

PRESS RELEASE
To: Book Review or Features Editor

Contact: Julianne Balmain
Julianneb@mindspring.com
Tel. 510.233.0339
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It's A Mystery: More Reviews for Male Mystery Novelists?

Each year, Sisters in Crime, a 3000-member organization committed to furthering the professional careers of women crime writers, monitors major print media outlets across the country for their coverage of crime fiction, tracking the gender split of the novels reviewed. The gender report on reviews is in for 2008, and, as in previous years, it reveals both areas of parity and notable inequities.

Overall, 63 percent of mystery fiction reviews covered books written by men and 37 percent covered those written by women. This split to a certain extent mirrors a similar gender split among new mystery novels published overall. According to submissions for best novel to the Mystery Writers of America, 59 percent of new 2008 hardcover mysteries were written by men, 41 percent by women.

Of the 47 newspapers and magazines tracked, only six reviewed more books by women than by men. Three of those, *Mystery News*, the *Omaha-World Herald*, and the *Seattle Times & Post Intelligencer*, featured women authors in slightly more than half of their reviews.

The most enthusiastic reviewer of mysteries by women was *Romantic Times* magazine, which devoted 82 percent of its mystery review coverage to books by women.

On the opposite end of the scale were the *Missoulian* and the *Indianapolis Star*; each reviewed 11 mysteries in 2008. In both papers, 91 percent of the reviewed books were written by men.

Three important publications – the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *San Francisco Chronicle* – all published at least 74 percent of their reviews on books by men.

“This is important information for book reviewers, book publishers, bookstores, readers, authors, and librarians,” said Judy Clemens, president of Sisters in Crime. “In a world of shrinking editorial space devoted to book reviews, readers need to know the advice they get on how to spend their discretionary book-buying funds or book-reading time might be skewed in one direction or another.”

About Sisters in Crime

Founded in 1986, SinC now has 3,000 members globally, including authors, readers, publishers, agents, booksellers, and librarians –men and women – dedicated to promoting the professional development and advancement of women crime writers to achieve equity in the industry. For more information, visit www.SistersinCrime.org

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