



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



# THE NOOSE LETTER

Volume III, Number 4—July 2007

## †Expert Testimony†

### From the Prez

Every time July rolls around I get that red, white, and blue feeling. When the red rockets do flare, I'm reminded of the greatness of our country and the nobleness of our values. There's no other place on earth like our America.

Like the fifty states that form our nation, there are hundreds of chapters like Croak and Dagger that form the national Sisters in Crime organization. The national group is where the true mission of Sisters in Crime is promoted for the benefit of their smaller, sister chapters.

At Croak and Dagger, we rarely discuss the mission of Sisters in Crime. But did you know that in the April 9, 2007, issue of *Publisher's Weekly* Erica Jong wrote an impassioned article about what she sees as a general lack of respect for women authors? In her article she wonders why topics about war and violence receive more attention than books that delve into emotions and relationships. She worries about young women writers who will feel that they have to conform to a male style of writing in order to become successful. Jong strongly advocates change.

For the past twenty years, Sisters in Crime has done a great deal to level the playing field for reviews given to books written by women. But statistics show that women still lag behind in the media attention they receive. To address this, the national group is continually engineering events and projects designed to draw attention to women writers. The Sisters in Crime newsletter explains these in detail and offers opportunities for members to participate.

For mystery writers, the season appears good for women. Female crime and mystery writers are consistently performing well, and many attribute their success in part to Sisters in Crime, which

helped them attain their goals. In fact, all five winners of the 2007 Agatha Awards were women authors who are also members of Sisters in Crime. (See the list on page 9.)

If you're feeling patriotic, consider joining the national Sisters in Crime organization. Through their newsletter and Web site you can follow the issues being addressed and be a part of the many successes that members of Sisters in Crime are experiencing. What you learn could empower you and your writing career. Joining is easy. Look online at [www.sistersincrime.org](http://www.sistersincrime.org) or pick up an application at the next Croak and Dagger meeting.

Happy writing and reading to all. ✓

—Lucinda Schroeder

## Don't Miss It!

Tuesday, July 24, 7:00 p.m.

**Mary Kay McCulloch**, our July speaker, has been an Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of New Mexico for 23 years. She prosecutes all violations of federal law in New Mexico, including bank robberies, tax fraud, murder, rape, illegal immigration, and embezzlement. She especially enjoys prosecuting cases involving wildlife and cultural heritage crime. She works with a variety of federal agencies, including the FBI, the IRS, ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement), the Secret Service, BLM, BIA, the U.S. Park Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Ms. McCulloch will talk about her most interesting cases emphasizing the unusual obstacles she sometimes has had to overcome to ensure that justice was served.

# Croak & Dagger Lineup

## Officers

President: Lucinda Schroeder  
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Vice President: Cheryl Wadleigh  
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Hospitality: Lucinda Schroeder  
Web Site Coordinator: Sarah Schwartz  
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## SinC Receives Dove Award

On April 5, 2007, the Detective and Mystery Caucus of the Popular Culture Association and American Culture Association presented a special Dove Award to Sisters in Crime to honor our organization's extensive activities in support of women crime writers. A crowd including founding mothers Sara Paretsky and Kate Mattes packed Kate's Mystery Books in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to watch the ceremony. (The plaque was accepted by VP Roberta Isleib.)✓

## 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!

Email croakdagger@yahoo.com for further instructions.

# Croak and Dagger

## Coming Events

Tuesday, August 28, 2007, 7:00 p.m.:

### Dr. Michelle Barry, OMI pathologist

Associate Medical Investigator, New Mexico  
Office of the Medical Investigator

Late August or early September 2007 (date TBA):

### Murder mystery dinner party

Quarters Restaurant, Wyoming and Montgomery  
(\$5 subsidized by Croak & Dagger).

Be sure to sign up at the meeting on July 24.

Tuesday, September 25, 2007, 7:00 p.m.:

### Lisa Polisar, Sisters in Crime mystery author

(*The Ghost of Mary Prairie*, *Blackwater Tango*,  
*Knee Deep*, *Straight Ahead*)

October 2007 (date TBA):

### Ghost tour in Old Town field trip

(\$5 subsidized by Croak & Dagger)

February 2008: **Mystery conference!**

Croak & Dagger and Southwest Writers are teaming up to host a mystery readers and writers conference.

## Croak & Dagger Members' Mystery Novel to Be Published This Summer: *Bloodsport at Hiram Bog*

Page Erwin's mystery novel, *Bloodsport at Hiram Bog*, the first in their series set in the mythical town of Venice, Maine, will be released in late summer 2007. Coauthors Carolyn Page and Ross Erwin are grateful to Hilliard & Harris for publishing what others rejected as "too literary."

When an elderly fisherman hooks the body of gay philanthropist Lester Moulton from beneath the ice on Hiram Bog, the peaceful facade of Venice, Maine, is peeled away. It's up to Sam Barrows, newly elected sheriff of Thoreau County, to untangle the mess. Sam feels torn between Detective Belle Whittaker and his wife, the young and beautiful Darla. Themes of love, longing, and xenophobia emerge as the residents of Venice, a waning town of 800 souls, struggle to find their place in the twenty-first century.✓

## Nancy Drew—



## The Original Movies

While shopping at Sam's Club, the impulse to purchase a Nancy Drew DVD could not be withstood. Together with my in-house Nancy Drew expert, my wife Nanette, I watched the four Nancy Drew films that starred Bonita Grandville as the teenage detective. As mysteries, the movies left a lot to be desired as viewed from a twenty-first century point of view. However, they offer a great insight into the times in which they were made.

When the first of the films was made in 1938, fifteen books had been published in the popular series. George and Bess, Nancy's literary sidekicks, were replaced by Ted Nickerson, who was loosely based on the character Ned Nickerson that was introduced in book seven. The books and the movies had little in common according to Expert Nanette and my Internet sources.

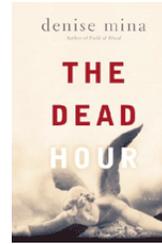
The movies depict the heroine as being headstrong, prone to breaking the law to get her way, manipulative of people, unable to plan a course of action, dependent on luck, and spoiled to a fault. The films lack suspense. The police are depicted in a keystone-cops style, being used as comic relief. In the four films, only three instances occurred where Nancy used deductive reasoning to help solve the crime, leaving most of that work to the ingenuity of reluctant boyfriend Ted. She fainted at the end of two of the films.

What I did like about these four films was that they are microcosms of the late nineteen thirties, a time that I would say very few of us have experienced firsthand. Nancy dressed impeccably in the style of the time, wearing hats, dresses, and gloves. Women were shown either as working-class servants or upper-class women of leisure with little of substance to occupy their time. The only person of color that I can recall seeing was depicted as a superstitious, bumbling fool who had to be given direction by the lady of the manor. In comparison, society has progressed in a positive direction during the intervening seven decades.

Overall, I enjoyed the films for their entertainment value and for portraying the historical period that they represented. Since there were four films made, I can only conclude that they conveyed the same feeling as were intended with the books—

giving their teenage audience the thrill of feeling “grown up.” If you have the opportunity to see them, you will enjoy the original Nancy Drew movies. ✓

—Reviewed by F. A. Aiken



## Come Over to the Dark Side

My favorite author of dark places is Denise Mina. A native Glaswegian, Mina is able to convince her readers that Glasgow, Scotland, is the perfect dark city for stories of fear, greed, and murder.

Mina's latest book, *The Dead Hour*, is the second in a series featuring Paddy Meehan, a female nighttime reporter. *The Dead Hour* is more thriller than mystery and is no fast-paced read. One has time to absorb the disappointment as well as the ambition, the ennui as well as the danger in Paddy's world.

One night Paddy goes to a police call at a home where a domestic dispute is in progress. Paddy sees the woman who is the object of the attack through the front door, but the woman apparently does not want help. The man at the door slips Paddy a £50 note. The next morning the woman is found dead. The bribe Paddy has accepted complicates her pursuit of the story and her investigation of the police who must have colluded in the woman's murder.

*The Dead Hour* was a nominee for the Mystery Writers of America 2007 Edgar Award.

You can read the first chapter of *The Dead Hour* and also of *Field of Blood*, the first in the Paddy Meehan series, on Mina's Web site, [www.denisemina.co.uk](http://www.denisemina.co.uk). ✓

—Sarah Schwartz



Sisters in Crime was founded in 1986. *The purpose of Sisters in Crime shall be* “to combat discrimination against women in they 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.”



## Croak & Dagger Nominations Committee (aka The “Gotcha!” Gang)

Croak & Dagger elections for new board members will be held at the November meeting. Which means we need to start sneaking up on people, catching them unawares, and convincing them to be part of the new board. If you’d like to put on your dastardly deeds cap and join the Nominations Committee, please contact any of the current board members (see the e-mail addresses on page 2 of this *Nooseletter* or tap one of us on the shoulder at a program meeting).✓

## The Writer’s Block



*News and views for chapter members who are struggling to become authors. Contributions are welcomed here.*

“There are three rules to writing fiction. Unfortunately, no one knows what they are.”  
—Somerset Maugham

“Rules? Ain’t no rules in a knife fight.”  
—Harvey Logan to Butch Cassidy in *Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid*

From time to time, authors have endeavored to come up with lists of rules to follow in writing fiction, or more particularly for us, writing mysteries. I came up with the following rules/steps (call them what you will) with the CIA writers group I founded. The 180 members had greatly varying interests, from cookbooks to spy novels, from travelogues to humorous calendars, from plays and poems to Civil War nonfiction.

**1. Start writing early.** I waited until my late 50s. Don’t you wait that long. Start now. If you find you like it and/or are good at it, you’ll be glad you didn’t wait. If you don’t like it, you get to find that out, and if writing comes hard to you, then you’ll have plenty of time to take classes or read how-to books.

**2. Develop regular writing habits consistent with your career and family situation.** I wrote the first draft of my first mystery novel manuscript in four months, writing four evenings each week, two hours at a time. My son had started his first job and my daughter was in college. Your best time of day and length of each sitting will depend on your job,

your spouse, and your kids. Some writers set goals of a chapter or a scene at each sitting or a number of pages or words.

**3. Introduce yourself as a writer.** And you are, from the time you type that cover page for your manuscript and start your prologue or chapter 1. We’re not authors until we’re published, but every author is also a writer. You never know who you’ll meet that may offer you some help. I never expected Dick Francis to ask my name so he could find my books. And because I recently mentioned my next project to Albuquerque author Richard Peck, he set me up with a location scout so I could spend most of a day on the Algodones set of the ABC Family Channel series *Wildfire*, where I watched takes, visited various additional sets, and learned a lot from a director, cameramen, caterers, and the location manager.

Those are some points that may help fledgling writers as they test their wings. Consider the following additional steps that may help you get your manuscript published.

**4. Finish your manuscript.** Don’t rewrite as you go, agonizing and re-revising that first chapter 16 times. Write it right straight through. You can revise it later, but if you don’t finish it, you’ll never have a completed manuscript to work on. And when you do finish the first draft, celebrate that moment. Have family and friends in to watch you type “The End” and share some champagne. No matter how many manuscripts you finish (I’m on my fifth), you’ll only finish the first draft of your first manuscript once.

**5. Learn good revision skills and apply them.** In various *Nooseletter*’s I’ve recommended books on revision by Hallie Ephron and Chris Roerdon. Besides books, critique groups can help, as can outside readers whose opinions you value. Do not use fee-charging editors unless feedback from more than one critiquer leads you to suspect that may be necessary.

**6. Persist in seeking agents and publishers.** It has been said that, often as not, publication comes as much to the persistent writers as to the talented ones. Do not be discouraged by a few rejections. There are always more agents to try and publishers to approach. Go to mystery writers and readers conferences. Learn how to pitch your book and approach industry professionals. Many (most?) writers are introverts, and it’s hard for us to come out of our shells and try to promote our work, but like any other skill, we can learn to do it.✓

—Rob Kresge, [rkresge777@comcast.net](mailto:rkresge777@comcast.net)

## DON'T FORGET:

Tuesday, July 24, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, August 28, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, September 25, 7:00 p.m.



## Book Review

*Track of the Cat* by Nevada Barr

This is the first in Nevada Barr's series featuring Anna Pigeon, a park ranger with the National Park Service. In *Track of the Cat*, Anna is stationed at the Guadalupe Mountains National Park in far West Texas (just southwest of New Mexico's Carlsbad Caverns). The location is an integral part of the mystery, and Barr's descriptions give the reader a vivid sense of both the desolation and the beauty of the area.

The story opens with Anna's grim discovery of the ravaged body of another ranger, Sheila Drury. It appears that Sheila was killed by a mountain lion, but Anna sees discrepancies at the scene that her superiors wave away. The lion is conveniently blamed and "dispatched" (official euphemism for "killed"). To Anna's mind, the "dispatch" was nothing more than an execution.

Anna continues to dig deeper into the mystery of both the life and death of Sheila Drury. Sheila's desire to open the campground to RVs had been a sore point with one fanatic ranger. But was this enough to provoke him to murder?

Then Anna discovers some disturbing photos among Sheila's belongings that lead her to wonder if Sheila was a blackmailer. If so, how many people might she have targeted?

Like any good mystery, *Track of the Cat* has several avenues for Anna to explore—and several twists along the way—before all the clues are unraveled.

Barr's characters are as well drawn as the scenery, making for a fascinating read. Paradoxically, while I was curious to see how it would all play out, I enjoyed the journey enough that I wasn't in a hurry to see it end.

In each subsequent mystery in this series, Barr wisely moves Anna to a different national park, giving her an opportunity to interact with a whole new set of people and places. I look forward to reading more of Anna Pigeon. ✓

—Margaret Tessler

## ROB'S RANDOM SHOTS

### July Case File Number One

*Kindness Goes Unpunished* by Craig Johnson, Viking, New York, 2007, HB, 288 pp.

Here's yet another author I admire whose work I'm reviewing more than once. Craig's Sheriff Walt Longmire series has really taken off. He's doing a book a year (*Another Man's Moccasins* debuts in early 2008) and as fast as a new one is published, the previous titles come out as trade paperbacks. This series doesn't absolutely have to be read in order, but I recommend reading his first, *The Cold Dish*, before the second or third, since there are spoilers in those books concerning the ending of number one.

Anyway, in *Kindness*, Craig moves the series from Absaroka County (the lowest-crime level county in the lowest-crime level state) to crime-ridden Philadelphia. Walt and best friend Henry Standing Bear are conveying valuable photos to an exhibit there, and Walt plans to spend some time with his daughter, Cady, a hot-shot young lawyer. But the City of Brotherly Love turns out to be anything but. Cady is mugged before they can meet and spends the rest of the book in an ICU. Walt steps over jurisdictional lines to interview suspects in his usual forthright manner. And in short order, more bodies begin to pile up.

But fret not, fans of this series. We get a generous (and hilarious) dose of our favorite characters in the first chapter—dispatcher Ruby, foul-mouthed former Philly cop Victoria Moretti, rich man Omar Rhoades, and his estranged (and dangerous) wife, Myra—before Walt and Henry can leave town for their road trip. Besides the murderous developments in Philadelphia, romantic entanglements threaten Walt as well, in the person of Vic's tempting mother. And another smoldering romance takes the next step.

If you aren't convinced you need to read this series, here's an excerpt from page one:

*I didn't wear my gun. They had said it was going to be easy and, like the fool I am, I believed them. They said that if things got rough to make sure I showed the pictures, of which there were only twenty-three; I had already shown all of them twice. "Long, long ago, there lived a king and queen . . ."*

*I looked around the room for a little backup, but there wasn't anyone there. They had said that I didn't have to worry, that they wouldn't leave me alone, but they had.*

(cont'd. on next page)

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

“. . . who didn't have any children. One day, the queen was visited by a wise fairy, who told her, 'You will have a lovely baby girl.' The king was so overjoyed when he heard the news that he immediately made plans for a great feast. He invited not only his relatives, but also the twelve fairies who lived in the kingdom."

"Where's your gun?"

My thoughts exactly. "I didn't think I was going to need it." They all nodded, but I wasn't particularly sure they agreed.

"How long have you been a sheriff?"

"Twenty-three years." It just seemed like a million.

"Do you know Buffalo Bill?"

Maybe it was a million. "No, he was a little before my time."

"My daddy says you're a butt hole."

Get the picture? He's reading to a class of five-year-olds. This is just page one. Check out Craig Johnson's excellent first-person mysteries as soon as you can.

**July Case File Number Two**

*A Fly Has a Hundred Eyes*; and *The Torch of Tangier* by Aileen G. Baron, Academy Chicago Publishers, 2002, HB, 277 pp.; and *Poisoned Pen* Press, 2006, HB, 194 pp.

Yes, in this review, you're getting a "two-fer." I met Aileen Baron in February when she chaired our panel on "Settings" at Left Coast Crime in Seattle. I learned from Pari how important it is to read works by fellow panelists, so I got the hard-to-find *Fly* and found *Torch* at the conference. Since they're both historical mysteries starring archeologist Lily Sampson, I thought I'd tell you about both books in one review.

*Fly* is set during the turmoil of Palestine in 1938, overrun with archeologists, terrorists of all stripes, British officials losing their grip on the League of Nations mandate, gun runners, and Nazi spies and agents of influence. Graduate student Lily Sampson works on a dig directed by British archeologist Geoffrey Eastbourne. Lily witnesses daily acts of mob or terrorist violence. When an important member of the dig expedition is murdered, a vital artifact goes missing, and the authorities seem impotent, she investigates on her own.

Astute readers will recognize a character drawn on Agatha Christie herself, who, married to

archeologist Max Mallowan, is said to have been inspired to write mysteries by a murder in Palestine in the 1930s. Here, artfully embroidered upon, is that event.

###

*Torch* opens in Tangier at the end of October 1942, just before the Allied invasion of North Africa, Operation Torch, which began to push back German gains in the Middle East. Fans of the movie *Casablanca* will feel right at home in this book's setting. Franco's Guardia Civil controls Morocco, which is overrun with American agents, Nazi spies, refugees of all races and nationalities, and the Moroccans themselves, simmering with the insults of colonialism.

In the midst of all this, Lily is digging up Neanderthal artifacts in the well-known "Cave of Hercules" under the direction of the enigmatic Dr. Drury of the University of Chicago. But she also finds herself involved with intrigue as the Allies prepare to invade and wrest Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia from German control in order to thrust into the underbelly of Axis Europe.

Things change when Drury is murdered. Does his death have to do with the dig, or does it involve the secret landings Eisenhower has scheduled only two weeks hence? Suspects abound, and Lily finds she cannot trust those around her. This time, there's no Agatha Christie to turn to.

If you enjoy archeology mixed with historical mysteries, this is the series for you. Since I once contemplated (long before Indiana Jones) becoming an archeologist myself, this is definitely one of mine. ✓

—Rob Kresge, rkresge777@comcast.net

**Classified Information**

**Are You Looking for a Critique Group?**

Why not advertise for like-minded writers in the *Nooseletter*? Just email your announcement to shirleycoe@comcast.net. Or if you prefer, bring up your suggestion at the next program meeting.

## Annual Tony Hillerman Conference: "Focus on Mystery"

The fourth annual Hillerman Conference will be held here in Albuquerque in November. Although the cost is high, almost all meals are included and the list of guest speakers, including our own Pari Noskin Taichert, is impressive. Since you would have no transportation or lodging cost, consider whether you might want to attend. Here are the vitals on the conference:

- Date: November 1–4, 2007 (including a workshop on November 1)
- Place: Hyatt Regency Hotel downtown
- Cost: \$425 (includes the opening reception, all sessions and signings, breakfast and lunch Friday and Saturday, the reception and banquet on Saturday evening, and Sunday breakfast; does not include the November 1 workshop)
- Web site: [www.hillermanconference.com](http://www.hillermanconference.com)

Attending/speaking authors include:

- Joe Badal of Santa Fe
- Steve Brewer, formerly of Albuquerque, now in Redding, CA; the Bubba Mabry series
- Margaret Coel of Boulder, CO; the Wind River Reservation series
- Steve Havill of Raton, NM; the Sheriff Bill Gastner series
- Tony Hillerman of Albuquerque; the Leaphorn/Chee mysteries
- David Morrell of Santa Fe; the Rambo series and many thrillers
- Shirley Raye Redmond of Los Alamos; noted children's and young adult mystery author (and Croak & Dagger speaker)
- Lucinda Schroeder; author of *A Hunt for Justice* (and Sisters in Crime Croak & Dagger president)
- Pari Noskin Taichert of Albuquerque; the Sasha Solomon mysteries (and Croak & Dagger's first chapter president)
- Judith Van Gieson; the Claire Reynier series (and Croak & Dagger speaker)✓



## Left Coast Crime Convention 2008: "Murder on the Rocks"

### Bulletin 1.

This is the first of several bulletins to provide details about the 2008 Left Coast Crime (LCC) mystery readers and writers convention. These bulletins will also tell why you should consider attending and how you can save money when doing so. Cut this section out and stick it on your refrigerator as a reminder.

- Date: March 6–9, 2008
- Place: Adams' Mark Hotel in downtown Denver
- Costs: Full registration is \$165, including the Saturday night banquet in honor of Alfred E. Packer (the first person to identify why this meal is in his honor, see Rob for a prize); "lite" registration (minus the banquet) is only \$115
- Hotel: \$139 a night (single and double occupancy); \$149 (triple and quad)
- Web site: [www.leftcoastcrime.org/2008/participants.htm](http://www.leftcoastcrime.org/2008/participants.htm) (Check back for updates on guests of honor and attending authors.)

How you can attend and save money:

- Obviously, skipping the banquet could save \$50, but you might get to sit with a favorite author or other chapter members at a table if you go.
- You could share a room with chapter members from Albuquerque.
- You could stay free with friends or relatives in the Denver area.
- You can carpool for a few dollars' gas money with other chapter members and Albuquerque attendees. I will be driving a seven-passenger minivan.

You won't be able to attend a mystery conference this close for this price for quite a few years. In fact, the 2009 LCC convention, "Say Aloha to Murder," will be held March 7–12 at the Waikoloa Beach Marriott Resort on the Big Island, Hawaii. Registration will be \$175 until the end of September, \$200 until March 8 (the end of LCC 2008 in Denver), and \$225 thereafter. I imagine the rooms will be more expensive there, as will the airfare. Want to go to that one? No carpooling, but check out [www.leftcoastcrime.org/2009](http://www.leftcoastcrime.org/2009).✓

—Rob Kresge, [rkresge777@comcast.net](mailto:rkresge777@comcast.net)



# Rob's Top 10 Mystery Lists—Three More

These are subjective lists from one reader's perspective. Write to the editor or to the author to dispute these or suggest writers or works that you feel were overlooked.

**Classic Mystery Writers** (and some works or series, with apologies to Edgar Allen Poe, by authors who only wrote short stories and poems). Pre-World War II. In no particular order.

- Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (Sherlock Holmes stories and four Holmes novels)
- Agatha Christie (Hercule Poirot, Miss Jane Marple, Tommy and Tuppence Beresford)
- Dorothy L. Sayers (Lord Peter Wimsey; the *London Times* opined that if a reader were to be marooned on a desert island for a year with only 36 inches of books and the mystery genre could only be represented by one title, it should be *The Nine Tailors*)
- Ngaio Marsh (Inspector Roderick Alleyn/Agatha Troy novels)
- Margery Allingham (Albert Campion novels and two very good PBS series)
- Ellery Queen (a pseudonym for novels about the father and son detectives of that name)
- Leslie Charteris (the "Saint" novels; don't be put off by the movie)
- John Dickson Carr (Dr. Gideon Fell and other novels)
- G. K. Chesterton (Father Brown stories)
- Mary Roberts Rinehart

**Traditional Mystery Writers** (traditional mysteries are also called cozies, in the tradition of Agatha Christie)

- Katherine Hall Page
- Carolyn Hart
- Margaret Maron
- Diane Mott Davidson
- Joan Hess
- Susan Wittig Albert
- Lillian Jackson Braun
- Nancy Pickard
- Carole Nelson Douglas
- Emma Lathen

## Historical Mystery Writers

- Elizabeth Peters (Amelia Peabody Egyptology series—late 19th, early 20th centuries)
- Lindsey Davis (Marcus Didius Falco series—first century AD Rome)
- Ellis Peters (Brother Cadfael series—12th century England)
- Bruce Alexander (Sir John Fielding series—early 19th century London)
- Stephanie Barron (Jane Austen as a sleuth series—early 19th century England)
- Laurie R. King (Mary Russell/Sherlock Holmes series—early 20th century)
- Peter Lovesey (Sergeant Cribb and Albert, Prince of Wales—both late 19th century)
- Edward Marston (several series set in the Middle Ages and Elizabethan England)
- Anne Perry (Pitt series and Monk series set 40 years apart in 19th century England)
- Jacqueline Winspear (Maisy Dobbs series set in early 20th century England)✓

—Rob Kresge, rkresge777@comcast.net



EFFICIENCY OF FEMALE POLICE IN WHAT IS VULGARLY CALLED A "JOLLY ROW."

## Classified Information

**Would You Like to Be in a Book Reading Club?**  
On a regular basis that doesn't conflict with monthly Sisters in Crime program meetings? Just announce it at the next program meeting or advertise for like-minded readers in the *Nooseletter* by e-mailing your suggestion to shirleycoe@comcast.net.



## The Nominees and Winners Are . . .

The Agatha Awards honor the traditional mystery — books best typified by the works of Agatha Christie. The genre is generally characterized by mysteries that contain no explicit sex, excessive gore, or gratuitous violence. Usually featuring an amateur detective, they have a confined setting and characters who know one another. Novels and stories featuring police officers and private detectives may qualify for the Agatha unless they are of the “hard-boiled” variety. (See [www.malicedomestic.org](http://www.malicedomestic.org).)

The final vote is by secret ballot by registered convention attendees at the Malice Domestic convention.

The Agatha awards presented on May 5, 2007 (\* denotes the winner) were:

### Best First Novel

- \**The Heat of the Moon*, Sandra Parshall (SinC Sister)
- Consigned to Death*, Jane Cleland (SinC Sister)
- The Chef Who Died Sauteing*, Honora Pmkelstein (Sister) and Susan Smily (SinC Sister)
- Feint of Art*, Hailey Lind (SinC Sister)
- Murder on The Rocks*, Karen MacInerney

### Best Novel

- \**The Virgin of Small Plains*, Nancy Pickard (SinC Sister)
- The Saddlemaker’s Wife*, Earlene Fowler (SinC Sister)
- Why Casey Had to Die*, L. C. Hayden (SinC Sister)
- All Mortal Flesh*, Julia Spencer-Fleming (SinC Sister)
- Messenger of Truth*, Jacqueline Winspear (SinC Sister)

### Best Children/Young Adult Fiction

- \**Pea Soup Poisonings*, Nancy Means Wright (SinC Sister)
- Behind the Curtain: An Echo Falls Mystery*, Peter Abrahams
- Room One a Mystery or Two*, Andrew Clements
- Sherlock Holmes and the Baker Street Irregulars: The Fall of the Amazing*
- Zalindas*, Tracy Mack and Michael Citrin

### Best Nonfiction

- \**Don’t Murder Your Mystery*, Chris Roerden (SinC Sister)
- Mystery Muses*, Jim Huang (SinC Sister) and Austin Lugar
- The Beautiful Cigar Girl*, Daniel Stashower

### Best Short Story

- \*“Sleeping with the Plush,” Toni L. P. Kelner (SinC Sister), *Alfred Hitchcock Mystery Magazine* (May 2006)
- “The Old Couple,” Robert. Barnard, *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine* (March/April 2006)
- “Provenance,” Robert Barnard, *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine* (July 2006)
- “Yankee Swap,” Maurissa Guibord, *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine* (March/April 2006)
- “Disturbance in the Field,” Roberta Isleib (SinC Sister), from the Anthology *Seasmoke: Crime Stories* by New England Writers

(SinC Sister) denotes a Sisters in Crime member!✓



SinC guppies come from across the United States and Canada. They have different occupations and avocations, but they share a passion for writing mysteries and a common goal of getting published.

“Few professions offer as many opportunities for rejection as writing does. Only the strong survive the path to publication. The encouragement and support of other writers can be the difference between giving up too soon and getting in print.” (SinC Guppies)

Guppies is an online writer’s support group, Subgroups represent cozies, noir, psychological and romantic suspense, and thrillers. The Mystery Analysis Group is a book discussion group aimed at discussing the craft, and the AgentQuest group can help with writing queries and synopses.

Interested in joining this online writer’s support group? Check them out at [www.sinc-guppies.org/](http://www.sinc-guppies.org/).

## 2007 MEETING DATES

Tuesday, January 23, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, February 27, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, March 27, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, April 17, 7:00 p.m. (*third Tuesday*)  
Tuesday, May 22, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, June 26, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, July 24, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, August 28, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, September 25, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, October 23, 7:00 p.m.  
Tuesday, November 27, 7:00 p.m.  
December TBA

### Meetings are free to the public.

Unless otherwise noted, meetings are held every fourth Tuesday of the month, at 7:00 p.m., at the James Joseph Dwyer Memorial Police Substation, 12700 Montgomery Blvd. NE, one block east of Tramway.

Check our Web site, [www.croak-and-dagger.com](http://www.croak-and-dagger.com), for schedule changes.

## †*Nooseletter* Submissions†

*Croak & Dagger* friends are encouraged to contribute articles, reviews, and essays on aspects of mystery writing *and* reading for publication consideration. Information on relevant conferences or events is also welcome. Especially let us know if you have published a new book or story, or have an upcoming local author event. (Unbridled enthusiasm for your own mystery book is encouraged here.)

**Length:** Articles should average 500 words.

**Deadlines:** 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.

**The Living and the Dead:** As a general policy, articles and information should focus on living authors rather than dead ones, but that's not set in concrete shoes. Articles about specific historical development of the crime-mystery writing genre, for example, would be welcome.

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

The *Nooseletter* is distributed to all members electronically. ✓

—*Shirley Coe*

## Summary of Findings

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



## 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 Sarah Schwartz, membership chair, at [croakdagger@yahoo.com](mailto:croakdagger@yahoo.com).