

January Is Mystery Month

**New Years Reading
Resolutions**
January 2008

Dear Barbara,

Has your book group ever discussed a mystery? Or maybe that's ALL your club discusses! In either case, have we got some suggestions for you!

Interested in the Middle East and how it affects the rest of the world? Try discussing some of the varied points of view in the new releases introduced here.

Resolve to do both, read more and have more fun with your reading group friends - it's all here in this month's issue!

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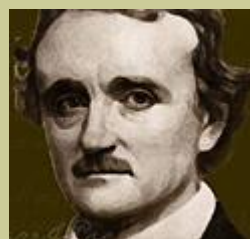
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Poe is "Evermore!"



January is Mystery Month at **Reading Group Choices**, in honor of Edgar Allan Poe's birthday, January 19th. Poe is considered the father of the modern detective story. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle said, "Each [of Poe's detective stories] is a root from which a whole literature has developed. Where was the detective story until Poe breathed the breath of life into it?" The **Edgar Allan Poe Awards** (popularly called the **Edgars**), named after Edgar Allan Poe, are presented every year by the **Mystery Writers of America**. They honor the best in mystery - fiction, nonfiction, television, film, and theatre



The Beekeeper's Apprentice by Laurie R. King is the first in a series of books to follow the adventures of Mary Russell, a gawky, egotistical, recently orphaned young lady who literally falls into the lap of Sherlock Holmes. Though he appears long retired from crime fighting, and is quietly engaged in raising honeybees on his Sussex estate, Russell piques his interest and in short order impresses the detective with her intellect and powers of deduction. Under his tutelage, this very modern twentieth century woman proves a deft protégée and a fitting partner for the Victorian detective, and in this first volume, we witness the formative years of a character who will grow and develop over many books to come.

1-On-One With Laurie R. King

17th Century Thriller

"After killing the red-haired man, I took myself off to Quinn's for an oyster supper." So begins Michael Cox's mystery, **The Meaning of Night**-the extraordinary story of Edward Glyver, book lover, scholar and murderer. As a young boy, Glyver always believed he was destined for greatness. This seems the stuff of dreams, until a chance discovery convinces Glyver that he was right: greatness does await him, along with immense wealth and influence. And he will stop at nothing to win back a prize that he now knows is rightfully his.



Enter For A Chance To Win A Copy!

New Year's Reading Resolutions

Have you resolved to improve the conversation at your book discussions, but don't know quite how? Here are four ways, suggested by Kaitie Stover at "Book Group Buzz" (**Booklist Online**):

published or produced in the past year.

Mystery books provide lively discussions among



reading groups - many groups only read mysteries. Along with a suspenseful plot, mysteries can provide historical and cultural background, interesting characters, and sense of place and time. And, there is always a resolution at the end - whether it is convincing or not! There are several subcategories within the mystery genre, each with their own characteristic approaches to style, setting, and structure - political thrillers, classic English detective novels, the hard-boiled style, the police and court procedural, the psychological thriller, and even, the "cozy" (funny and light).

Enjoy the summaries of some of the current **Reading Group Choices'** mystery and intrigue selections in the left hand column. There are plenty more listed on the **Reading Group Choices' website** - go to "Choose Keyword" at the top of the page, select Subject, then select Intrigue and Go! Or review the selections

1. Point out the positive aspects of a book before getting into the criticism (which is ever so much more fun, I know, but still).
2. Make efforts to steer conversation away from recaps, summations and descriptions of plot and character.
3. Got a comment? Share it with the group.
4. This is a tough one. In the midst of a spirited discussion, it's easy to start interrupting and stepping on the comments of others. (I am guilty of this. I resolve to do better.) Listen to all comments carefully. You never know when someone might be saving you breath.

Or maybe you've resolved to just read more in 2008? Remez Sasson, who teaches and writes about positive thinking, motivation, self-improvement, and such, suggests ten ways. Click [here](#) to see all ten.

New Releases Sure To Spark Lively Discussions

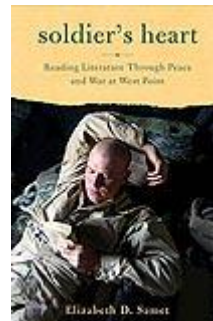


Once in a Promised Land by Laila Halaby is the story of Jassim and Salwa, who left the deserts of their native Jordan for those of Arizona, each chasing mirages of opportunity and freedom. Although the couple lives far from Ground Zero, they cannot escape the dust cloud of paranoia settling over the nation.

Enter For A Chance To Win A Copy!

Elizabeth D. Samet and her students learned to romanticize the army "from the stories of their fathers and from the movies." For Samet, it was the old World War II movies she used to watch on TV, while her students grew up on *Braveheart* and *Saving Private Ryan*. Unlike their teacher, however, these students, cadets at the United States Military Academy at West Point, have decided to turn make-believe into real life. In her memoir

Soldier's Heart: Reading Literature Through Peace and War at West Point, Samet forcefully examines what it means to be a civilian teaching literature at a military academy. She also considers the role of women in the army,



of The **Independent Mystery Booksellers Association** or the list of **Agatha Awards**.

Break out of the box - investigate and read a mystery!

Chances To Win Discussible Books!

Once in a Promised Land

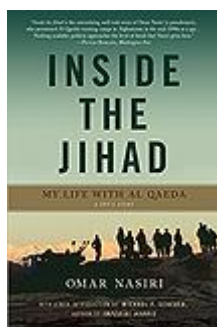
The Meaning of Night

Wolves of the Crescent Moon

Soldier's Heart

the dangerous tides of religious and political zeal roiling the country, the uses of the call to patriotism, and the cult of sacrifice she believes is currently paralyzing national debate.

1-On-One With Elizabeth D. Samet



Inside the Jihad is a gripping insider's account of both Islamist terror networks and the intelligence services that spy on them. This new release offers a completely original perspective on the ongoing battle against Al Qaeda.

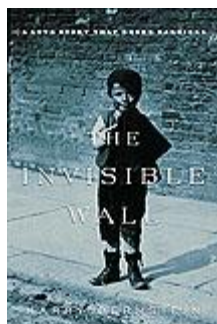
In a suspenseful and elegantly constructed

Wolves of a Crescent Moon, Yousef Al-Mohaimed reveals the surprising connections among three people—the Bedouin, the orphan, and the eunuch—to tell a provocative tale of modern Saudi society.



Enter For A Chance To Win A Copy!

2007 Favorites



The Invisible Wall by Harry Bernstein was picked by William Grimes, *New York Times* book critic, as one of his 10 favorite books of 2007. Along with Grimes, Jane Maslin and Michiko Kakutani, both of the *New York Times*, named their **10 favorite books** of the year. As Jane Maslin wrote, "We have favorites. And they meet criteria that any reader will recognize. These are the books that are disappointing only because they

have to end. They're the ones we mention to friends. They're the ones worth taking on vacation, and they are well executed, whatever their genre or subject matter."

Many of the **2007 Book Sense Bestsellers** were also **Reading Group Choices** selections for lively book discussions. Among them were:

For One More Day by Mitch Albom

Water for Elephants by Sara Gruen

The Memory Keeper's Daughter by Kim Edwards

The Inheritance of Loss by Kiran Desai

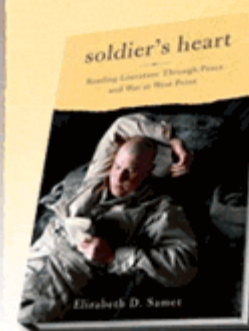
soldier's heart

Reading Literature
Through Peace and War
at West Point

by Elizabeth D. Samet

"I know of no other new book that's a better choice for any reading group that loves to debate literature and politics."

—Bob Minzesheimer, *USA Today*



FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX

Profile of Soldier's Heart

More About Soldier's Heart

New 1-On-Ones

Elizabeth D. Samet

Laurie R. King

Jeanne Kalogridis

Elisabeth Brink

The History of Love by Nicole Krauss
Astrid & Veronika by Linda Olsson
The Year of Magical Thinking by Joan Didion.

Watch For Your "2007 Discussible Favorites" Survey!

Don't miss your chance to weigh in on the books that created the liveliest discussions in your group in 2007! The survey will be arriving in your email box in the next few weeks.



Your Own Discussible Choices

Congratulations to Carole and the **Heritage Wake Forest Book Club** for winning December's Discussible Book Drawing! They make their varied selections many months in advance - their choices for 2008 are:

The Saffron Kitchen by Yasmin Crowther
The Other Boleyn Girl by Philippa Gregory
A Thousand Splendid Suns by Khaled Hosseini
I, Mona Lisa by Jeanne Kalogridis
To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee
The Madonnas of Leningrad by Debra Dean
The Unwanted: A Memoir of Childhood by Kien Nguyn
Songs Without Words by Ann Pacher
The Nine: Inside the Secret World of the Supreme Court by Jeffer Toobin
Suite Française by Irene Nemirovsky
Eat the Document by Donna Spiotta
Middlesex by Jeffrey Eugenides.

We enjoy hearing from book club members and sharing their choices with everyone. **Please let us know** about your group's discussible choices - you may win a book-related prize for every member of your reading group!

Other Discussible Choices

The "KIBBIES"

Heidi Pitlor

**Signup For The
FREE Newsletter
& More**

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Book Group**

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Group Tips**

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Reading Group
Choices**

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Holiday Parties Are Fun! Melanie from **KI Book Babes** sent us these photos of The KIBBIE Awards. At their Christmas party, they vote on Best Book, Best Character, Least-liked Character, etc. and award the person who selected it. The creative and talented Susan of the club made the "KIBBIES". Awesome, Susan! From left to right, can you match the book with the KIBBIE?

Mercy by Jodi Picoult
The Poe Shadow by Matthew Pearl
1,000 White Women by Jim Fergus
The Way the Crow Flies by Anne Marie MacDonald
Mercy (again) by Jodi Picoult



Thanks for keeping the joy of reading alive,



Selecting Discussible Books Since 1994