

## WRITERS INVESTIGATE GENDER DISPARITY IN CRIME FICTION

Since 1986, Sisters in Crime has tracked reviews published in a variety of publications, including local and national newspapers, magazines, and prepublication book sources to see what percentage of crime fiction reviews are accorded writings by women authors. In 2012, born-digital mystery review and reader-reviewer blog sites were added to gain a sense of the gender breakdown for online review coverage. SINC's 2015 research demonstrates, in most categories, women's share of reviews is trending up.

"Women write roughly half the mysteries and crime novels published by traditional publishers, but have long lagged in reviews, major award nominations, and 'best of' lists," said SinC President Leslie Budewitz. "Accountability is key to progress. Sisters in Crime is pleased to celebrate the publications and organizations who recognize that women hold up half the literary sky, and looks forward to the day when parity is the norm."

Type of Publication	Reviews of Books by Women, 2007	Reviews of Books by Women, 2015
National Newspapers	31%	42%
Local Newspapers	37%	46%
Pre-publication Sources	45%	45%
Genre-focused Magazines	40%	50%
Born Digital Review Sources	n/a	52%

**Percent of Reviews Given to Mysteries by Women, 2007 and 2015**

As we've noted since we began counting born-digital reviews in 2012, women tend to be better-represented among blogs and online review sites than in traditional media. **This year, 52 percent of the 1,600 reviews posted to the blogs and websites we monitor were of crime fiction by women.** The category most resistant to women authors, but making significant strides in recent years, is national newspapers: *The New York Times*, *The Toronto Globe & Mail*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Wall Street Journal*. These review outlets matter because they have prestige and a relatively wide readership. Of the important pre-publication review sources, *Booklist* once again favors male authors over women authors when it comes to assigning review space (42%), more so than *Publishers Weekly* (45%) or *Library Journal* (60%); in fact, since 2011 a majority of mysteries reviewed in *Library Journal* have been by women.

**We'd like to recognize the following publications that devoted half or more of their crime fiction review space to books by women in 2015: *Boston Globe*, *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Library Journal*, *Suspense*, and *RT Reviews*.** *Mystery Scene* came very close, with 49 percent of their reviews devoted to books by women. It's worth recognizing, too, that the *Wall Street Journal*, which over recent years was not so generous to women authors, on average giving only a quarter of their crime fiction reviews to books by women, approached parity this year, with 21 reviews of books by men and 19 books by women.

**The full Monitoring Project report, with additional data, can be found [here](#).**

*Sisters in Crime is an organization dedicated to promoting the ongoing advancement, recognition and professional development of women crime writers. It has 3,600 members in 50 chapters worldwide, offering networking advice and support to mystery authors.*