



ORANGE HERRING

Sisters in Crime  Orange County



MISSION STATEMENT

To promote the professional development and advancement of women crime writers to achieve equality in the industry.



MEETING PLACE

Irvine Ranch Water District
15500 Sand Canyon Avenue
Irvine, CA 92618

The meeting location is still at the Irvine Ranch Water District, but it's now in the Community Affairs meeting room on the northeast side of the parking lot. For directions, visit: www.ocsistersincrime.org. ([IRWD map](#))

"IRVINE RANCH WATER DISTRICT NEITHER SUPPORTS NOR ENDORSES THE CAUSE NOR ACTIVITIES OF ORGANIZATIONS WHICH USE THE DISTRICT'S MEETING ROOMS THAT ARE MADE AVAILABLE AS A PUBLIC SERVICE"



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

To join or renew your membership in our Sisters in Crime Chapter, you must also be a member of National. To renew your national membership, go to: www.sistersincrime.org/. To renew for our chapter, go to: www.ocsistersincrime.org/membership.htm and download the form, or fill out the form at the end of this newsletter and mail it in with your check. You can join national online or send your check to national to us, along with your check for our chapter.

If you have not already done so, please renew your Sisters in Crime membership today!



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UPCOMING MEETINGS

Here are the remaining meeting dates for 2014: Sep. 28, Oct. 12, Nov. 23, and Dec. 14.

Our next meeting is **Sunday, Sept. 28th** - **Tod Goldberg** will discuss his new book, *Gangsterland*. Tod is the author of several books of fiction, including the novels *Living Dead Girl*, a finalist for the Los Angeles Times Book Prize, *Fake Liar Cheat* and the popular *Burn Notice* series, as well as two collections of short stories, *Simplify* and *Other Resort Cities*. His essays, nonfiction, and journalism have appeared widely, including, most recently, in *Best American Essays 2013*. Tod holds an MFA in Creative Writing and Literature from Bennington College, and he directs the Low Residency MFA program in Creative Writing & Writing for the Performing Arts at the University of California, Riverside, Palm Desert Division.

October 12th - **T. Jefferson Parker** has a new book coming out called *Full Measure*. This meeting will be held at Mystery Ink. (Please note the **change in date and location** from the original schedule.)



MEETING ROUNDUP

**SINC Meeting East West Mysteries: Asian Themes in Crime Fiction.
By Cynthia Weitz**

On August 24, 2014, our SinC OC meeting was held jointly with the Southern California chapter of Mystery Writers of America. A delicious buffet of Asian food was served in keeping with the theme: East West Mysteries: Asian Themes in Crime Fiction. Following lunch, a panel discussion was led by **Naomi Hirahara**, the Edgar Award-winning author of the Mas Arai mystery series which features a Japanese American gardener and atomic-bomb survivor who solves crimes. Her titles include: *Summer Of The Big Bachi*, *Gasa-Gasa Girl*, *Snakesskin Shamisen*, *Blood Hina*, and *Strawberry Yellow*.

Murder on Bamboo Lane, the first book in her new mystery series with a female twenty-something LAPD bicycle cop, was released with Berkley Prime Crime in spring 2014. Her next in the series, *A Grave on Grand Avenue*, will be released in April 2015.



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The author panel included: **Lisa Brackmann**—*Rock Paper Tiger*; **Steph Cha** *Beware Beware: A Juniper Song Mystery*; **Kim Fay**—*The Map of Lost Memories*; and **Timothy Hallinan**—*Herbie's Game* (*Junior Bender* #4).

Steph Cha, a Korean/American author, is a graduate of Stanford and Yale Law. She lives in Los Angeles. Cha grew up liking old detective fiction, particularly the mysteries of Raymond Chandler and other noir writers. Her novels about contemporary LA are seen through the eyes of an Asian American, but while emulating Chandler, she makes these stories her own. Her women are more ascendant, bringing a modern female voice and a smart sense of humor to the noir tradition. A recent LA Times review of *Beware, Beware* declared that Marlowe and Chandler would be proud.

Kim Fay, a 2013 Edgar award finalist for best first novel, says she has a personal relationship with Asia. At an early age, she was influenced by the stories and scrapbooks of her grandfather who had been a sailor on the South China Seas. After college, she spent time in Thailand, Borneo and Singapore. When she reached Vietnam, she felt at home immediately. She tells of being smitten by the sodden heat, the smell of incense and jasmine down hidden lanes. Her writings are the magical combination of foreignness and her familiarity from the stories she was raised on.

Many of Kim's stories revolve around foreigners who illicitly claim a piece of Asia for their own. She has been criticized for being a white woman writing a book about a foreign country where the white characters are bad people.

Lisa Brackmann worked as an executive at a major motion picture studio, as an issues researcher in a presidential campaign, and as the singer/songwriter/bassist in an LA rock band. Her debut novel, *Rock Paper Tiger*, set on the fringes of the Chinese art world, made several "Best of 2010" lists, including Amazon's Top 100 Novels and Top 10 Mystery/Thrillers. Lisa was also nominated for the Strand Magazine Critics Award for Best First Novel. Her second novel, *Getaway*, won the Los Angeles Book Festival Grand Prize and was nominated for the T. Jefferson Parker SCIBA award.

In 1979, right after the Chinese Cultural Revolution, Lisa visited her friend's parents who were teaching in China and has returned there yearly since 1999. Initially, China was so foreign to her, she just accepted it for what it was and didn't experience culture shock until she returned home, but the experience helped put her own cultural life in perspective.

Lisa says that very little is being written about contemporary China, because it's always changing. In fact, she finds herself constantly editing what she just wrote. Her ability to speak Mandarin with a good accent helps her understand and write about places in the middle of nowhere that remain unchanged since the time of Indo-China.

Edgar Nominee, **Timothy Hallinan**, is a writer of thrillers, known for his detective series: The Simon Grist Series, The Poke Rafferty Series, and The Junior Bender Series—the latter which has recently been picked up by NBC.



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After spending a freezing winter writing a PBS special about a symphonic tour of China, he decided he wanted to try a warmer climate. Like Kim Fay's first visit to Vietnam, as soon as Tim arrived in Thailand, he felt at home. He describes the Thai people as good-hearted, but claims that their outward cheerfulness belies the fact that theirs is a closed society. And living in the oppressive, energy-draining heat makes everyday actions slow and deliberate.

According to Tim, there are six to seven different Thai accents. By his own admission, he speaks the language miserably, but says he didn't begin to write about the country until he could understand the language. Tim spends half the year in Santa Monica, CA and the other half in Thailand.

All of the speakers agreed that in order to be comfortable in writing about something, it's important to not only research the history, but to personally experience the place—as often as necessary—even at different times of day or night.

Before writing about Canter's Deli, Steph Cha had heard that Canter's was the only LA restaurant open all night, so she made a point of visiting at 2 a.m. and found it packed with diners.

As the child of Korean-born parents, she learned Korean from her Korean-speaking grandmother who lived with them. Her grandfather was a Korean Minister. Steph says that her native born family provides positive role models to draw from, and the bad characters come from those depicted on TV.

Tim Hallinan mentioned that Thai society has its extremes, ranging from the very poor to the bar girls to the richly-embellished temples. He understands that an impoverished Thai farmer may be forced to sell a child into the sex trade—an idea abhorrent in Western culture. After Thailand underwent its eighth coup, the new regime issued an edict instructing its people “to be happy.” His books are distributed in Thailand but are written in English, not only because it's difficult to find someone to translate them into Thai, but also because most Thais can't afford to buy them.

Kim Fay feels that writing about a nationality we don't understand is very difficult. As to how to use language, she suggests that writers not concentrate on slip-ups, but on what the words mean.

In writing about the normal lives of people, Lisa Brackman warns the author against imposing his or her own idea of what is exotic. She cautioned writers not to overdo dialect, but instead show differences of speech through sentence structure. She likes taking one or two rules from a particular language and applying them. She finds dialects a scary process and says it's important to do it right.

Editor's Note: OC SinC member Jackie Houchin also has a nice write-up about the meeting at <http://bit.ly/VOHsEs>.



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MEMBER NEWS

At Tustin Library on September 10th at 7 p.m., **Jill Amadio** has been invited to talk about her life as a writer and read from her book, *Digging Too Deep*.

On September 29th at 6 p.m. at Stanton Library, she will talk about her book characters and setting and read from her book.

Her article on "Publishing Across the Pond" appears in the current issue of the UK online magazine, Mystery People. And she was interviewed by MyCornwall, a UK print and online magazine, about growing up in St. Ives, Cornwall.

D.P. Lyle has the following event coming up:

Anaheim Public Library Foundation
Tuesday, September 16, 2014, 6:30-8:00 p.m.
500 W. Broadway
Anaheim, CA
<http://library.anaheim.net/Library/>
Info: [714-765-1880](tel:714-765-1880)

Terri Nolan will be the guest author for Lit Up: A Conversation with Orange County Writers and Readers Tuesday, September 30 at 7 p.m.
Kean Coffee
13681 Newport Ave.
Tustin, 92780

Dmitri Ragano's short story "The Guardians" was a finalist in the Little Tokyo Short Story contest, run by the Little Tokyo Historical Society in Downtown LA.

His novel *The Fugitive Grandma* has gained over 800,000 "reads", 9,000 votes and 7,300 followers on Wattpad, the world's largest social reading network.

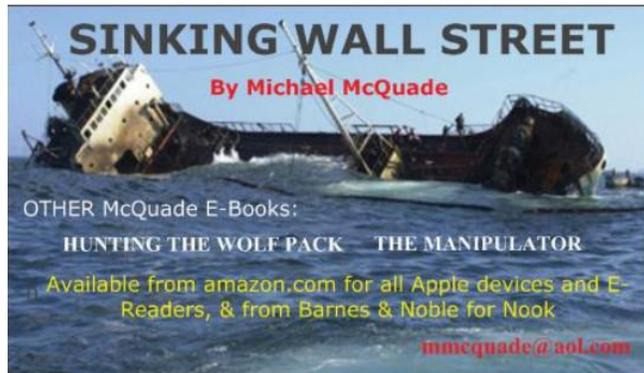


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Michael McQuade has a new book out title *Sinking Wall Street*. Will the world's economy collapse? As oil supertankers sink in the Middle East and off the coast of Venezuela, the stock markets of the world headed in the same direction. Only days before a major depression strikes, Nathen Foster, troubleshooter for the SEC, climbs aboard a jet and heads to São Paulo, Brazil. He joins forces with Interpol agent Armando Schmidt to track down those responsible.



On Tuesday, Oct. 14, from 7-9 PM, **T. Jefferson Parker** will be the featured author at the Pen on Fire Speaker Series. He'll talk about his new book, *Full Measure*, and will talk about the process of writing suspense fiction, structuring a novel, and more. Mystery Ink will be on hand to sell books. There will be nibbles and sips (of wine and non alcoholic beverages). Limited to 50 guests, so register sooner than later.

Visit penonfire.com/speakerseries for more information or email Barbara DeMarco-Barrett at penonfire@earthlink.net.

Feisty Old Ladies by OC SinC member **Cynthia Weitz**, is now available on Amazon in paperback or on Kindle. You can visit her website at www.feistyoldladies.com, or contact her at Cynthia@feistyoldladies.com.



UPCOMING CONFERENCES, CONVENTIONS, and EVENTS

Bouchercon 2014: Murder at the Beach. November 13-16 in Long Beach, CA. For more information, go to: <http://www.bouchercon2014.com/>.



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Support your local SinC chapter. Buy a lovely mug at the next meeting, and bring your novels for our Sister Share!



PLEASE CONTRIBUTE!

If you have events coming up or announcements you want to make, let me know. Please send your contributions and suggestions to: ocsinc.newsletter@gmail.com. **The deadline is the 7th of each month!**



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SISTERS IN CRIME ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER

Print and complete this form. NOTE: YOU MUST ALSO JOIN SISTERS IN CRIME NATIONAL TO BE A MEMBER OF THE ORANGE COUNTY CHAPTER.

Send the completed form with both checks, \$40 payable to Sisters in Crime (National) and \$25 payable to Sisters in Crime, OC to:

Membership

Sisters in Crime, Orange County

P.O. Box 53132

Irvine, CA 92619-3132

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please print all information and list your name as you want it listed in the Membership Directory.

New **Renewal Name: Address:**

Day Phone:

Evening Phone:

Email: I am a (check all that apply):

Mystery Writer **Published** **Unpublished**

Writer in other fields **Published** **Unpublished**

Screenwriter

--Produced: **Features** **TV/Cable** **Other**

Reviewer **Agent** **Bookseller** **Librarian** **Reader**

I would like to help with (check all that apply):

Publicity **Refreshments** **Speakers** **Raffle** **Other:**