

# The Purloined Newsletter



A CAPITAL CRIME WRITERS PUBLICATION

## Inside this issue:

From the President Susan Gates	2
Notes from the Editor Katherine Hobbs	3
Forensic Corner: I is for Injection	4
Let's Talk Turkey	6
Hi Ho Hi Ho, it's not to work I go	8
Blog Book Tours—Part 3 Going on Virtual Tour	9
Getting into Character: October Meeting Report	10
The final bits & pieces	12

**Capital Crime Writers is an organization of writers and editors working in the mystery field, as well as readers who love the genre.**

**We meet on the second Wednesday of each month to discuss writing and crime. Meetings are suspended in July and August for the summer.**

**Membership fees are: \$30 per year, \$15 corresponding.**

**Meetings are held in Room 156 at the Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington Street beginning at 7:00 p.m.**

Volume 21, Issue 3 – November 2008



## It's bombs away on November 12, 2008

as **Dr. Wesley Wark** talks  
to the **CCW** about security, intelligence,

Dr. Wesley Wark's field of expertise includes intelligence and security issues, cold war issues, and military conflict. His interests also include the popular culture of espionage, and the study of terrorism and counter-terrorism. He is a frequent commentator on these various issues in the media.

He teaches at the Munk Centre for International Studies at Trinity College, U of T and is also an Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of Toronto's St. George Campus, and a visiting Professor at the University of Ottawa's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs.

Dr. Wark is co-editor of the London-based journal, Intelligence and National Security and editor in chief of the Oxford University Press encyclopedia, The Companion to Modern Espionage. He has served as a consultant to the Privy Council Office of Canada on intelligence policy and is working on a book on Canada and the War on Terror.

If you'd like to bring a guest, they are more than welcome. Guest fees are \$10.00. Looking forward to seeing you on November 12.

Tom Curran  
Program Committee

### **GOING OUT WITH A BANG** **November 13, 2008 Book Launch!**

RendezVous Press and Prime Crime Mystery Bookstore invite you to the launch of...**GOING OUT WITH A BANG** — the latest Crime and Mystery Collection by The Ladies Killing Circle and Friends.

**Details:** 7-9 p.m., Thursday, November 13, 2008  
Library & Archives Canada, Room A

### GOING OUT WITH A **BANG**

A crime and mystery collection by  
The Ladies' Killing Circle



## From the President - Susan Gates: FEAR ITSELF

### The CCW Executive

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We welcome Wesley Wark as our speaker for the November meeting. An academic who specializes in issues of security and intelligence, Mr. Wark has written extensively on these highly contemporary issues. A decade and a half ago he wrote a book illuminating the differences between spy fiction and the realities of espionage. Fans of thrillers, espionage novels and all things clandestine will be hanging on his every word. I know we've been clamouring for a "spy speaker" for years, so kudos again to the program gang — particularly Tom Curran.

However, I expect there will be lessons in Mr. Wark's talk for all who write crime fiction. When I thought about 21<sup>st</sup> century Security and Intelligence, I couldn't help but think of the so-called "War on Terror", or what I call "The War Without End". I'm not certain we are any *safer* than we were on September 8, 2001, but I'm convinced that Western governments and their security and intelligence arms have succeeded in perpetuating fear among their citizenry. This upsets me because I agree with the 1<sup>st</sup> Century A.D. writer, Seneca — "If we let things terrify us, life will not be worth living." (*Epistles*)

Then I had to climb down off my high horse. What are crime fiction writers, but purveyors of fear? Whether you write about serial killers, tales of children in peril or the gentler *things that go bump in the night*, you must be able to generate fear in your reader. You want them to turn the page. You want them to care whether your protagonist might go to jail or has a stalker. You want them to cheer when your heroine saddles up and goes off to battle injustice.

So what is this relationship of humans to fear? While fear is not a physical object, it has physical manifestations; the fight or flight response; the dry mouth; clammy palms; gut-churning; paralysis. It's a reaction, formed in the mind to threats of danger or insecurities. So in many ways it can be a life-saving, and appropriate response when those dangers are real. Or it can prove to be a wildly irrational response to perceived or imagined threats.

"Sooner or later, false thinking brings wrong conduct." (**Julian Huxley, *Essays of a Biologist*, 1923**) History and current affairs are crammed with episodes of inappropriate reactions to fear (whether real or perceived) — assaults, scapegoating, racism, murder, genocide, war. Bertrand Russell said, "Fear is the main source of superstition, and one of the main sources of cruelty. To conquer fear is the beginning of wisdom." (***An Outline of Intellectual Rubbish*, 1950**)

A skilled crime writer uses intelligence (clues) and counter-intelligence (red-

herrings) to weave their plot and deliberately mislead the writer . . . or at least obscure the truth until the end of the story. Modern crime fighting — much like modern spying — has become reliant upon technological advances. But do the facts, as revealed through forensic science or the latest spy gizmos and information systems, bring us closer to the truth or to a resolution of the injustice? Do they help or hinder us in determining the "right things to do"?

Herein lies the role of the artist. A writers' job is to examine the conditions of modern life (or of a specific time period) and draw attention to social issues of injustice and inhumanity in a way that gives the reader understanding, hope, a happy ending, or the impetus to effect change in the real world. "Intellect does not attain its full force until it attacks power," said Madame de Stael in 1800.

So while a discussion of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century world of security and intelligence may spark me to write about the horrific injustice of a system complicit in sending a citizen away to be tortured because of his religion or the colour of his skin, I must be mindful of the way in which I perpetuate fear in my own writing. Do I use fear to merely titillate or to engender hatred and discrimination? Or as a way to move the reader to first identify with, care about and then feel like a character or about a situation? Is fear a means to an end or is it the goal itself? I have no idea how much a security officer thinks about such things, but a writer surely must.

**See you on the 12<sup>th</sup> at the Library and Archives Canada. Susan**

## From the Editor—Katherine Hobbs



If you liked [Kane and Abel](#), you'll love Jeffrey Archer's latest — [Prisoner of Birth](#).

However it was a bit of a shock that Archer got his idea for the book from [The Count of Monte Cristo](#) by Alexandre Dumas, one of the highest selling books of all time. (Plot spoiler alert — if you haven't read it don't read any further!)

A betrayed man is imprisoned for a crime he didn't commit. Once he achieves his freedom he embarks on a plan to take revenge on the people that *done him wrong*. Helping him along is a sizable pot of money — thanks to the adoption of someone else's name.

Archer contends that a poor man will spend a lifetime seeking revenge, however a rich man can exact revenge fairly quickly — as he has the means to do so.

But what was really interesting was the fact that Archer wrote the first draft in approxi-

mately 300 hours. Up at 5 am, he writes from 6 to 8 am. Takes a 2 hour break. Back at the computer from 10 to 12 pm. Takes a 2 hour break. Writes from 2 to 4 pm. Another two hour break. Then he eats and goes to bed. Every day. Whew.

But lest you think he churned out the finished book in six weeks, the final published copy was his 17th draft. He adds, perhaps needlessly to my mind, that writing is hard work!

Meanwhile I'm reeling from the fact it took 17 drafts. How does this man make himself sit down, day after day after day and get it all done? And why is it I fiddle around playing Spider Solitaire rather than writing?

Thinking about that inspired the article on procrastination. It was fun to write about wasting time — unlike this month's Forensic Corner, I is for Injection. Because as disturbing as I find the research for this feature each month, I sometimes worry by the time I've written them I've become desensitized to the subject matter.

Not so with this series of articles on capital punishment. I'm increasingly bothered by the moral questions involved in putting someone to death — especially as executions were designed as a spectator sport.

And not that I don't enjoy watching horrifying things — after all I goggled watching Sarah Palin in a \$3000 suit tell Katie Couric that she'll have to "get right back to her." You betcha that's embarrassing and somewhat career limiting, but ultimately it was truly entertaining.

Whereas the implications of putting someone to death are so far-reaching. They affect not only the accused, but the doctors who are forced to operate against their medical oaths, the families of the executed, the families of the victims, right down to the people who are forced to strap someone down in order to kill them.

It's worrisome that that the United Nations has issued a report concerning the high number of executions in the state of Alabama for example, as it's likely they have executed the innocent.

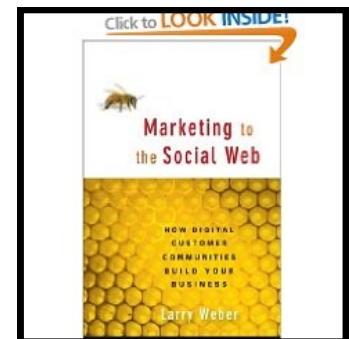
It's because Alabama has a "judicial override" system under which judges can overrule jury decisions on punishment. Elected judges may feel compelled to change life sentences to death to ensure reelection, and not because they believe the jury erred.

But back on the brighter side of life, Susan Gates

has written about the Turkey fair, and although she didn't actually see any of the big birds, she did sell some books — and that's good news.

Paul Sadler contributed the informative overview of the October Meeting with Peter Hinton of the NAC.

And also this month is the final segment for online book tours. The overwhelming web presence



of top US authors is startling.

Granted many have help, their publishers and publicists maintain their sites and their social networking sites, but overall the web presence they have is amazing — including promotional tools like automated messages to their fans to announce new books. Must be lucrative exposure or they wouldn't be doing it.

Launching a book is the perfect time to jump on the marketing train — whatever form it takes.

**Katherine**

## Forensic corner : I is for Injection, Lethal Injection

Lawyers representing two condemned prisoners in Kentucky say that the method used for lethal injection is a cruel and unusual punishment, and therefore against the Eighth Amendment.

In 2008 they brought their case to the Supreme Court. They point to a botched execution in 2006 in Ohio, where it took an hour to dispatch an inmate. At one point, according to court records, the inmate cried out, "It don't work."

The main issue is whether the current three-drug method would be more humane if it involved only one drug, as there would be less chance of a botched execution. If the drug doses are not correct, the drug used to put the patient to sleep can wear off and the drug used to paralyze can act, and the patient could be fully sensitive for the third and final drug.

Death penalty opponents note that the cocktail used for executions today was abandoned by an American veterinary association for use in killing animals because it was deemed unnecessarily cruel.

The three drug method of lethal injection was developed in Oklahoma and first used in 1977 and has not changed over time. It was considered a more humane

way of executing the condemned than what had gone on before.

Since 1976, there have been 1,095 executions in the United States, and of the 37 states that have the death penalty on their books, 36 use basically the same three-drug protocol for lethal injection.

### Should the death penalty be painless?

If you've seen the film, Dead Man Walking you're familiar with Sister Helen Prejean who took the position that, "if society is to inflict this extreme punishment, it should, itself, be perfect."

Contrast that with an anonymous blogger's comments picked up off the web, "I believe there are some people who deserve to die. They don't deserve to die humanely either. They should be executed the same way their victims were killed. I'm sure that was not humane."

### How does lethal injection work?

The condemned inmate is strapped to a gurney and sedated with sodium thiopental, rendering them unconscious. Then they are injected with a paralyzing agent, called pancuronium bromide, which stops the breathing muscles, and finally a dose of potassium chloride, which stops the

heart.

### Chemical Problems

The first injection is a barbiturate meant to put the condemned prisoner to sleep deeply enough that they feel nothing afterwards. However it is considered an ultra-short-acting bromide which is effective as an anesthesia for just a few minutes.

The second, pancuronium bromide, paralyzes the skeletal muscles without affecting the nerves or brain. The individual is conscious without being able to move or speak, thus giving the impression of tranquility. It prevents the prisoner from twitching, convulsing, or indicating discomfort, giving the impression of serenity to viewers.

However anesthesiologists contend that if a person is not properly anesthetized, the paralytic drug will prevent them from being able to indicate any distress, and can make them feel as if they are suffocating. So the serenity may be a false impression, but it does serve to make the execution more palatable and acceptable to society.

The final injection, potassium chloride, stops the heart. But, again, if the prisoner is not properly anesthetized, medical experts say the drug

### The History of Executions

The death penalty has been used as a form of punishment in America since the founding of the colonies when Europeans brought the practice with them to the New World. The methods of execution have evolved over the years from hanging, to the firing squad, to the electric chair in 1890, the gas chamber in 1924, and finally to lethal injection in 1982. All methods of execution, including death by lethal injection, can cause severe pain to the condemned.

will be excruciatingly painful, making make the prisoner feel as if their veins are on fire.

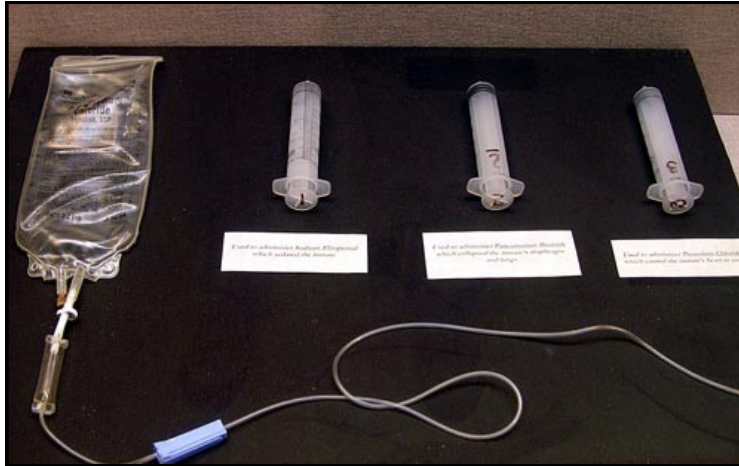
### Administration Is Key

A medical expert from Kentucky testifies that a one-drug solution would get rid of most legal objections to the procedure. But he added that it could take longer, and because there would be no paralytic to avoid twitching, it could be more difficult for witnesses to watch.

Cont'd on page 5...



## Forensic Corner: I is for Injection, Lethal Injection (cont'd.)



### Medical Ethics

Lethal injection causes severe ethical issues for medical personnel involved with the process.

According to the AMA, physicians "should not be a participant in a legally authorized execution." This includes injecting drugs, inspecting injection devices, supervising staff who perform injections, ordering lethal drugs, selecting intravenous sites and placing intravenous lines (particularly necessary in inmates who have been drug abusers and thus have poor veins), monitoring vital signs and pronouncing the prisoner dead.

In addition to the AMA, the American Nurses Association is "strongly opposed" to participation in executions because it is "contrary to the fundamental goals and ethical traditions of the profession."

### A final note

In April 2008 the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the three drug method of lethal injection used for executions by the federal government and in 36 US States, rejecting the lawyers claim that it was a cruel and unusual punishment and was therefore against the constitution.

Other experts contend that the one-drug protocol has also not been tested on humans and may cause a greater potential for error.

However Joseph Meltzer, a professor of anesthesiology and critical care medicine at Columbia University says that the three-drug cocktail is sufficiently complicated in the mixing and administration of the drugs that it has inherent risks." He goes on to say, "Each added level of complexity opens the door to potentially more and more error."

One researcher who studied blood samples of inmates after executions found that more than 40 percent contained levels of anesthesia so low that the prisoners might have been conscious during their executions.

They also found that executioners in Virginia and Texas, where the nation's busiest death chambers are (nearly half the execu-

tions in the US occur there) were not trained to administer anesthesia.

It was found that poorly trained executioners administered the chemicals from behind a curtain or from another room, preventing them from assessing inmates' awareness levels.



## Let's Talk Turkey—Seven points for successful hand-selling

by Susan Gates

I read with great interest the recent Purloined articles about promoting one's work using the new technologies of the Internet and through blogs. Fascinating and much needed information for technoslugs such as myself.

However, let's not forget the importance and success that can come from personal contact and good old-fashioned hand selling. A perfect example of this has been the participation over the past five years of some CCW authors at a small village fall fair.

The Turkey Fair is held every year on the third Saturday in September in the streets of the tiny village of Lyndhurst, Ontario (about an hour and half south west of Ottawa off Highway 15).

In days gone by, Lyndhurst area farmers would bring their turkey crop to town (dressed and frozen) in the backs of their trucks. Buyers for the large retail groceries stores would come to the village, walk along the streets, survey the poultry on offer and buy directly from the farmers' truck beds.

The turkeys would then be loaded onto train cars and shipped off to the stores' warehouses. Flush with cash, the farmers would pull out their brown jugs. Much socializing and celebrating continued into the evening.

Today's version of the Turkey Fair is a little different. I have yet to see any of the live turkeys or stay late enough to watch the "jug races" above the falls that serve to remind fairgoers of Lyndhurst's roots. The emphasis, however, is still on the sale of locally produced products — be it market garden items, preserves and jellies, woodwork, crafts, art and the like.

We were invited because a fair organizer, one charged with showcasing local writers, knew I was having my first short story published in an LKC anthology. Would I like to attend and bring some fellow writers? As it turns out, many CCW writers

have connections to the nearby villages and towns — some of us have grandparents from or cottage in the area, others are regional rural residents.

Here's why I think we've been very successful at selling relatively large numbers of books at the Turkey Fair:

### 1. **Location, location:**

We have been placed in the meeting room at the back of the village's branch of the library — the second most visited establishment in the village (after the gas station). In addition,

the fair encourages attendees to visit all areas of the fair by providing a passport that, when stamped in six different locales, can be entered into a draw for a grand prize. We writers have always been a stamping "booth". Vicki Cameron has honed her sales pitch to perfection over the years — in exchange for the desired stamp!

### 2. **Be nice to Librarians:**

Linda Wiken, of Prime Crime, would come with surplus stock as a gift for the Library branch. Resident authors would chat up



**Pictured l-r: Liz Palmer, Sue Pike, Vicki Cameron, Susan Gates, and Violette Malan**

## Let's Talk Turkey, cont'd



the librarians offering to give a talk or describing their own work so that the library staff were better informed and more likely to promote the authors' work and order their books.

### 3. Support the Fair:

To attract as many people as possible, the Fair has no entry fee. Organizers sell buttons and present a silent auction with the proceeds used to finance next year's fair. Our authors and/or their publishers have donated copies of their recent works to the auction. In fact, Violette Malan has included an "appearance" as a character in her next novel as part of her prize package. She now has the "winner" sending in their friends and relatives to buy copies of the books.

We've moved from a "push" marketing technique to a "pull" technique.

### 4. Love Local:

As much as folks like to read to learn about or escape to other parts of the world, there is a great deal of excitement for readers to see a local setting or "know" a local author.

This year, we had disappointed Barbara Fradkin fans showing up looking for her and her work. Sue Pike's *Locked Up*, a mystery anthology with settings located along the Rideau Canal system, was envisioned, in part, to appeal to the Turkey Fair readers.

### 5. Grow Your Readership:

Repeat appearances build the writer's credibility with the specific audience. Readers come to see what's new from those crazy Ladies' Killing Circle women or hope their favourite author has a new book out. They'll bring their friends and relatives to "meet the author" that they have been praising.

This year, we noticed parents bringing their kids to meet 'real' authors because their children were budding writers and voracious readers.

Vicki's young history mystery, *Shillings*, sold very well among this segment. Word of mouth is still the most valuable sales technique an author can foster.

### 6. Don't forget the bumpf:

Beaded book marks were a bonus this year with purchases of *Shillings*, a big hit with that age group. But traditional book marks are a great "take-

away" for those fair goers who show an interest in your work but have already spent their budget before they find our table.

A prepared flyer or your web address can direct them to your back list, an upcoming launch, a nearby reading or serve as a reminder when they request your work from the library.

### 7. Comfort in Numbers:

Usually we've been a group of 5 to 8 writers. The Newbies get to watch the veterans and learn how to engage prospective readers in a way that improves the odds they'll buy your book (or look for it at a later date).

It's also much easier to talk-up a fellow author's work than it might be to toot your own horn. Equally important, our numbers allow us to get out and enjoy the fair on a fall day. We can spell each other off as we head to the local churches for their Ladies Auxiliary lunches or wander over to the chip booth or the ice cream line or cruise the stalls for other goodies.

It's not the dreary, lonely, chained-to-your-chair affair that a bookstore signing can be.

This year we were five participants, with only 6 titles on offer (the least number to date). We sold somewhere in the range of thirty books over a period of six hours — an astounding number compared to most bookstore signings.

I guess you could say that in the pecking order of sales techniques, a book in someone's hand is worth two mentions on the web!

### Member News!

Susan C. Gates is pleased to announce that her short story, "**Courting Frank**", will appear in the next Ladies' Killing Circle anthology from *RendezVous Crime* "**Going Out with a Bang**," edited by Joan Boswell, Barbara Fradkin and Linda Wiken. This story, written as an exercise to find a character's voice and explore her back story, features crime reporter Bernadette Doolan, at a critical turning point in her pre-novel life.

Susan will be signing at the launch party Thursday, November 13th at the Library and Archives Canada on Wellington.

## Hi Ho Hi Ho, it's not to work I go...

by Katherine Hobbs

It's crunch time. As the end of the month rolls to a close I wonder why I've been dilly-dallying for weeks when I know I have to issue The Purloined.

Will I finish it in time? Well, yeah — but maybe the articles would have been brilliant if I'd taken more time and done more research.

But is my procrastination really that bad? What if I become more creative in a time crunch? With my heightened sense of desperation I may write things I'd never have ordinarily.

In reading about procrastination I discovered procrastinators actually know how to manage time, we just don't like to work that way. So, no point wasting money taking that time management course -- it won't help.

And sometimes procrastination is exactly the right thing to do. When it's not a destructive force, it allows us to be hyperproductive in bursts, making it a great way to contain an assignment within a smaller block of time.

Now that's good news! Gives me all the approval I need to procrastinate without guilt. Although generally I do meet my deadlines. But what if I missed them? Consistently? Then it's not okay. If we say we'll do something and we don't,

people stop believing us. And if we disappoint ourselves for the inability to get things done, then not only have we made other people angry, but we'll get frustrated too.

However the bottom line is: If writing is something we do as a business (and not a hobby) and we intend to make a living through our words — then we have to sell our work. If nothing gets written, we'll end up broke.

I read an article that defined different types of procrastinators. Like **Perfectionists**—they want everything to be perfect. **Dreamers** figure that magically everything will work out. **Crisis makers** work only when there

is a crisis even if they have to create it themselves. **Worriers** dwell on every possible scenario for failure which prevents any real work from being done. **Defiers** resent the deadline, and refuse to do the work. And finally **Overdoers** take on so much they can't deliver.

But I believe writers have other issues that cause us to drag our feet when we have finished work sitting in the drawer instead of sending it out to the world. And why do we do

that? Maybe it's in case someone rejects us. The **fear of failure**.

Recently a writing teacher gave some sage advice in this regard: "Some of your work will be rejected. Period. Stop worrying and get on with it."

And what would happen if we did send our story in to a contest and we didn't win? Not much. Submit it somewhere else — it just might win that one.

But this brings up what might be an even bigger issue paralyzing us. What if we succeed? What if we send in our story and win? What if we query an agent and

they love our work? What if we get published in a great magazine.

Perhaps the bigger factor stalling writing careers is **the fear of success**. That we'll never be able to produce anything good, ever again.

So, do we really want to write for a living? If the answer is yes, and we aren't getting our work out, then we may have to get over the way we think about things.

Are we sticking with habits we've developed over time that stop us from sitting at the keyboard? Some reprogramming might be all that's required to change our behaviour.

Louise Penny tells of conquering procrastination by leaving a pastry beside the computer so she'd be sure of being drawn back to her work. Of course she went on to say she ended up wearing her book on her hips.

Ultimately it's okay to admit we can't do everything. To pick and choose what's most important to us to do. And if we decide to something other than what's on our to-do list, like watch TV—well, we should throw ourselves into watching that TV show and not feel guilty about what other things we're not doing.

If procrastination is not debilitating, it may be useful in getting that story written in record time. It's only if it is debilitating — if you note disbelief on people's faces when you tell them you're going to do something -- then maybe it's time to change how we go about things.

As for me, I'm going to get started on the next issue of The Purloined right away. Well, just as soon as clean the oven ....

### Procrastination Theory 101

**Hard work often pays off over time,  
but laziness always pays off now!**



## Blog Book Tours: Part 3 – Going on Virtual Tour

Previously we've covered the benefits of going on a virtual book tour, creating a blog, finding blog hosts and cybersmoozing. Now that you have your blogging friends in hand, it's time to plan your tour.

### Inviting hosts

Several months before your book release invite the best bloggers from your blogroll to host a tour stop for you. If they agree, maybe send them a complimentary copy of your book in advance so they could read it. Your publisher might supply these books for free. If they do, ask for a couple extra to use for contests at your tour stops.

Most blog book tours run 2 to 3 weeks, with stops at different blogs on consecutive days. This allows for a tour that gets noticed by search engines without becoming too grueling to the author, or boring to the fans.

A few weeks before the tour, start creating buzz on your blog. Your host blogs should start mentioning your tour, too. Create some fan excitement.

### Preparing Hosts

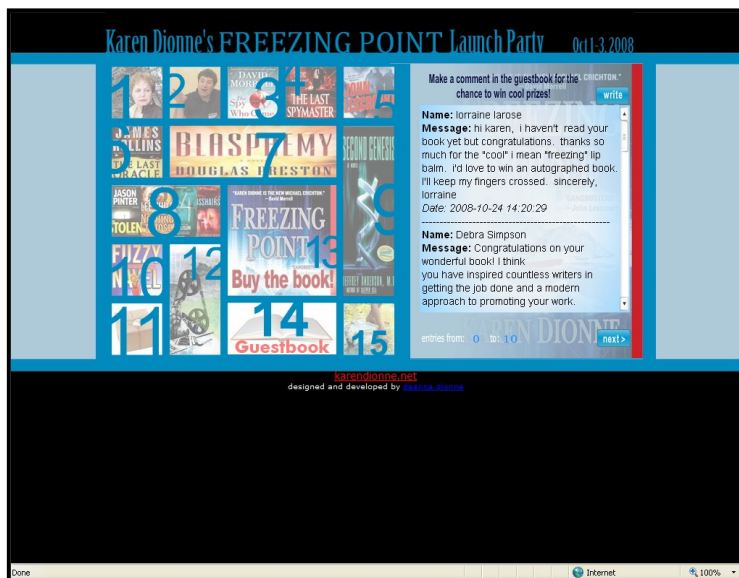
Prepare your blog book tour hosts by sending them an author photo and book cover – your bio won't hurt either. Give them a link to your entire blog book tour schedule and other URLs they should embed in their post.

Make sure your hosts have a sales link for your book. Make it easy for your readers to purchase a book! Amazon.com links are the

easiest to add. Another link option might be your favourite independent bookstore.

The best way to learn how a good tour works is to read a few of them. Then create your own book tour -- with a combination of stops that are interesting to readers who might follow the tour from day to day.

Some great things to do



are book excerpts, interviews, book reviews, guest posts, book trailers, character interviews, info on how the bookcover was created, a drawing for free book draws, live tour notification, radio and tv broadcast dates. Your tour host may also have a few ideas.

The best blog tour I've seen so far is Karen Dionne's, pictured here. Simply amazing!

Hint: It may help to have your tour stop posts written ahead of time. At least the basics of what you want to say. It will save time once you're on tour.

A couple of days before the tour make sure the hosts have their completed posts ready and that they have site meters installed to gauge how many visitors go to their blog. Track your amazon.com rating at <http://www.titlez.com> so you know how you're doing on the tour. Create a Google alert for your book title at <http://www.google.com/alerts> and get reports every day

### Start the tour

Remind each host the day before about their next day 8 am post. Be available to answer blog questions at each stop. Even if you are in your pajamas!

The more interactions you have, the more search engines will notice you. After every blog visit change the link at your tour schedule to a **permalink**. On really busy blogs, your tour stop will disappear in a hurry, so you must give the exact link to your post for future reference.

### Winding down

As your tour winds down get statistics together from your hosts and your own sites to determine the relative success of your tour. It's not so much about the immediate sales as building buzz.

At the end of your tour a thank you to your hosts is appreciated and even a nice little gift builds good will. After all blog book tours take your hosts a lot of time.

to see how much buzz your tour is creating. Numbers are important!

Book sales do count!

Did it work? Well, it is crucial to create a buzz, but your royalty cheque is your ultimate statistic!

### BOOK BLOG URL LINKS

Karen Dionne:

<http://www.freezingpointlaunchparty.com/secpa/16.html>

Other examples:

<http://lookingglassreview.blogspot.com/2008/10/alan-gratz-blog-book-tour-day-three.html>

<http://www.michellegagnon.com/events.php#blogtour>

<http://www.elizabethelvin.com/virtualtour.htm>

<http://www.ericmaisel.com/mvbtours.html>

<http://www.abouthyme.com/blogtour.shtml>

Need more help? Join yahoo groups <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/blogbooktours/> There are no fees, just ask questions. It's authors helping authors.

## October Meeting Report: Getting into Character with Peter Hinton of the National Arts Centre by Paul Sadler

Peter Hinton, Artistic Director of English Theatre at the National Arts Centre was the guest speaker for the October meeting. He opened a

logue for the stage. For the stage, dialogue is designed to be said "out loud" and "in time". While the "out loud" portion is easily differ-

characters in that precise moment.

For example, one could have a wife recounting a story about an old flame,

in the stage, and the moment the dialogue happens must inform the text as much as the text informs the moment.

The creation of characters, by contrast, can be quite similar. Peter advised that the focus on "writing what you know" should be supplemented by writing about what others don't know, bridging "what is like you" (what you know) and what is outside you (i.e. what others and you don't know).

Quoting playwright Judith Thompson, Peter suggested people should "write about something you would never tell your mother, family, priest or doctor." Creating characters in theatre also require the dramatist to think about conflict, desires and obstacles, but may have a unique challenge to portraying it on stage if some of the conflict comes from an environment or setting.

Often theatre is set up with very open spaces, such as a sitting room, that empowers people to speak, whereas an alternate location where the characters might have trouble talking could be a great dramatic device but difficult to portray on stage and have the audience able to hear and understand.

...Cont'd on page 11



Photo by Darlene Cole

window onto the world of the stage. He's spent most of his adult life writing, directing and engaging in dramaturgy, the art of dramatic composition and its representation on the stage, and his passion for the world was obvious. Peter outlined a number of differences and similarities between writing for the stage and writing prose fiction.

Dialogue in prose is much different than dia-

entiated from written prose, the "in time" part appears more subtle. Often, in books, the author can provide a great deal of backstory through a variety of techniques, while in theatre, the past can only be recounted through dialogue. Such dialogue must always serve two purposes -- first, it can indeed provide the backstory; second, however, it must do so as part of an interaction between the

and the content of the story would serve the first purpose. However, the second purpose would only be served if there is some reaction from the husband in the present -- for example, how does he react to the story? Is he angry, sad, jealous, amused, etc.?

Or, alternatively, what is the wife's motivation in telling this story, how is she feeling towards him? It is the "in time" aspect that must drive dialogue

## October Meeting Report: Getting into Character with Peter Hinton, cont'd

One saying for the stage helps to develop the plot, and could also apply to prose fiction: "Bad news for the character, good news for the actor". In the case of prose, it could have a corollary, "Bad news for the character, good news for the plot and author."

Equally, writers for both stage and book can develop characters using questions such as:

- "who are they?"
- "when are they?"
- "what are they?"
- "how are they?" (including how they view the way the world should operate), and
- "what sort of clothes do they wear?" etc.

Peter also noted that characters who are mature, balanced and well-adjusted may not be as interesting as immature, unbalanced and mal-adjusted characters, just as in writing prose!

Theatre also faces some similar challenges to prose writing, but perhaps more intensified, such as a shifting sense of morality that affects dramatic license. Peter gave the example of characters smoking -- whereas it might have been possible to have a character smoke 20 years ago, now the audience just won't accept a character that smokes, and are pulled out of the story by it.

Equally, the impact of television has created models of expected behaviour, and audiences may become lost if the



Photo by Darlene Cole

characters in a play or story don't act that way.

Stage productions are far less democratic than a book, however. For example, if you want to see the play, you have to go to the NAC at 8:00, sit in and your seat, and watch it unfold at the pace the troupe has predetermined.

By contrast, a book is far more intimate and personal, and democratic, as the reader can pause

wherever they want to think about things, go back and re-read something, decide how fast the story will unfold for them, etc.

However, in the end, Peter argued that both forms of writing should be about a rigorous pursuit of human nature, what Margaret Atwood describes as "negotiating with the dead," providing keen observation without imposing judgement.

### Calling all members!



**I'm on my last round-up (so to speak) regarding the annual membership drive, so please get your \$30 in to me either before, or at our next meeting on November 12. The member password will be changing on the website after that, so to continue your access without interruption please don't forget your chequebooks!**

**Don't forget to get your friends and relatives to join too. The more the merrier.**

**Thanks,  
Darlene Cole  
Membership Secretary**

## CCW Twentieth Anniversary Preparations—How can YOU help?

One of the things we'd like to accomplish for the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Capital Crime Writers is to compile a history and record of our milestones to date. We're fortunate to have a couple of the founding members willing to mine their memory lodes (or is that lobes?) to sketch out the deep dark beginnings of this dangerous group. We'd like to receive some "testimonials" from current and former members. Write up a paragraph or two along the following lines?

- Why you joined CCW or why you stayed.
- A memory of your first meeting or meeting a new writing friend at CCW.
- A reflection on what your CCW membership has meant for your crime writing.
- A short description of your favourite meeting . . . so far.

A number of your testimonials may be selected for a future publication or for promotional or historical purposes on CCW's website. We will seek your prior consent before publishing your piece in print or on the web.

Please send your submissions (including your full name, the year you joined CCW, and your telephone number) to: [president@capitalcrimewriters.com](mailto:president@capitalcrimewriters.com) The deadline is **Sunday November 30, 2008**.

*Capital Crime Writers . . . Writing Wrongs since 1988.*

[www.capitalcrimewriters.com](http://www.capitalcrimewriters.com)

**Check out recent updates to the members only section of the website!!! Contest info, event listings and more.**

### Bits & Pieces: Workshops, Markets and Conference Information

1. Canadian Screen Training Centre presents: **T2S (TAKING IT TO THE SCREEN) Film and TV Weekend Workshops**: directing, producing, screenwriting, documentary, acting. 2008 registration has begun for T2S 2008's weekend workshops, featuring some of Canada's top film and television professionals. Take your skills to the next level. Network with fellow filmmakers. OTTAWA dates: Nov 15-30. Workshop classes are kept small and fill quickly so register early. To REGISTER ONLINE or for MORE DETAILS, visit [www.cstc.ca/t2s](http://www.cstc.ca/t2s), or call toll-free 1-800-742-6016 // 613-789-4720
2. **Agora Bookstore and Internet Café** on Besserer serves the students of the University of Ottawa. Students can consign their old textbooks, but in addition, Agora is focusing on displaying and promoting books from local authors. If you are a local author interested in consigning your books, email Janel Goyette at [consign@agorabookstore.ca](mailto:consign@agorabookstore.ca), or call Janel from Mon—Fri between 8 and 4 p.m. at 613-562-4672 Ext 33 to discuss the details.
3. Check out the new web site **www.5minutemystery.com**. The site publishes a short (1200 to 1500 word) mystery each day. The reader identifies the clues and solves the mystery, scoring points by doing so. 5 Minute Mystery is looking for new authors to write stories for them — they want as many different writers as possible. They pay \$50 for each short mystery published.
4. **Bloody Words 2009** is offering an Xmas special: Buy one registration for \$155, and get a second one for \$125. This offer is good from Nov 1 to Dec 25 only. After that the price goes up! Registering at Bloody Words gives you access to an opening reception, oodles of great programming on Friday night and Saturday, a sit down banquet on Saturday night, the opportunity to enter the Bony Pete short story contest, or meet with an agent, and on Sunday there are two workshops to choose from. All this for a great low price. Check out the details at [www.bloodywords2009.com](http://www.bloodywords2009.com)