due to be published.

Yes, that's all very nice, you say, but why should an unpublished writer want to go to the trouble of building a Web site when there are no readers clamoring to know the scoop on your latest book or story (which, of course, is yet to be published)?

Because the *other* thing many authors do with their Web sites is use them to build up an audience for works in progress. Now this is subtle stuff, but you're readers and writers in a genre that does "subtle" very well.

(cont'd. on next page)

*(A Web Site? What? Who? Me? cont'd.)*

Of course you don't want to go around promising that your fabulous novel is about to be published when you don't have an agent yet; or even suggest that what is sure to be an award-winning short story will undoubtedly be hitting the magazine racks at Barnes & Noble any day now when you haven't finished blocking out the plot, let alone started your market research.

Neither do you want to go into great detail about your developing novel or short story.

The task is to lure an audience to you.

Now that I've almost completed work on the Croak & Dagger site, I'm getting ready to reconstruct my own Web site. I'll be transferring all the information about my past and current projects, and I'll be adding a page named something like "What Interests Me These Days" or maybe the more writerly, "Grist for My Mill."

On that page I'll include carefully selected essays, articles, and—most important of all!—links, links, links about pirates and poor little Elaine of Astolat. You remember her, the sweet creature who had the grave misfortune to fall in love with that cad Lancelot while he was running around the countryside half mad and mostly sulking over another lover's quarrel with Guenevere.

How are pirates and tragic Elaine related? In no way, but that they are subjects for books I am either writing or will be writing.

It didn't take people long to learn how to Google like crazy to find new sites dedicated to their favorite topics. (If you don't believe that, do a bit of Googling yourself on a favorite subject and see what you turn up.) Link-rich pages that are part of an author's Web site bring potential readers.

There is no reason why a writer waiting to be published can't do the same thing. Have your site in place, fill it with articles and links that will draw in the people who will be interested in what you write. Don't be shy about mentioning that you are a writer—in fact, build some bridges to that community by including links to sites other writers would appreciate knowing about.

You can easily find inexpensive Web-hosting services; some will even host a bare-bones starter site for a little as \$4 per month. The best services will host a starter site for about \$9 a month and charge on a monthly basis so you don't find yourself locked into a contract. Site-building tools are almost always included, many so simple you can have a site up and running over the weekend—even

if you've never dreamed of doing such a thing, let alone learning how to make it happen.

So, published or not, you *are* a writer. If you're writing in the genres that Croak & Dagger focuses on, you're going to want to be able to tap the audience for mysteries, thrillers, and crime fiction on the virtual shoulder and let it know you're here.

Start helping your audience to find you now; it might very well pay off later! ✓

—Nancy Varian

*Nancy Virginia Varian is Croak & Dagger's Web mistress. As Nancy Varian Berberick, she's published over a dozen novels and a basket-load of short stories in the fantasy genre. Though she hasn't published even one little short story in the mystery/crime/thriller genres, Nancy has vowed to change that. After all, having created the Croak & Dagger Web site, by gum, she is determined to have her Web page linked to the Croak & Dagger Web site. Legally, because she'd never do a hack . . . nope, never.*

## HOW CAN I LINK MY WEB SITE TO THE CROAK & DAGGER WEB SITE?

Piece o' cake! Meet the following criteria and let the Web mistress know that you'd like to link:

- You must be a member in good standing of Croak & Dagger.
- You must have published short stories (one will do until your snowball starts rolling down the hill) or novels in the mystery/crime/thriller genres, or you must have published nonfiction related to those genres.
- Nonfiction can be anything from how to fire a gun without killing granny while she's peeling apples on the front porch, to how to concoct poison right in your own home (we're a lovely lot, aren't we?), to how to write mystery/crime/thriller fiction.

If you meet these qualifications, e-mail Nancy at thule21@att.net and let her know the URL to your site. She'll be happy to link to you for one little fee—you'll be asked to link back to the Croak & Dagger site. Now isn't that a bargain?

Please also note that the criteria listed above pertains to having book reviews posted to our Yahoo! discussion group.

# ROB'S RANDOM SHOTS

## March Case File Number One

*Balloons Can Be Murder* by Connie Shelton, Intrigue Press, hardback, 234 pp, \$24.00

As astute readers have probably noticed, I write reviews for *The Nooseletter* according to rules. Two sets of rules, actually. That of the editor and my own. Editorial policy dictates that we do not review books by chapter members. Reviewed books must have been published in the preceding 12 months. Reviews should be 450–500 words. Simple enough. My own rules are somewhat less fathomable.

In view of Sisters in Crime's stated goal of equal review treatment for women authors, I review one book by a woman author and one by a male author each issue. While I try to include at least one New Mexico author each month, I don't always succeed. And of course, I lean toward authors I've met or known personally. That's true this month, but not always.

*Angel Fire* author Connie Shelton's ninth Charlie Parker mystery is an assured, involving, well-plotted novel that only she could have written. Nobody else. Period. It revolves around Charlie's PI firm's effort to protect a female balloonist who is receiving threats prior to attempting a world altitude record in an AX-7 class hot air balloon during the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta.

Not coincidentally, Connie herself set such a record more than 20 years ago. That experience gave her the chops to write this story convincingly. Compellingly. Of course, Connie had the good sense to make her ascent away from the hustle and bustle of Balloon Fiesta crowds. But her balloonist, Rachel Fairfield, is determined to make her attempt at that venue, with all the security headaches it entails.

Local PI Pat Caristo spoke to our group a year ago and made clear the monotony of conducting stakeouts, knocking on doors, interviewing people, and sifting stories that are the bread and butter of real PI work. Connie has been studying the reality of the PI business (and perhaps the bodyguard business, too), and her sleuth, Charlie, has her hands full trying to balance the demands of the job with maintaining her marriage and getting enough sleep.

Needless to say, there are a plethora of suspects to be located, interviewed, and considered. I didn't figure out the villain or the motive before Charlie did. You may do better. But Connie Shelton is an author to match wits with. Her series has gotten better and better and is worth starting at any point.

Remember the rules I set for myself? The final one is the reason that I write these screeds: To introduce chapter members to authors they may have heard about, but not tried. Start the series earlier than this book, so you can follow Charlie's romance with and marriage to her helicopter pilot husband, Dan. Again, not coincidentally, Connie is married to a helicopter pilot and flies also. Imitate me and introduce yourself to Charlie Parker—and Connie Shelton.

## March Case File Number Two

*The Closers* by Michael Connelly, Warner Books, paperback, 447 pages, \$7.99

Reading and writing for these reviews has enabled me to finally read many of the "classics" of our favorite genre. I've never met MWA Grand Master Michael Connelly, but I may get to. He's the editor of the MWA *Burden of the Badge* anthology (to be published next year) to which I submitted a short story.

Connelly is justifiably famous (and has received many awards) for his Harry Bosch LAPD novels, but he has done a smattering of stand-alones. The Bosch novels are police procedurals. But whereas novels like Ed McBain's 87th Precinct series, Michael McGarrity's Kevin Kerney books, and shows like *Law and Order* and *Hill Street Blues* feature team approaches to solving mysteries, Bosch is a throwback to the loner cop on a mission.

I started with *The Concrete Blond* (#3) in our book exchange box and got hooked. I have since read *The Last Coyote* (#4) and *The Closers* (#11), the latter of which I'll review, since it was published just last year. I'll be reading all the Bosch novels and you should do so, too. Preferably in order, so you can follow the character's ups and downs, his relations as he changes partners and romantic interests, and his bouts with his *bete noir* in the department. I picture Bosch as looking like Briscoe or Munch of *Law and Order*.

Harry has been shot, has been suspended, and was eventually retired a couple of novels ago. After working a case or two privately, Connelly put him back on the force in this novel, working as a "closer" with the department's Open-Unsolved unit on cold cases. This is not his first foray into such difficult investigations. In *The Last Coyote*, while under suspension, he investigated the 30-year-old case of his mother's murder, à la *The Black Dahlia*.

Bosch and his partner draw a 16-year-old case of the murder of a teenage girl made to look  
(cont'd. on next page)

*(Rob's Random Shots, cont'd.)*

like suicide. Connelly draws unrelenting portraits of the effects of the murder of an only child on parents and friends years after the event. All the supporting characters are realistically drawn and fully fleshed out. With witnesses and even the first investigators dead, moved away, impossible to locate, or uncooperative, the deck is stacked against Harry.

The case gathers speed and threatens to reopen old wounds within the department. Can Harry solve the case? Will it jeopardize his return to the force and the status of the new chief who reinstated him?

The final twists and turns are logical and satisfying, like the final hundred pages of *The Concrete Blond*, but unlike the unrealistic final twists of *The Poet*, a stand-alone.

Even if your tastes in mysteries usually center on Janet Evanovich or talking cats, you owe it to yourself to investigate Harry Bosch. Maybe we'll bump into each other while I'm buying copies of *The Black Echo* and *The Black Ice* (Bosch #1 and Bosch #2). ✓

—Rob Kresge

## Scene of the Crime

**Murder in the Grove** will be held June 2–3, 2006, at Boise Centre on the Grove in Boise, Idaho. Sara Paretsky will be the guest of honor, and Anne Perry will attend as a special guest. Carolyn Wheat will present a full-day preconference workshop on June 2 based on her book, *How to Writer Killer Fiction*. Many other authors and professionals will be presenting workshops and panels. More information is available at [www.murderinthegrove.com](http://www.murderinthegrove.com). ✓

### DON'T FORGET:

Tuesday, April 26, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, May 23, 7:00 p.m.  
Saturday, June 24, 1:00 p.m.



## BOOKMARKS

Have you seen them? Bright yellow, with blood-red markings? Do you have one? Do you have a handful?

The new 2006 *Croak & Dagger* bookmarks are a great way to spread the word about our Sisters in Crime chapter. Hand plenty out, but keep one for yourself: they list all our meeting dates and times for 2006.

## Crime and Justice

At the annual meeting for the American Academy of Forensic Sciences, held in February, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) distributed several publications that are excellent references for mystery, crime, and cop writers, including:

- *Death Investigation: A Guide for the Scene Investigator*
- *Eyewitness Evidence: A Guide for Law Enforcement*
- *A Guide for Explosion and Bombing Scene Investigation*
- *Crime Scene Investigation*
- *Fire and Arson Scene Evidence*
- *Principles of Forensic DNA for Officers of the Court* (CD-ROM) [This just released at the meeting]

The NIJ's entire output is listed, and may be ordered, at its Web site: [www.ncjrs.gov](http://www.ncjrs.gov) (National Criminal Justice Reference Service). You can search by the titles above, or just browse. The best thing is that all this stuff is government/public domain, so the price is right—(generally) FREE! ✓

—Ira J. Rimson

## New Mystery Magazine

Wildside Press has announced that it will soon be publishing the *Sherlock Holmes Mystery Magazine*. Each issue will have a new Sherlock Holmes adventure and new mystery fiction. For Croak and Dagger members who would like to break into the genre—while still writing your first novel, finding your agent, and hoping for a contract—this could be a good venue. Interested writers should check out [wildsidepress.com](http://wildsidepress.com) to find out more. ✓



## And the Nominees Are .....

Mystery Writers of America (MWA) is proud to announce its nominees for the 2006 Edgar Allan Poe Awards, honoring the best in mystery fiction, nonfiction, television, and film published or produced in 2005. The Edgar Awards will be presented to the winners at MWA's 60th Gala Banquet, April 27, 2006, at the Grand Hyatt Hotel in New York City.

### Best Novel

*The Lincoln Lawyer* by Michael Connelly (Little, Brown)  
*Red Leaves* by Thomas H. Cook (Harcourt)  
*Vanish* by Tess Gerritsen (Ballantine Books)  
*Drama City* by George Pelecanos (Little, Brown)  
*Citizen Vince* by Jess Walter (Regan Books)

### Best First Novel by an American Author

*Die a Little* by Megan Abbott (Simon & Schuster)  
*Immoral* by Brian Freeman (St. Martin's Minotaur)  
*Run the Risk* by Scott Frost (G.P. Putnam's Sons)  
*Hide Your Eyes* by Alison Gaylin (Signet)  
*Officer Down* by Theresa Schwegel (St. Martin's Minotaur)

### Best Paperback Original

*Homicide My Own* by Anne Argula (Pleasure Boat Studio)  
*The James Deans* by Reed Farrel Coleman (Penguin-Plume)  
*Girl in the Glass* by Jeffrey Ford (Dark Alley)  
*Kiss Her Goodbye* by Allan Guthrie (Hard Case Crime)  
*Six Bad Things* by Charlie Huston (Ballantine Books)

### Best Fact Crime

*Rescue Artist: A True Story of Art, Thieves, and the Hunt for a Missing Masterpiece* by Edward Dolnick (HarperCollins)  
*The Elements of Murder: The History of Poison* by John Emsley (Oxford University Press)  
*Written in Blood* by Diane Fanning (St. Martin's True Crime)  
*True Story: Murder, Memoir, Mea Culpa* by Michael Finkel (HarperCollins)  
*Desire Street: A True Story of Death and Deliverance in New Orleans* by Jed Horne (Farrar, Straus & Giroux)

### Best Critical/Biographical

*Writing and Selling Your Mystery Novel: How to Knock 'em Dead with Style* by Hallie Ephron (Writer's Digest Books)  
*Behind the Mystery: Top Mystery Writers Interviewed* by Stuart Kaminsky, photos by Laurie Roberts (Hot House Press)  
*The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes: The Novels* edited by Leslie S. Klinger (W.W. Norton)  
*Discovering the Maltese Falcon and Sam Spade: The Evolution of Dashiell Hammett's Masterpiece, Including John Huston's Movie with Humphrey Bogart* edited by Richard Layman (Vince Emery Productions)  
*Girl Sleuth: Nancy Drew and the Women Who Created Her* by Melanie Rehak (Harcourt)

### Best Short Story

"Born Bad" by Jeffery Deaver, *Dangerous Women* (Mysterious Press)  
"The Catch" by James W. Hall, *Greatest Hits* (Carroll & Graf)  
"Her Lord and Master" by Andrew Klavan, *Dangerous Women* (Mysterious Press)  
"Misdirection" by Barbara Seranella, *Greatest Hits* (Carroll & Graf)  
"Welcome to Monroe" by Daniel Wallace, *A Kudzu Christmas* (River City Publishing)

### Best Juvenile

*Shakespeare's Secret* by Elise Broach (Henry Holt Books for Young Readers)  
*Wright & Wong: The Case of the Nana-Napper* by Laura J. Burns and Melinda Metz (Penguin Young Readers—Sleuth/Razorbill)  
*The Missing Manatee* by Cynthia DeFelice (Farrar, Straus & Giroux Books for Young Readers)  
*Flush* by Carl Hiassen (Knopf Books for Young Readers)  
*The Boys of San Joaquin* by D. James Smith (Simon & Schuster Children's Books)

### **Best Young Adult**

*Down the Rabbit Hole* by Peter Abrahams  
(HarperCollins—Laura Geringer Books)  
*Last Shot* by John Feinstein (Knopf Books for  
Young Readers)  
*Quid Pro Quo* by Vicki Grant (Orca Book  
Publishers)  
*Young Bond, Book One: Silverfin* by Charlie Higson  
(Hyperion/Miramax Books)  
*Spy Goddess, Book One: Live & Let Shop* by  
Michael Spradlin (HarperCollins Children’s  
Books)

### **Best Play**

*River’s End* by Cheryl Coons (book and lyrics),  
Chuck Larkin (music) (Marin Theatre Company)  
*Safe House* by Paul Leeper (Tennessee Stage  
Company)  
*Matter of Intent* by Gary Earl Ross (Theater Loft)  
*Mating Dance of the Werewolf* by Mark Stein  
(Rubicon Theatre)

### **Best Television Episode Teleplay**

*CSI*—“A Bullet Runs through It, Parts 1 and 2” by  
Richard Catalani & Carol Mendelsohn  
*CSI*—“Grave Danger” by Anthony Zuiker, Carol  
Mendelsohn, Naren Shankar; story by Quentin  
Tarantino  
*Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*—“911” by  
Patrick Harbinson  
*Sea of Souls*—“Amulet” by Ed Whitmore  
*Wire in the Blood*—“Redemption” by Guy Burt

### **Best Motion Picture Screenplay**

*Crash*—story by Paul Haggis; screenplay by Paul  
Haggis and Bobby Moresco (Lions Gate Films)  
*A History of Violence*—screenplay by Josh Olson,  
based on the graphic novel by John Wagner &  
Vince Locke (New Line Productions)  
*The Ice Harvest*—screenplay by Richard Russo &  
Robert Benton, based on the novel by Scott  
Phillips (Focus Features)  
*Match Point*—screenplay by Woody Allen (BBC)  
*Syriana*—screenplay by Stephen Gaghan, based on  
the book by Robert Baer (Warner Brothers)

### **Robert L. Fish Memorial Award**

Eddie Newton, “*Home*”—EQMM May 2005 (*Dell*  
magazine)

### **Grand Master**

Stuart Kaminsky

### **Ellery Queen Award**

Brian Skupin and Kate Stine, Copublishers of  
*MysteryScene* magazine

### **Raven Awards**

Black Orchid Bookshop (Bonnie Claeson & Joe  
Guglielmelli, owners)  
Men of Mystery Conference (Joan Hansen, creator)

### **The Simon & Schuster–Mary Higgins Clark Award**

*Breaking Faith* by Jo Bannister (Allison & Busby  
Ltd.)  
*Dark Angel* by Karen Harper (MIRA Books)  
*Shadow Valley* by Gwen Hunter (MIRA Books)



## **Web Site Technical Issues**

We are still waiting for our new Web host to resolve domain name problems with the domain holder that our previous host employed. Therefore, we urge you to have people visit our temporary digs at [www.croakanddagger.homestead.com](http://www.croakanddagger.homestead.com).

## †**Nooseletter Submissions**†

*Croak & Dagger* members are encouraged to contribute articles, reviews, and essays on various aspects of mystery writing *and* reading for publication consideration. Information on relevant conferences or events is also welcome. Articles should average five hundred words or less.

Publication is every other month, starting in January. Submission deadlines are the 15th of the month prior to publication: February 15, April 15, June 15, August 15, October 15, and December 15.

Please submit via email to [shirleycoe@comcast.net](mailto:shirleycoe@comcast.net), with “Nooseletter” in the subject line.

The *Nooseletter* will be distributed to members electronically.

—*Shirley Coe*

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## Summary of Findings

The *Nooseletter* is the official internal organ of the *Croak & Dagger* chapter, Albuquerque, of Sisters in Crime (SinC), in association with the SinC national organization. Opinions expressed herein are those of the authors and editors.

## 2006 MEETING DATES

Tuesday, January 24, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, February 28, 7:00 p.m.  
Saturday, March 25, 1:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, April 25, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, May 23, 7:00 p.m.  
Saturday, June 24, 1:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, July 25, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, August 22, 7:00 p.m.  
Saturday, September 23, 1:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, October 24, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, November 28, 7:00 p.m.  
Saturday, December 16, 1:00 p.m.

**Free to the public in the briefing room of the James Joseph Dwyer Memorial Police Substation, 12700 Montgomery Blvd. NE, one block east of Tramway.**

**For more information, call Rob Kresge, program chair, at 797-1874.**



## STILL NOT A MEMBER OF SISTERS IN CRIME?

\$20/year brings mystery to your life! The Albuquerque *Croak & Dagger* chapter welcomes mystery fans who want to enjoy felonious fun, absolutely criminal companionship, and sensational speakers.

Benefits of membership in the *Croak & Dagger* chapter include a subscription to our *Nooseletter*, close contact with local mystery writers, and fun events with other mystery fans.

You do NOT have to be a member of the national organization to join us. Come hear our next program speaker and meet the gang. We promise to bring mayhem and murder into your life. **Contact Stephanie Hainsfurther, membership chair, at 505-298-2155 or [words13@osogrande.com](mailto:words13@osogrande.com).**