

CAPITOL CRIMES

Sharing the thrill of mystery.

MARCH 2023

From the President

I love police procedurals.

Everything I know about crime scenes and how to conduct a proper police investigation I learned from writers like Deborah Crombie, Patricia Cornwell and Michael Connelly — not to mention endless reruns of “Law & Order.”



I’ve watched enough “Dateline” to know DNA test results take months not hours, and writing crime fiction with believable, authentic characters and stories can be tough to pull off.

I’ve always shied away from writing a police procedural, even though my bookshelves and Netflix queue are crammed full of them. There are too many details to get wrong. Like do officers in Hawai’i take off their shoes when entering a home? (Turns out there’s a Facebook group for that.)

Our own Vice President [Claire Booth](#), a former crime reporter whose work has appeared in the Miami Herald, San Jose Mercury News, Philadelphia Inquirer and Contra Costa Times, pays justice to police procedurals with her Hank Worth series. She expertly balances the cop stuff with ordinary family life.

This month, Capitol Crimes’ favorite prison warden turned author [James L’Etoile](#) has assembled an inside crew to help the rest of us get it right.

We hope you’ll join our panel of experts for Cops & Writers: How to Get Away with Murder on Saturday, March 25 at 1 PM Pacific Time via Zoom.

Our featured speakers include Capitol Crimes member [Robin Burcell](#), who spent nearly thirty years as a police officer, hostage

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negotiator and criminal investigator. An FBI Academy-trained forensic artist, Robin has penned three police procedural series and currently co-writes with international best-selling author Clive Cussler on the Fargo series.

We'll also welcome San Francisco police sergeant [Adam Plantinga](#), whose Tweets are great examples of cop humor. A twenty plus year police veteran, his book 400 THINGS COPS KNOW was nominated for an Agatha Award and won the 2015 Silver Falchion for best nonfiction crime reference.

His debut novel NOTHING LIKE EASY, about an ex-cop caught up in a prison riot, is scheduled for release by Grand Central Publishing later this year.

Jim will be wrangling these lifers. As many of you already know, Jim's own law enforcement career spanned twenty-nine years. He served as an associate warden in a maximum-security prison, as well as a hostage negotiator and director of California's state parole system.

Unable to leave his life of crime behind him, Jim turned to writing fiction. He recently received a Silver Falchion Award and his latest book DEAD DROP was nominated for a 2022 Lefty.

Looking at this lineup, I'm thinking I may give writing a police procedural a try.

—Jennifer Morita, President



Upcoming Events

COPS & WRITERS: HOW TO GET AWAY WITH MURDER

Saturday, March 25, 2023 @ 1:00 PM (PT) • Zoom

CRIME TIME AT THE PLEASANT PHEASANT

Sunday, March 26, 2023 2:00 PM (PT)
1059 Court Street, Suite 109, Woodland, CA 95695

MEET THE AUTHOR WITH KEENAN POWELL

Tuesday, April 11, 2023 7:00 PM (PT) • Zoom

BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FOR WRITERS WITH KAREN ODDEN

Saturday, April 15, 2023 1:00 PM (PT) • Zoom

CAPITOL CRIMES WRITERS WORKSHOP with YASMIN ANGOE

October 26-29, 2023

Mercy Center Auburn, 535 Sacramento Street, Auburn CA

Visit www.CapitolCrimes.org for details and to register.

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Chapter News



Have we got a Crime Panel for you--a former prison warden and two cops! If they can't answer your questions, who can?

Please join New York Times Bestselling author [Robin Burcell](#), and award winning writers [James L'Etoile](#) and [Adam Plantinga](#) for a wide ranging discussion of police procedurals, creating law enforcement characters, and how authors get the authentic details right—or really wrong. Gunpowder or cordite; revolver vs. semi-auto; clip vs. magazine; is it a gun, or piece, or service weapon...

Get the facts and enjoy a great discussion.

Register for the March meeting Zoom link [here](#).

CRIME TIME at The Pleasant Pheasant Bookstore

Sunday, March 26, 2023 • 2:00 - 3:00 PM (PT)

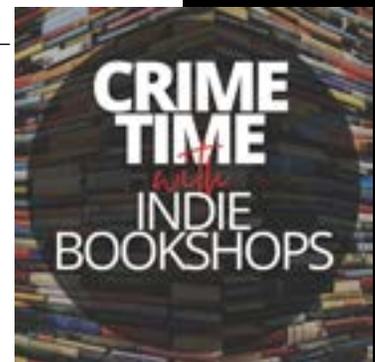
[The Pleasant Pheasant](#) • 1059 Court Street, Suite 109, Woodland, CA 95695

Please join host Chris Dreith for Crime Time at The Pleasant Pheasant bookstore in Woodland as local crime writers discuss our experiences with the writing, publishing, and marketing processes.

Whether you're a seasoned pro or struggling through your first draft, it's a great chance to network with your tribe and maybe get a few questions answered. Come enjoy the company of others who can't resist the lure of (fictional) crime!

The Pleasant Pheasant has graciously offered to host our meeting, and we're sure you'll enjoy browsing their shelves, finding a book (or two or three) that need to come home with you!

Space is limited so [please register here](#) if you plan on attending.



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Chapter News

MEET THE AUTHOR with Keenan Powell

Please join us as Keenan discusses her latest book, IMPLIED CONSENT.

Lawyer Maureen Gould has a dark secret and a need to prove herself. When a young woman walks into her office with a Hollywood #metoo case, Maureen spots the chance for redemption.

Enter the opponent: Maureen's father, Frank Gould, a man as evil as the movie producer he defends. While Frank pulls every dirty trick known inside the courtroom, someone behind the scenes is engineering Maureen's defeat. Doors are slammed in her face. Disturbing photographs are "discovered." A witness dies mysteriously. Clearly someone means to silence her.

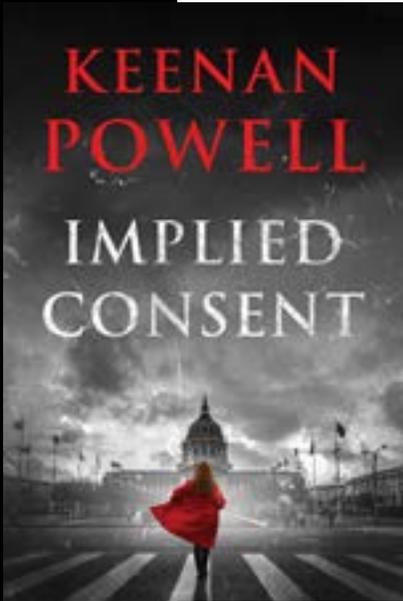
Will Maureen muster the strength to free herself from the past, reveal the truth, and win justice for her client?

Keenan Powell is the author of the Maeve Malloy Mysteries, a three-book series, and numerous short stories. She belongs to Mystery Writers of America, Sisters in Crime, and International Thriller Writers. She writes a legal column, Ipso Facto, for the Guppies newsletter, First Draft, and blogs with Miss Demeanors.

Despite being one of the original Dungeons and Dragons illustrators, art seemed an impractical pursuit – not an heiress, wouldn't marry well, hated teaching – so she went to law school. The day after graduation, she moved to Alaska.

When not writing or practicing law, Keenan can be found embroidering or studying the Irish language.

Learn more about Keenan at www.keenanpowellauthor.com.



From Keenan Powell –

Implied Consent, the debut of the Maureen Gould Legal Thriller Series, was released on January 26, 2023, and has consistently remained in the top 100 kindle new release categories for legal thriller and psychological fiction!

"Powell has written a book that dares to be a legal thriller, family drama, and polemic. Remarkably, she succeeds at all three." - Booklife Editor's Pick

<https://www.amazon.com/Implied-Consent-Maureen-Gould-Thriller-ebook/dp/B0BKYMP37V>

Instagram: keenan.powell

Facebook: Keenan Powell, Author

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Chapter News

BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FOR WRITERS with Karen Odden

Saturday, April 15, 2023 • 1:00 - 3:00 PM (PT) • On Zoom

Please join us for USA Today Bestselling author Karen Odden's newest workshop: "Finding your People: Developing your Community of Practice as an Author."

As the publishing industry has changed this past decade, authors are increasingly required to handle their own community outreach, including marketing, PR, their website, book launches and zoom events, and social media. Furthermore, Covid forever altered the way authors connect to readers, to libraries, to bookstores, to professional groups, and to each other.

With personal anecdotes and industry knowledge, Karen shares her journey toward discovering a "writing community mindset" and discusses some specific, professionally productive and emotionally fulfilling ways to engage with the writing community, to both find support and give back.

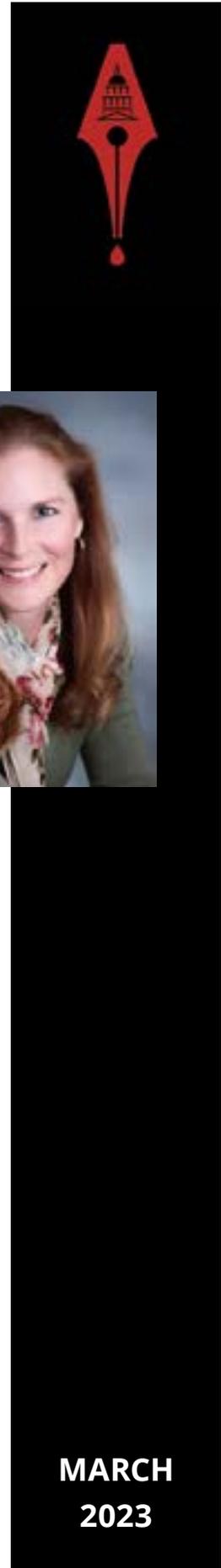
Karen received her Ph.D. in English literature from New York University and subsequently taught at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee.

Her first novel, *A Lady in the Smoke*, was a USA Today bestseller and *A Dangerous Duet* and *A Trace of Deceit* have won awards for historical mystery and historical fiction. *Down a Dark River* introduces readers to Inspector Michael Corravan, a former thief and bare-knuckles boxer. The sequel, *Under a Veiled Moon*, is a 2023 nominee for both the Lefty and Agatha awards.

Prior to receiving her Ph.D. in English, she worked in publishing at Harcourt Brace Jovanovich and McGraw-Hill, as a Media Buyer for Christie's auction house in New York, and as a bartender at the airport in Rochester, where she honed her listening skills. She is a member of Sisters in Crime (National), Desert Sleuths (SinC Arizona) and Mystery Writers of America.

Karen lives in Arizona with her family, and she loves to hike the Sonoran Desert.

For more information about Karen go to www.karenodden.com or connect with her on Twitter @karen_odden and Facebook @KarenOddenWriter



THE CAPITOL CRIMES VIRTUAL BOOKCASE

It's time to clear out our shelves and make room for new books – yours!

We're updating the virtual bookcase on our [homepage](#), and we're looking for a few new titles to add. One-click on any cover in the revolving slideshow will take visitors to the author's preferred online bookseller. If you would like to support local, independent bookstores, bookshop.org is a great option.

Current Capitol Crimes members can submit one book to be featured by completing [this form](#). Be sure to send an image of your book cover in a separate email to capitolcrimes@gmail.com

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Member News

From Karen A Phillips –

You're Invited to a [Book Launch Event!](#)

Meet author Karen A. Phillips at Face In A Book on Sunday, April 2nd from 1:30-3pm as we celebrate the publication of her debut mystery novel, ***A Deadly Combo***.

Boxing, vintage trailers, and murder...In the rural backdrop of the Sierra Foothills, things move at a leisurely pace. But when retired twin sisters find the local trailer restorer dead at a vintage trailerfest, suddenly life in the foothills is anything but quiet.

A Deadly Combo is the first book in the Rocky Nelson Boxing Mystery series – perfect for lovers of small-town mysteries with a cozy-noir feel.

Join us for boxing trivia, snacks, and a good time!

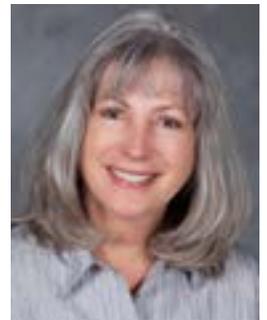
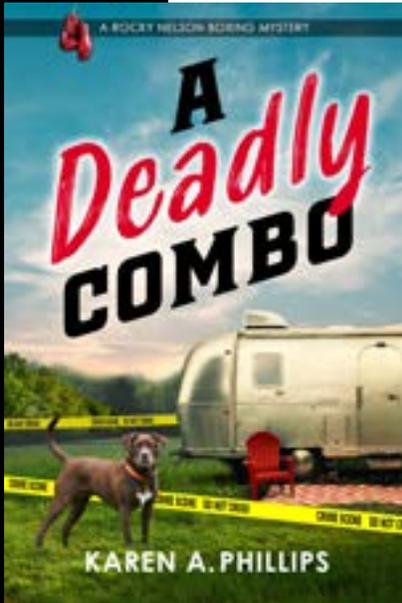
[Face In A Book](#) • 4359 Town Center Blvd #113
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762

www.karenaphillips.com

Instagram: kannphillips

Twitter: @phillips_writes

Facebook: KarenAPhillips/Author



[Yasmin Angoe](#), developmental editor and bestselling author, will spend three packed days with writers who want to go in-depth with their craft.

This retreat is limited to 15 attendees. Attendees will receive individual critiques of up to 10 pages from Yasmin, an individual consultation with her about the work, five in-depth craft sessions, and time to write and share work with fellow attendees. Lodging and meals are included at the beautiful Mercy Auburn Retreat Center. Learn more [here](#).

THREE DAY IN-DEPTH
WRITERS RETREAT WITH
**Yasmin
Angoe**
Bestselling author and
developmental editor
**CAPITOL
CRIMES**
Oct. 26-29, 2023

**MARCH
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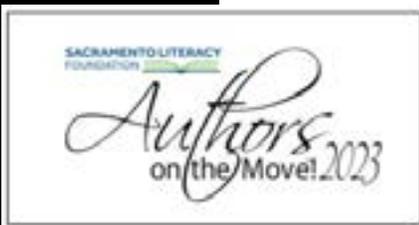
**ONLY 4 SPOTS
LEFT!**



Member News

From James L'Etoile -

On March 11, 2023, James L'Etoile will attend [Murderous March](#), a virtual conference sponsored by the Upper Hudson Chapter of Sisters in Crime. He'll participate in a panel, titled: *Murder at High Noon: Western Mysteries That Rope in the Reader*. James will appear alongside Terry Shames, J.R. Sanders, Gerald Elias, and Dale T. Phillips.



Capitol Crimes authors Catriona McPherson, Claire Booth, James L'Etoile, and Richard Meredith will be participating in the 21st Annual [Authors on the Move](#) gala, a fundraising event for the Sacramento Literacy Foundation, on March 11, 2023 at Kimpton The Sawyer hotel in downtown Sacramento. The Foundation collaborates with community organizations to advance children's literacy skills throughout the Sacramento region.

James will attend [Left Coast Crime in Tucson, Arizona](#) from March 16-19. If you're looking him, you can find him on March 16th at 9:00am for *Author Speed Dating*, at 2:30pm on the *True Crime: Fact or Fictionalized Panel*, on March 17th at 11:30am on the *Best Mystery Novel Nominees Panel*, also on the 17th at 4:00pm he'll be moderating the *Call the Cops Panel*.

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IG: @authorjamesletoile

**MARCH
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Member News

Tucson
**NOIR
at the
BAR**

**MARCH 15
@ 6:30 PM**

FEATURING
LAURIE R. KING
MATT COYLE
CURTIS IPPOLITO
MEREDITH HAMBROCK
A.J. DEVLIN
CLAIRE BOOTH
PATRICK WHITEHURST
RICHARD MEREDITH
S.M. FREEDMAN
D.M. ROWELL

 © FireTruck Brewing Company
9630 N Orade Rd #110
Oro Valley

Brought to you in partnership
with Tucson Sisters In Crime
tucsonistersincrime.org



Just in time to kick off [Left Coast Crime!](#) Join a collection of crime writers at The Firetruck Brewing Company at 6:30 p.m. on March 15th. This free event will feature nine amazing authors, three of them Capitol Crimes members!

From Lorie Lewis Ham –

The second episode of Mysteryrat's Maze Podcast up in February features the first chapter of *Murder at the Menger*, A Sydney Lockhart Mystery by Kathleen Kaska, and it is read by local actor Ariel Lin. It can be found here and in all the usual podcast places <https://mysteryratsmaze.podbean.com/e/murder-at-the-menger-by-kathleen-kaska/>



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In Other News

From Grand Canyon Writers –

MARCH 11, 2023 (10:30 AM in Arizona / 9:30 AM Pacific)

THE CHALLENGE AND JOY OF SELF-EDITING, TO POLISH YOUR WORK LIKE A PRO!

Kelly Oliver is the award-winning author of The Jessica James Cowgirl Philosopher Mysteries, including *Wolf*, which won the 2016 IPPY Award, Gold Medal, Best Mystery eBook and Forward Award Finalist, Best Mystery; and *Coyote*, winner of the 2016 Reader's Choice Silver Falchion Award, along with F.O.X. a 2017 Finalist for Killer Nashville Claymore Award and 2018 Finalist Silver Falchion Award), and *Jackal*.

- Why is excellent editing so critical to YOUR success—before you pitch or publish?
- What is the “Layering Approach to Writing and Editing” and how does it improve your work?
- When can editing be easier than you think?
- Why will planting clues and “red herrings” at the editing phase work well?
- How can authors develop theme through editing?
- Learn to LOVE editing...or at least not hate it!

[Register for meeting with Kelly here.](#)

From Desert Sleuths –

March 15, 2023 (10:30 AM in Arizona / 9:30 AM Pacific)

EVERY CONTACT LEAVES A TRACE with Garry Rodgers

Whether you're a hardcore crime thriller writer, or the author of cozy mysteries, you'll definitely want to catch this suspension-of-disbelief seminar by Garry Rodgers. His takeaway? Every contact leaves a trace.

This is known as Locard's Exchange Principle, a foundational tenet of forensic science. Locard's Principle holds that through contact, the perpetrator of a crime will bring something into a crime scene and will leave with something from it. Every contact leaves a trace.

In this fascinating presentation, Rodgers will cover the range of possible forensic clues, from DNA and bloodstain pattern analysis, to firearm signatures and other types of physical evidence. He will delve into the process of trace evidence processing and review the evidentiary conclusion scale used to tell the facts in court. This is a rare opportunity to not only learn but also ask specific questions you may have about forensic science.

Pre-registration for this fascinating webinar will open soon. Circle March 15th on your calendar today, from 6:30 to 7:30. **Our monthly member meeting starts at 6pm.**

Preregistration required. Presenter will be virtual, but we will have in-person attendance in Tempe. EventBritepreregistration has two choices: in person or virtual.

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In Other News

You'll receive reminders from EventBrite before the event.

Virtual Registration: <http://bit.ly/3KttHrc>

Important: For Virtual attendance, your confirmation message returns you to EventBrite to register for the Zoom link. (Yes, a second "registration" is required)

In-Person Registration: <http://bit.ly/3Zd4Lc9>

In-person attendance will be at the [Tempe Public Library](#). You'll received directions during registration and reminders from EventBrite before the event.

From the Coastal Cruisers -

March 18, 2023 (10:30 AM Pacific)

ENGAGING WITH YOUR READERS with Shawn Inmon

Shawn Inmon is an award-winning and bestselling author of literary fiction, best known for the "Middle Falls Time Travel" series. He's also a pro at connecting with his readers and building strong relationships with his reader base. He'll talk about engaging your readers and how selling yourself and not just your books can create lifelong fans.

To register, click: https://sistersincrime-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tjlvce-oqDssH-NXcEKhVjF6oPT_H3RSjSv2d

From MWA Norcal -

March 25, 2023 (1:00 PM Pacific)

THE U.S. CONSTITUTION AND THE MYSTERY NOVEL by Micheal O'Connor

Though not everyone realizes it, the U.S. Constitution can have serious repercussions on a mystery novel. Search warrant requirements, Miranda warnings, and prohibitions against rubber hoses are just a few of the many constraints placed on police detectives. While private detectives are not directly affected by the Constitution, disregarding the rules can have negative consequences for them as well. We'll explore the highlights of these restrictions, and the different impacts they have on police and private detectives. Keep those pesky legal fact-checkers at bay! If you have a specific question regarding the constitution and how this might play into your mystery novel, please send your questions to norcalmwa@gmail.com.

[Please register here for this virtual event.](#)

Micheal O'Connor has just retired as a District Attorney after a decades-long career in a county that shall remain nameless. He attended U.C. Berkeley, and like a lot of English majors, ended up getting a law degree from Hastings Law School many moons ago.



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In Other News

Murderous March - March 10 & 11, 2023. Guest of Honor : New York Times Bestselling Author Deborah Crombie. Online only. Registration closes March 7th @ 11:59pm Eastern. [Click here for info.](#)

The New York Write to Pitch 2023 LIVE NYC, March 16-19, 2023. [Click here for info.](#)

Left Coast Crime 2023: "Trouble in Tucson" – Tucson, Arizona. March 16-19, 2023. [Click here for more details.](#)

Malice Domestic - April 28-30th 2023 - Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center in Bethesda, Maryland. [Click here for more information.](#)

California Crime Writers Conference - June 10 & 11, 2023. [Click here to go straight to the Registration page.](#)

Save the Date: **SleuthFest 2023** will be July 6-9, 2023. [Click here for info.](#)

Book Passage Mystery Writers Conference 2023, July 21-23, Corte Madera, California. [Click here for info.](#)

Willamette Writers Conference 2023, August 2-6, online and in-person at the Crowne Plaza in Portland, OR. The Saturday Evening Keynote is New York Times Bestselling Author Cheryl Strayed. Registration is now open! [Click here for more information.](#)

Killer Nashville Writers' Conference, August 17-20, 2023 - Franklin, TN at the Embassy Suites Nashville South / Cool Springs hotel. [Click here for more details.](#)

Bouchercon 2023: "Murder at the Marina" August 30 to September 3, 2023 at the Marriott Marquis San Diego Marina, California. [For details click here.](#)

The Elk Grove Writers Guild Writers Conference, Saturday, September 23, 2023, 7am - 5pm. City of Elk Grove, 8230 Civic Center Drive, Elk Grove, CA 95757. [Click here for more information.](#)

Noir at the Bar: Monterey - Held monthly at Duffy's Tavern in Monterey, it's a great excuse for a trip to the coast! For more information, call Alec Cizak at 831-644-9811.

FOLLOW US, LIKE US - JOIN US!



Visit www.CapitolCrimes.org for details.

GOT CONTENT?

Send your press-ready article to: CapitolCrimes@gmail.com
Put "Newsletter" in the subject line. Due by the third week of the month.
We will publish the first Monday of the following month.

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