

Sara The Fuller Award for Lifetime Achievement VI Warshawski Novelist PARETSKY



Presented by the
Chicago Literary
Hall of Fame

May 9, 2019
Newberry Library



AWARDS*

- 1985: Friends of American Writers Award for *Deadlock*
- 1987: *Ms. Magazine's Ms. Woman of the Year Award* "for bringing a woman detective and feminist themes to murder mysteries, and for championing women writers in this mostly male genre"
- 1988: University of Kansas Hall of Fame
- 1988: British Crime Writers Association's Silver Dagger Award for *Blood Shot*.
- 1988: Private Eye Writers of America's Shamus Award for *Blood Shot*. (Best Hardcover P.I. Novel of 1988)
- 1989: YWCA Outstanding Achievement Award
- 1993: German Crime Writers Association's Marlowe Award for *Guardian Angel*
- 1993: Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, McMurray College, Illinois
- 1996: The Society for the Study of Midwestern Literature's Mark Twain Award for Distinguished Contribution to Midwest Literature
- 1996: Lawrence Lions Alumni Association Hall of Honor at Lawrence High School, Kansas
- 1999: Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, Columbia College, Chicago
- 2000: Illinois Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights Professional Achievement Award
- 2002: National Organization for Women Chicago Chapter's Women Who Dared Excellence in Media Award
- 2002: British Crime Writers Association's Cartier Diamond Dagger for Lifetime Achievement
- 2002: Honorary Degree of Doctor of Humane Letters, Elmhurst College, Illinois
- 2002: Chicago Historical Society's Richard Wright History Maker Award for Distinction in Literature (Making History Awards)
- 2004: British Crime Writers Association's Gold Dagger Award for *Blacklist*
- 2004: Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at DePaul University, Chicago
- 2004: *Crain's* list of "100 Most Influential Women in Chicago"
- 2005: Susan B. Anthony Legacy Award to a Leader in Arts & Letters
- 2005: Private Eye Writers of America's Shamus Lifetime Achievement Award
- 2005: Barnes & Noble Booksellers' 2005 Focus on Illinois Award for her contributions to the Illinois Writing and Publishing Community
- 2006: Murder in the Grove's Ridley Award for *Blood Shot*



2006: College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Kansas's Tenth Annual Alumni Distinguished Achievement Award

2007: ACLU of Illinois' Harry Kalven Freedom of Expression Award

2008: National Book Critics Circle Finalist for *Writing in an Age of Silence*

2008: State Library of Kansas's 2008 Kansas Notable Book for *Bleeding Kansas*

2011: Mystery Writers of America Edgar Awards' Grand Master award

2011: Kansas Governor's Distinguished Arts Award

2011: Bouchercon Lifetime Achievement Award

2011: Private Eye Writers of America's Hammer Award for Best P.I. Series Character

2012: Chicago Public Libraries' Harold Washington Literary Award

2012: City of Chicago's "Sara Paretsky Day," March 14, in honor of the 30th anniversary of the publication of *Indemnity Only*

2012: Giving Matters, Literature for All of Us Award

2013: Freedom from Religion Foundation Freethought Heroine Award

2015: University of Kansas's Honorary Degree of Doctor of Letters

2015: Malice Domestic's Lifetime Achievement Award

2015: International Guest of Honor at Theakstons Old Peculiar Crime Writing Festival, Harrogate, UK

2015: Paul Engle Award at the Iowa City Literary Festival

2016: Pinckley Prize for Distinguished Body of Work

2017: MWA Midwest Chapter's Sara Paretsky Award honoring mysteries set in Midwest



2019: MWA Sue Grafton Memorial Award at the annual Edgars

*Credit to Margaret Kinsman's *Sara Paretsky: A Companion to the Mystery Fiction* (McFarland, 2016) for this awards compilation

BIBLIOGRAPHY



Novels

Indemnity Only (1982): The debut of Paretsky's most famous character, the great Chicago detective V.I. "Vic" Warshawski. "Not since crime-fiction masters Raymond Chandler and Dashiell Hammett has a mystery writer integrated a character and an environment so seamlessly, to such telling, vibrant effect."—*Chicago Magazine*.

Deadlock (1984): After Vic's cousin "accidentally" falls from a pier, she must investigate criminal activity in the Great Lakes shipping industry.

Killing Orders (1985): While trying to clear the name of her great-aunt, who's been accused of embezzling from a local priory, Vic is attacked by an unknown assailant.

Bitter Medicine (1987): The death of Vic's friend in a for-profit hospital is deemed an accident, until the friend's doctor is brutally murdered.

Blood Shot (1988): A friend asks for help finding the father she never knew; but the investigation is complicated when another friend of Vic's is discovered dead in a local pond.

Burn Marks (1990): Vic is asked to find a hotel room for an estranged aunt; but after a fire and a mysterious death, the aunt is nowhere to be found.

Guardian Angel (1992): While trying to protect the longtime resident of a gentrified neighborhood, Vic faces betrayal from a close friend and her own lawyer.

Tunnel Vision (1994): Vic doesn't want to investigate the suspicious activity of a supposedly charitable organization, until a board member is killed in the detective's office.

Ghost Country (1998): Three homeless women converge in a Chicago hotel where, during a violent storm, a silent fourth woman appears. "This book is rich, astonishing, and affecting, and Paretsky deserves rave reviews for taking a huge risk and doing so with amazing success."—*Booklist*.

Hard Time (1999): When a multimedia conglomerate buys out a Chicago newspaper, Vic must investigate the dark side of the entertainment industry.

Total Recall (2001): While trying to save her friend, who was traumatized during the Holocaust, Vic discovers an international conspiracy dating from the days of the Third Reich.

Black List (2003): After discovering a dead journalist in a suburban pond, Vic must confront the effects of racial discrimination, the McCarthy-era blacklists, and the Patriot Act.

Fire Sale (2005): Vic is tasked with confronting the Bysen family, the warring owners of a giant retail chain.

Bleeding Kansas (2008): Two families in the Kaw River Valley are forced to adapt to changing times when a new neighbor challenges their sexual and religious mores.

Hardball (2009): While searching for a man who's been missing for 40 years, Vic discovers unsettling secrets from Chicago's—and her family's—history.

Body Work (2010): Thinking she'll have a chance to enjoy herself, Vic visits a Chicago nightclub, where a stranger is shot and dies in her arms.

Breakdown (2012): A group of tween girls discover a fresh corpse while holding a ritual in an abandoned cemetery; Vic is called to investigate.

Critical Mass (2013): Vic's friend, a survivor of the Holocaust, summons Vic for a case whose origins lie in the race for the atomic bomb.

Brush Back (2015): Vic is called to help a woman who's just finished a twenty-five year sentence for murdering her own daughter, Vic's high-school acquaintance.

Fallout (2017): Trying to help a framed man sends Vic to Lawrence, Kansas, where conflict revolves around a nuclear missile silo.

Shell Game (2018): Paretksy's latest novel has Vic investigating the disappearance of her own niece. "*Shell Game* could hardly be more timely with its pointed riffs on #MeToo, the brutality of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement and the long reach of Russian oligarchs. At the same time, the novel is rooted in classic noir."—*Chicago Tribune*.

Nonfiction

Writing in an Age of Silence (2007): In this memoir, Paretksy explores her experiences with political dissent and traces the origins of V.I. "Vic" Warshawski.

Words, Works, and Ways of Knowing (2016): This history of New England theologians analyzes the intellectual disputes of the past, with implications for those of the present.

Stories

Windy City Blues (1995): A collection of stories featuring the Chicago detective V.I. "Vic" Warshawski.

WHAT IS THE FULLER AWARD?

By Valya Dudycz Lupescu

“The Fuller” is awarded by the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame to a Chicago author who has made an outstanding lifetime contribution to literature. The first six Fuller Awards were presented to Gene Wolfe (2012), Harry Mark Petrakis (2014), Haki Madhubuti (2015), Rosellen Brown (2016), Angela Jackson (2018), and Stuart Dybek (2018).

The Fuller Legacy: A Quick Look at a Literary Pioneer

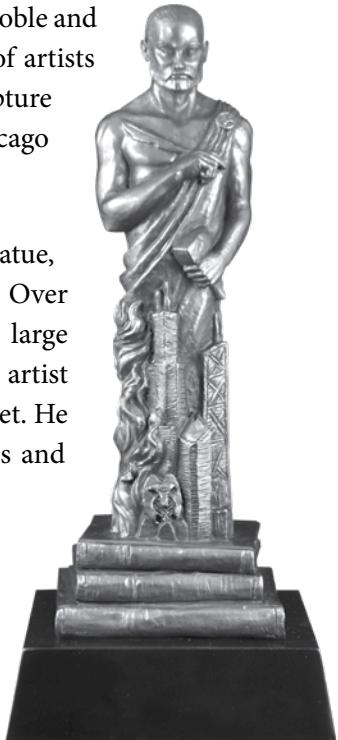
The award was inspired by the literary contribution of Henry Blake Fuller, one of Chicago’s earliest novelists and author of *The Cliff-Dwellers* and *With the Procession*. Both novels use the rapidly developing city of Chicago as their setting and are considered by many to be the earliest examples of American realism. Theodore Dreiser called *With the Procession* the first piece of American realism that he had encountered and considered it the best of the school, even during the days of his own prominence. There are additional layers of meaning to the word “fuller.” A fuller is also a tool used to form metal when it’s hot, an important part of building and a nice metaphor for Chicago, home to the “First Chicago School” of architecture that rose up from the ashes of the Chicago Fire of 1871. Between 1872 and 1879, more than ten thousand construction permits were issued. Chicago emerged as a resilient city that took risks and made bold decisions—using iron and steel to frame its buildings, giving rise to the world’s first skyscraper. The fuller was one such tool that made it happen, a symbol of possibility and perseverance. Inspired by the sleek lines and art deco style of Chicago sculptor John Bradley Storrs, whose sculpture Ceres is on top of the Board of Trade building, the award statue for the Fuller was based on Hephaestus, the Greek god of the blacksmith’s fire and patron of all craftsmen. According to legend, Hephaestus was the only god who worked, and he was



honored for having taught mankind that work is noble and one should excel at his or her craft. The patron of artists and craftsmen, he seemed a fitting symbol to capture the spirit of excellence embodied by the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame's Fuller Award.

Ron Swanson, Jr., who created the Fuller Award statue, is the founder and owner of R.E. Sculpture, Inc. Over the course of his career, Ron has worked on large sculptures, including public figures as part of an artist group at Friends of Community Public Art in Joliet. He has also worked on many original toy prototypes and various licensed character sculpts.

www.resculpture.net



“When I hear from readers that my books have spoken to them in a very particular or personal way, that means a lot to me. I think of [my fans] often. I feel like I owe it to them to do my best job always. This current book, I pull it apart, restructure it, start again; it’s not fair to them if I’m not giving it my best effort.”

– Sara Paretsky

Photo by Mary Livoni

TONIGHT'S PROGRAM

Karen Christianson, Director of Public Engagement	Welcome to the Newberry Library
Donald G. Evans	<i>The Chicago Literary Hall of Fame's Fuller Award</i>
Donna Seaman	<i>Sara Paretsky: P.I. (Public Investigator)</i>
Neil Harris	<i>What's Past May Be Prologue</i>
Lori Rader-Day	<i>Big Sister in Crime</i>
Dominick Abel	<i>Representing Sara</i>
Heather Ash	<i>Better Angels, Bigger Wings: Equity in the Mystery Community</i>
Ann Christophersen	<i>Prose and Politics</i>
Margaret Kinsman	<i>Warrior Woman, Classy Champion</i>
Sara Paretsky	Accepting the CLHOF's Fuller Award for Lifetime Achievement

Sara Paretsky is truly one of Chicago's finest literary greats. From the wildly popular V.I. Warshawski mysteries to her stand-alone novels to her short stories to her nonfiction work, Paretsky has enthralled millions of readers worldwide. Her trailblazing work with Sisters in Crime has done much to promote and support female crime writers. Sara Paretsky is a treasure, a role model, and an inspiration. Congratulations and thank you!



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come true*

TONIGHT'S PARTICIPANTS



Dominick Abel is president of the Dominick Abel Literary Agency, Inc. Before he became a literary agent, in 1975, he was a history teacher, a magazine and book editor, a book publishing executive, and, for a brief time, wine columnist of the late, lamented *Chicago Daily News*. He represents about 50 writers, including Sara Paretsky.



Heather E. Ash is President of the Mystery Writers of America Midwest Chapter. She started her writing career in television, with credits on STARGATE SG-1 and others. Her one-hour original script "Square One" was chosen by the WGA's *Written By* magazine as a top five unproduced drama pilot and was also a finalist in the script category of the 2013 Writer's Digest Annual Competition. Her short fiction has appeared in anthologies, and a first crime novel is in the works.



Ann Christophersen is one of the founders of Women & Children First and co-owned the bookstore with business partner, Linda Bubon, for thirty-four years. She is also a past president of the American Booksellers Association.



Lori Rader-Day is the Edgar Award-nominated and Anthony and Mary Higgins Clark Award-winning author of *Under a Dark Sky*, *The Day I Died*, *Little Pretty Things*, and *The Black Hour*. She co-chairs the mystery conference Murder and Mayhem in Chicago and serves as the national vice-president of Sisters in Crime. Her next book, *The Lucky One*, will be out from Harper Collins in 2020.



Donald G. Evans is the Founding Executive Director of the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame; a four-time honoree of *Newcity's* Lit 50 listing; and recipient of the Chicago Writers Association's Spirit Award. He is the author of three books, most recently the short story collection, *An Off-White Christmas*.



Neil Harris is Preston and Sterling Morton Professor of History Emeritus at the University of Chicago. His specialty is American cultural history and he has written on the history of American art, architecture, entertainment, publishing, museums, and commerce.



Margaret Kinsman is the author of *Sara Paretsky, A Companion to the Mystery Fiction* (McFarland 2016). She is a visiting Research Fellow in Popular Culture at London Southbank University, United Kingdom. After seven years as Executive Editor of *Clues*, the only American scholarly journal dedicated to mystery fiction, she now serves as Consulting Editor. She, and Elizabeth Foxwell, Managing Editor of *Clues*, were jointly given the 2006 George N. Dove Award from the Popular Culture Association. Kinsman received the 2016 Raven Award from the Mystery Writers of America. Her book on Paretsky won the 2017 Macavity Award for Best Non-Fiction from Mystery Readers International.



Donna Seaman is Editor, Adult Books, for *Booklist*. A recipient of the James Friend Memorial Award for Literary Criticism and the Studs Terkel Humanities Service Award, Seaman is a member of the Content Leadership Team for the American Writers Museum. Her most recent book is *Identity Unknown: Rediscovering Seven American Women Artists*.

SNAPSHOTS WITH SARA

by Lori Rader-Day



“Would you take a photo with me?” Sara Paretsky said, holding out a bottle of wine with, no lie, *Poison* on the label. “My editor said I should schmooze more.”

In the resulting photo, posted on Facebook, I have a tolerant look on my face, like I’m granting her a favor. I remember thinking, *Your editor is not going to be impressed by your schmoozing with me.* My first book had been out six months. I was a baby in publishing terms and, even worse, earnest. Of course I was not so new that I didn’t know who Sara Paretsky was—you couldn’t be a crime writer in Chicago without knowing—and though I was making a study of all the ways a woman might make this writing business her own, Sara was the model, a woman writing hard-edged crime fiction, big books with tough topics and a tough protagonist. She stood at the pinnacle.

And then suddenly she was standing on a *chair*, giving a speech to the gathered authors, all their hopeful faces turned up, adoring. I spotted for her. *If Sara Paretsky falls off this chair, I'll never write in this city again.*

That was at a meeting for the Midwest Chapter of Mystery Writers of America, but since that day I have met Sara many times: at events for other writers, at events at which we both read our work or spoke; at times when we locked arms with other women crime writers to demand fairness and at times when Sara was rewarded for a lifetime of such work: as an MWA Grand Master, as the national president of Mystery Writers of America, as a Lifetime Achievement Honoree at the readers’ conference Malice Domestic. Even better were the moments when Sara modeled the other ways of being an author, when she encouraged a young writer at Printers Row Lit Fest, or lent her name to a reading of mostly unpublished women writers so that the audience might be full. At Bouchercon New Orleans, Sara and I danced through the wet streets in a Second Line Parade

made up of crime writers. (“I’ve never been in a parade that wasn’t a protest march,” she said.) We weren’t schmoozing anymore. We were friends. For Sisters in Crime’s 30th anniversary, I interviewed the Big Sister of Us All on stage for the Chicagoland chapter. When publicist Dana Kaye and I launched the readers’ conference Murder and Mayhem in Chicago and decided to honor crime fiction written from and about the Midwest, we named the award—what else?—The Sara Paretsky, and presented the inaugural award to its namesake.



Parades and awards are nice, but they are fanfare in a life that is mostly quiet and solitary. In recent months, I have seen Sara mournful, for her beloved husband Courtenay, and for the work that is left to do. She isn’t going to finish it all.

But she damn well started it. I haven’t been the only one watching while Sara Paretsky has shown us how the work is done. All we have to do is stand up for what we believe in. We stand up, again and again, as often as it takes. We stand up on the highest chair we can, and then we reach back and pull up the others.



Photo by John Thomas Bychowski

CHICAGO, OUR HOME TOWN

by Margaret Kinsman



In 1998, on a semester's sabbatical leave from London Southbank University, I pitched up in Chicago to work on a Scribner's commission for a set of profiles on mystery and suspense writers. Setting up base at the Newberry Library, where Sara Paretsky had lodged the first set of her papers, I went to work on a lengthy critical/biographical article on the author and her legendary V.I. series. I had long been in exile myself from Chicago, having decamped to London in the early 1970s and then forgotten to come home.

Over the course of those three months, I had the pleasure of re-discovering a city I had known as a youngster, and which had come alive for me, far away in London, through the pages of Sara's V.I. Warshawski mysteries, reading them as Lessing's Martha Quest hungrily reads, wanting to know what this told me about myself. I loved the ways in which I experienced the detective's city through her favourite restaurants, her affection for the lake, her love/hate relationship with the Cubs, and her appreciation of the Windy City's distinctive neighbourhoods. And I identified with the cranky/crusading spirit of the brave, stubborn, resourceful private investigator – whose loyalty to friends and causes was second to none. This was Nancy Drew for grown-ups.

During that sabbatical, Sara and her husband Courtenay Wright welcomed me into their Hyde Park home and lives. They could not have been more gracious and open to an eager scholar and reader. Given access to the writer – and to the files and papers still in her office – it seemed I had died and gone to heaven. It was a unique opportunity for which I have long been grateful. Their professional and personal generosity has informed and nurtured my own work in countless ways. I was lucky to be working on a project that engaged me at every level – as a reader, a researcher, a feminist, a Midwesterner. So I was indeed thrilled at the invitation to participate in this Fuller Award event honouring Sara and

the outstanding body of work which has had such a profound impact on the landscape of crime and mystery fiction as we know it today.

I had first met Sara Paretsky a few years earlier in Nottingham, UK at the Bouchercon Convention, hosted in 1995 by Shots on the Page and Shots in the Dark – festivals celebrating crime and mystery on the page and on the screen. I had approached Sara's British publicist to request an interview, which was duly arranged to follow the annual Sisters in Crime breakfast. The interview took place on the hoof – it turned out that both of us were privately snarling over the dreadful coffee on offer, and the rest of the day was about to unravel unless we sourced something better. So together we prowled the streets of Nottingham on a grey Sunday morning in pursuit of espresso, which was finally located in a small dingy Italian café tucked down a side street. It did the trick. Knowing now that caffeine is one of Sara's major food groups, I like to imagine that the shared coffee quest helped forge the professional – and subsequent personal – relationship that developed over the years since.

What I initially appreciated as an enthusiastic reader - the ground-breaking detective character Victoria Iphigenia Warshawski, and the detailed rendering of the Chicago location in all its beauty and grime – were, by the late 1990s, commonplaces of the mystery genre. But that was not the case in the early 1980s, when Paretsky's agent, Dominick Abel, was looking for a publisher for the first V.I. novel – *Indemnity Only*. As Sara has written, it took “a year to find [a publisher] in New York willing to take a chance on a woman private

eye in the Midwest” (see intro to *Indemnity Only*, 30th anniversary edition). That first V.I. novel presented an unexpected double-whammy in the early 80s – not only a female private eye, but a Chicago setting. What *were* the author and her agent thinking? [To be fair, Chicago had a recurring presence in the early Nancy Drew stories, though more as a backdrop than mean city streets.] What



Photo by Margaret Kinsman



Photo by Margaret Kinsman

Sara's first manuscript presented was an extraordinary departure from the norms of the private investigator novel. That it is now hard to imagine any big publisher saying no to a mystery writer using the Midwestern setting or presenting a female protagonist, is testimony to what Paretsky's interventions kick-started. As we all know, the combination of the irascible detective, and her vivid city streets, proved a winning one. V.I. and Chicago injected fresh air into a genre more traditionally identified with wise-cracking male detectives and the rain-slicked streets of LA, or San Francisco, or NYC. Chicago, with its legendary reputation as a hard and corrupt city – along with its stunning lakeside built environment – lent itself with ease to Paretsky's pen. She laid claim to the location, giving it a life of its own in the mystery genre. According to the British critic, Marcel Berlins, in a 1990 review of *Burn Marks*, "Chicago is proving to have layers of decadence and corruption that not even Los Angeles can match. The city is an essential character in all Paretsky's novels."

Paretsky's great knowledge and understanding of her adopted city emerges time and again. Chicago's history is integral to the plots, which more often than not explore the economic and political complexities of gender, class and racial oppression. The detective's, and I suspect the author's, relationship with her city is a paradoxical one. Proud of her blue-collar roots in south Chicago where the once-thriving steel mills stood, V.I. is enraged by the corporate and institutional corruption she discovers at all levels of Chicago's private and public sectors. Driven to challenge the cruel people and criminal practices she comes across, the private investigator's high-octane battles with Chicago's power structures contrast with the comfort and companionship she finds in

a sustaining group of friends and colleagues; no bourbon bottle for her in the bottom drawer of a lonely hotel room. V.I.'s personal network is itself testament to Chicago's famously diverse population: the stalwart neighbor Mr. Contreras, retired machinist of Italian descent; Sal Barthele, African-American owner of the legendary Golden Glow bar in the Loop; Dr. Lottie Herschel, friend extraordinaire and long-time Chicago resident; Max Loewenthal, Lottie's devoted companion (Lottie and Max both refugees



from 1930s Nazi Austria); reporter Murray Ryerson, native Chicagoan. V.I.'s own parentage is further testimony to Chicago's plurality – her mother Gabriella fled Fascist Italy in the late 1930s; the detective's Polish father, Tony, made a career as a cop in the notoriously Irish Chicago police force.

The appeal of the V.I. series, and its mold-breaking features, were recognised from the get-go by appreciative critics and reviewers. The second V.I. outing, *Deadlock*, won a Friends of American Writers Award in 1985, the first of more than 30 honors to date, including the British Crime Writers Association Diamond Dagger and the Mystery Writers of America Grand Master Award. Closer to home, Paretsky was given the Mark Twain Award for distinguished contributions to Midwestern Literature; and she was the first recipient, in 2017, of the MWA Midwest Chapter's Sara Paretsky Award honouring mysteries set in the Midwest. While Paretsky's later career has included teaching writing courses at Northwestern University and the University of Chicago, and while she is much in demand as a public speaker, her major achievement is truly the V.I. novels, which "have grown richer and more ambitious with age" according to reviewer Maureen Corrigan. Paretsky's multi-faceted literary career, and the stories she tells of V.I. and her circle of Chicago friends, are reminders to us all that it is possible for women to have a powerful presence in the real world – that they can speak for themselves, have adventures, and help imagine a better world.



"No," I said, "when you're struggling to survive, no one gets to label you a coward, not even you yourself in your private thoughts."

– Sara Paretsky,
Brush Back, 2015

Photo by Mary Livoni

DISCOVERING SARA PARETSKY, SOCIAL WARRIOR

By Mia P. Manansala



Even though I grew up watching “Matlock” and “Murder, She Wrote” and reading my parent’s mystery novels, I didn’t discover Sara Paretsky until I decided that I wanted to stop dreaming about writing a novel and actually write one. A one-day writing workshop reminded me of why I fell in love with mysteries in the first place. And that’s where I learned about

organizations like the Mystery Writers of America and Sisters in Crime. It was through my involvement with these organizations that I first heard about Sara Paretsky. And once I knew about her work, I couldn’t get enough.

I felt like I’d hit the jackpot. A female P.I. novel set in Chicago? My city, my beloved hometown, so often ignored in media, is front and center in all of her V.I. stories. Her stories weave delightful nods to places familiar to me (V.I.’s office and her bar of choice are a block away from where I work) but also gave me perspective on a Chicago I never knew; either because those times are past or because Chicago is a city of neighborhoods and V.I. explored far outside my little area of Hermosa on the Northwest side.

After I became acquainted with her fiction, I wanted to know more about this wonderful author who I’d never come across despite living in Chicago almost my entire life. It was through her memoir, *Writing in an Age of Silence*, that I learned she wasn’t originally from Chicago, but came to our great city in the ‘60s as a community organizer and activist for the civil rights movement. Her passion for social justice—for women, people of color, and other marginalized communities—solidified not just my appreciation of her talent as a writer, but a deep respect for her as a person.

I recently read Sara's short story collection, *Windy City Blues*, and this line in the introduction stood out to me: "One thing all Chicagoans understand is loyalty, especially loyalty to someone who has bribed you."

And this is true. Chicagoans tend to be a fiercely loyal people, though we may play fast and loose with certain laws. However, unlike our politicians, you can't buy my loyalty. But Sara Paretsky has it anyway. She gave me a community and a place to belong. She gave women in mystery the attention and support they desperately needed and deserved. She gave people from marginalized communities a seat at the table. She gave us V.I. Warshawski.

Who could ask for more than that?



"Some men can only
admire independent
women at a distance."

– Sara Paretsky,

● *Indemnity Only*, 1982

Photo by Mary Livoni

TAKING STRENGTH FROM V.I.

By Sherry Harris
President, Sisters in Crime

When I start reading a novel I don't expect it to be life changing. "The night air was thick and damp." That's the opening line from Sara Paretsky's first book, *Indemnity Only*. I don't expect a fictional protagonist to be a role model or that the author would someday become an inspiration. But all of those things happened to me over the years while reading about V.I. Warshawski.



Don't get me wrong, I have plenty of real-life role models, but when I got divorced and in those first painful, early days of reshaping my life, I turned to Sara's books about V.I.. There was a strong, independent woman. She didn't need a man, and if she didn't, maybe I didn't either.

Years later when I decided to write a novel I again thought of V. I. Warshawski. She was smart, she cared deeply about the people she was helping, and she was tenacious—always seeing things through to the end, sometimes to her detriment. That was the kind of protagonist I wanted to write, the kind of protagonist I hope I'm writing as I get ready to draft the ninth book in my first series.

Sara's writing inspired me to tackle societal problems in my own books. I write about issues that the spouses and children of military members have to deal with, from abuse to depression to unspoken rules to expectations that are sometimes impossible to live up to. Keeping the home fires burning isn't easy.

It's not surprising that Sara tackles societal problems in her books, for she's done it in her real life, too. One of her many legacies is as founding mother of

Sisters in Crime. SinC was formed more than thirty years ago by twenty-seven women crime fiction writers when they realized that women weren't getting reviewed or recognized with awards as often as men. Sara led the charge and became the first president. Today the organization has 4,000 members, worldwide, and continues to promote the ongoing advancement, recognition, and professional development of women crime writers. We still monitor reviews from major publications and each year produce a report of those findings as one of our missions. When I was asked to run for national president of Sisters in Crime, the first person I thought of was Sara. I felt a zing from her heart to mine through a succession of strong women who have led and shaped this organization. I can only hope that my writing and my legacy, inspired on so many levels by Sara Paretsky, will touch other people's lives as hers have touched mine.



"In addition to needing considerable courage even to tell stories, we women have also to figure out what our stories are. The image of ourselves as inconstant, duplicitous, stupid, illogical, using our bodies to seduce and subvert men is such an ancient, ingrained part of our tradition, reinforced in fairy tales, epics, history, that to counteract these images by telling women's stories makes for very heavy work."

– Sara Paretsky, Introduction to *A Woman's Eye*, 1991

AN EDITOR'S DREAM

By Emily Krump

Senior Editor, William Morrow, an imprint of HarperCollins Publishers



Sara Paretsky is a master storyteller. After twenty (nearly twenty-one!) published novels, dozens of short stories, hundreds of thousands of copies sold, regular appearances on bestseller lists, award nominations and wins, there is plenty of quantitative evidence to support this statement. But Paretsky's excellence lies deeper, and nowhere is that more apparent than in how she approaches her writing.

Despite her success, she is incredibly humble. She is open about the challenges and the struggles of telling each new story, in a new way. She is committed to putting in the hours and hours of hard work writing and rewriting, again and again until each story unfolds in exactly the way she envisioned. Her refusal to become complacent creates stories that are ever more twisty, more nuanced, and as a result, she drives her audience to return book after book to be challenged by the complex puzzles she crafts. And, of course, be inspired by dauntless protagonist, V.I.

For me, spending time with V.I. Warshawski often feels like spending time with Sara Paretsky. After an afternoon together, I feel a little bit smarter, a little more thoughtful, and I always know more about pressing social issues. Though there are many, many differences between Sara and her famous heroine, Sara generously instilled V.I. with a few of her own traits that I believe have made the iconic detective so enormously popular: she is a steadfast friend, she is a champion for the underprivileged, she is fearless. Because V.I. and her creator are so passionate and so informed, Sara Paretsky has been able to seamlessly address difficult subject matter. She has an unrivaled ability to shine a spotlight on people and issues often forgotten, all within a suspenseful, satisfying mystery.

It's a transportive experience that leaves readers thinking, never chastised, and always feeling victorious as our tireless V.I. gets the bad guy. No other author today has been able to achieve what Sara Paretsky has with V.I. Warshawski. The combination is simply thrilling!

The incomparable Sara Paretsky has left an indelible mark on the mystery genre, the literary landscape, and our larger world. She has made it a better place to be. An editor's dream. I am grateful to work with her and honored to know her.

“The water had a flat silvery sheen, a flinty shade that you don’t see in summer. You can tell the seasons by the color of the lake, even if nothing else in the landscape changes. When it’s calm the water seems infinitely enticing, offering to hold you, to caress you until you sleep, as though there were no cold depths, no sudden furies that could dash you helpless against the rocks.”

– Sara Paretsky, *Burn Marks*, 1990

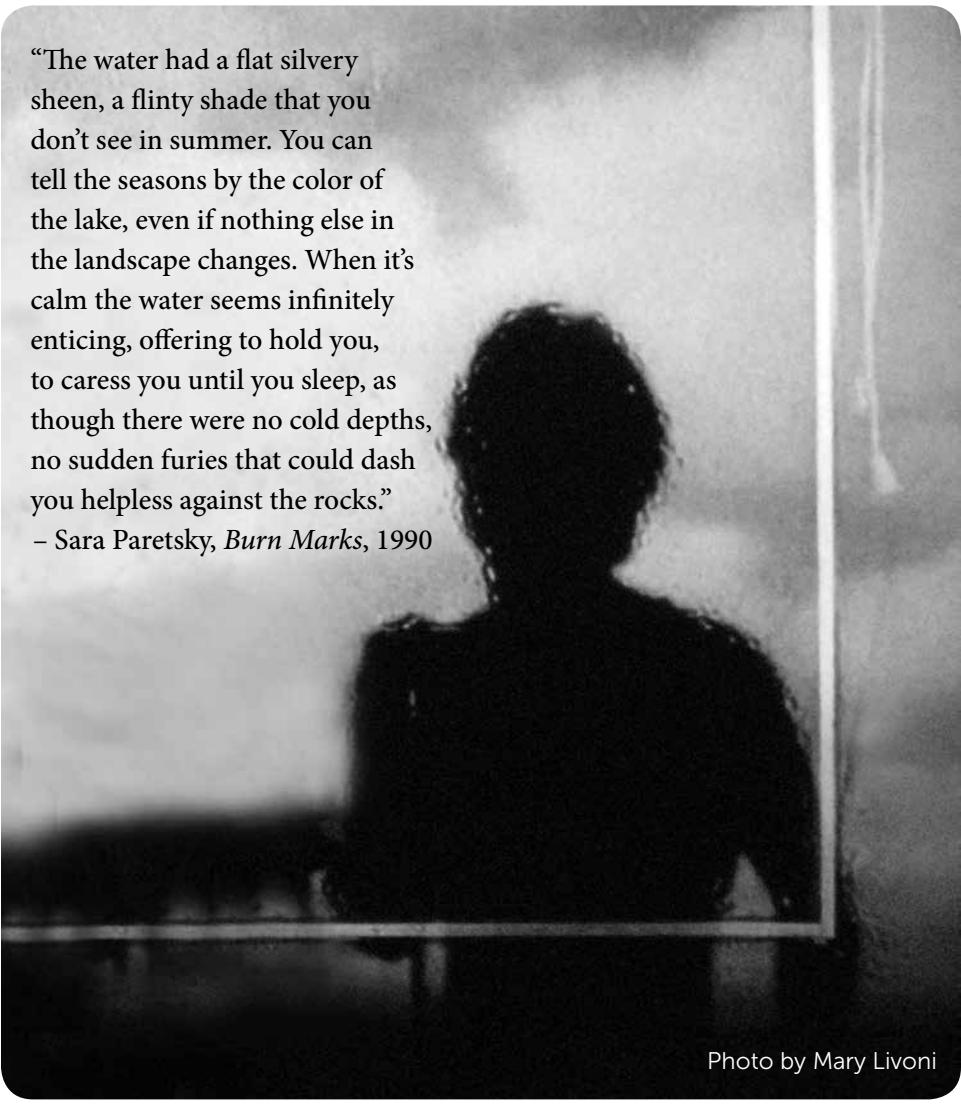
A black and white photograph showing the back of a person's head and shoulders. The person is facing a large window or glass door that looks out onto a body of water. The water is calm, reflecting the light. The room interior is dark, creating a strong contrast with the bright outdoor scene. The person appears to be wearing a dark jacket or coat.

Photo by Mary Livoni

FALLING FOR PARETSKY AND V.I.

By Laura Caldwell

I fell for V.I. first. I read *Killing Orders* while on break from law school, looking for something fast, smart, fun and not caring if I liked the characters. But V.I. had me. I adored her sauciness but loved how capable she was. I wasn't an author yet, so my law student mind was hard to turn off and another trait I noticed, one I would forever love about Paretsky's writing, is that her research is meticulous, undeniable. Later, when I fell for Sara, as a friend, colleague and her one-time editor, I was able to reflect on this incredible drive for nailing the background, for making sure she knows all about her plots, the real-life subject matters, the scandals, the bodies buried. That research is what gives Paretsky's writing such a powerful authenticity, one that comfortably envelopes the reader, allowing them to tiptoe with delicious trepidation along with V.I., eternally looking over her shoulder but unwanted to stop her push for the truth.



It's a funny understatement to say Sara Paretsky doesn't hold back her opinions, both in her real life and her writing, but it must be pointed out that Paretsky paints nothing all black. In one interview she gave in 1990, she described a corporations' favorite employee as one middle-aged and with severely ill children because they're trapped, they can't leave. She then mentioned her decade in the corporate world, saying how though it was somewhat grotesque, she enjoyed aspects of it, and in particular missed the camaraderie. Paretsky is always piecing together the threads of complication then pulling them apart again to see how they are driven, woven. She is the author who can always find a villain for her readers, sometimes many, but then often deliver some heartbreakingly details about that same felonious character.

Sara Paretsky is beloved by other authors and is a perennial favorite at writer's conferences, not just because she gives good panel (which she does—always reaching for deeper implications as well as zinging quips to crack the audience), and not because she'll say yes to a refreshment at the bar later (which

she also does) but because she listens, truly listens, when people talk. She'll visit with published authors, who all come calling to say hello, to congratulate her on the latest V.I., to ask her thoughts on certain publishing aspects, but Sara is always one of the last authors at the signing tables, talking with readers, even as organizers shoo them to the next event, listening close to their commentary, always eliciting opinions.

Sara Paretsky was high on the list of authors I asked to write on Anatomy of Innocence: Testimonies of the Wrongfully Convicted. The book pieces together essays of exonerees told by master storytellers in order to explain how a wrongful conviction happens and feels. In addition to Paretsky, Lee Child, Laurie King, Scott Turow and a posthumous Arthur Miller contribute accounts that add up to the stages of an innocent convicted. Sara's essay in particular was a tricky one because it had almost become a trope—the story of a young black man tortured by South Side police into falsely confessing to murder. But Paretsky's story about David Bates is nothing short of searing, horrifying and deeply tender to its subject. It's a true tale that can easily drive me to tears if read too often. It's one that makes me so incredibly proud to be an editor of not just that important collection but maybe more importantly of Sara Paretsky, one of Chicago's true treasures and someone so worthy of the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame.

“I have a confrontational approach to life that matches this city.
I’m not subtle enough to be a writer about San Francisco.”

— Sara Paretsky

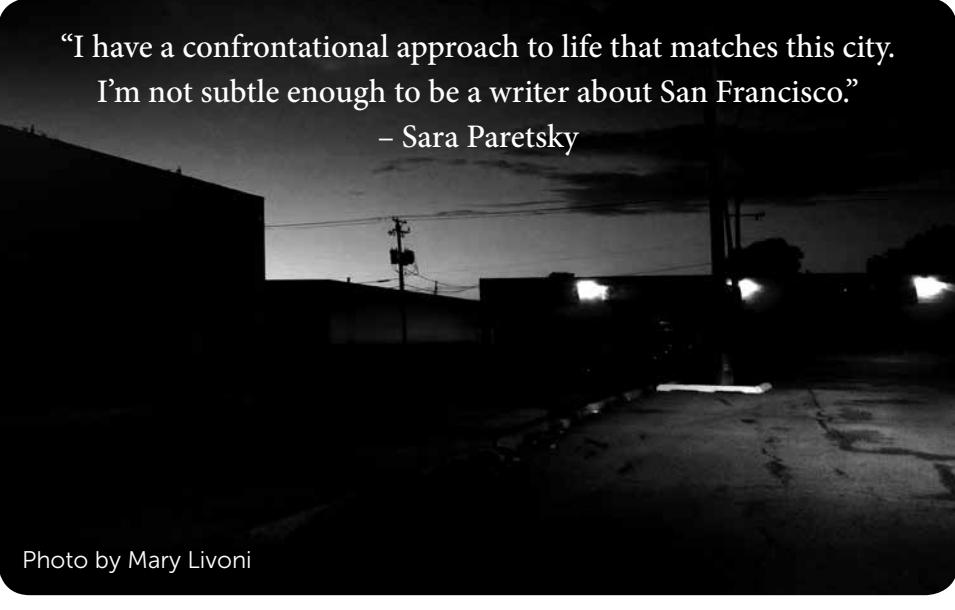


Photo by Mary Livoni

GROWING UP WITH V.I. WARSHAWSKI

By Tracy Clark



Way back when phones were the size of a stevedore's lunchbox, fictional, home-grown private eyes came only one way—hard-boiled. We knew them by their trench coats and fedoras, and by the Chesterfield cigs dangling rakishly from their jaded lips.

Fedora guy kept it loose, easy. He talked tough, lived tough, drank tough. He was a loner, disagreeable to most,

the death of any cocktail party. He was up when the city slept, asleep when it hummed. He trolled mean streets, playing both sides, taking up for little guys with names like Mugsy or Squeak, guys who lived their entire lives getting the short end of the stick. This P.I., both hero and antihero, meted out his own brand of justice, often with hands that weren't so clean.

In P.I. Guy's world, right was complicated and wrong likely announced itself by a sap strike to the back of the head. This iconic P.I., his ethos, the armchair peek at society's underbelly was fiction gold.

But as good as the stories were, as recognizable as P.I. Guy became, even as a kid, I could see no good reason why Sam Spade couldn't just as easily have been a Samantha. I mean, Nancy Drew solved crimes in River Heights all the time. Granted River Heights wasn't exactly Hell's Kitchen, but she got it done. So where was hard-boiled P.I. Woman keeping herself?

We had soft-boiled female sleuths galore, of course—often the brash, rich, nothing-but-time-on-their-hands kind, who toolled around the English countryside in roadsters. These Nosy Nancies, for want of anything better to do, accepted weekend invitations to stately manor houses where they invariably stumbled upon a dead body sprawled on the parlor floor but unmasked the murderer herself just in time for tea and crumpets. There were hunting parties and masquerade balls, high tea, low affairs, and enough poison to dispatch half of Hampshire. I was an African-American kid from the South Side of Chicago. It wasn't a fit you'd expect.

Then 1982 rolled around.

Every Sunday, it was my habit to listen for the *Chicago Tribune* to hit the front porch. At which point, I'd race down the stairs, snatch the front door open and pluck the massive thing off the doormat before anyone else in the house got any ideas. At the kitchen table, I'd tear the paper apart and pluck out the book section. I waited all week for that section. From front cover to back, I'd read about all the genius writers whose new books would soon be added to my leaning TBR stack. As far as I was concerned, they were fairy people who could conjure up entire worlds out of thin air. They were rock stars, friggin' word warriors, and, strangely, I felt a kinship, though it would be years, *years* before I wrote anything that didn't stink.

This Sunday in 1982, however, my eyes drifted down (bottom left corner) to a review of a new book titled *Indemnity Only* by a writer named Sara Paretsky, which featured a female PI in Chicago named V.I. Warshawski. I lived in Chicago. Didn't I love PI Guy? Hadn't I been the one to wonder about Samantha Spade? My Cheerios went soggy. I hit the bookstore the next day, and there she was: Victoria Iphigenia Warshawski, V.I. for short. Sam Spade in a designer suit and Italian pumps

But V.I. wasn't just a gender swap. P.I. Woman, unlike P.I. Guy, had a life. She had people, pets, lovers, daddy issues. She still championed the underdog, the streets were still mean and the goons hadn't gone far, but P.I. Woman lived in the world, not on its fringes. She didn't type memos or make her boss coffee. She *was* her boss. She didn't wait for someone to save her; she saved herself. P.I. Woman stood her ground, pushed the envelope, and didn't give a flip what

anyone thought about it.

Paretsky led the way, and soon P.I. Woman came in all shapes and sizes. She was black, white, Asian, Hispanic, straight, gay, hard, easy. She was the world in microcosm, and I couldn't read the stories fast enough. My bookshelf sagged under the weight of all the new books I piled high. And somewhere along the way, I managed to voice my own aspirations to create my own characters, write my own stories, and now, knock wood, I do. No fedora. No cigs. No trench coat. Plenty of snark, though, and goons. Goons are good.

My P.I. Woman stands on the shoulders of giants. Maybe one day some kid will run down for the Sunday paper, pluck the book section out of the mess and see a review of my book there. That kid won't have to ask why there isn't a Samantha Spade. She is out there, and she is on the case.

“The smoke and noise and the sour cabbage smell were filling my brain. I put my head down to look her in the eyes, started to say something rude, then thought better of it. I fought my way through the smog, tripping over babies, and found the men hovering around a table filled with sausages and sauerkraut in one corner. If their minds had been as full as their stomachs, they could have saved America.”

— Sara Paretsky, *Deadlock*, 1984

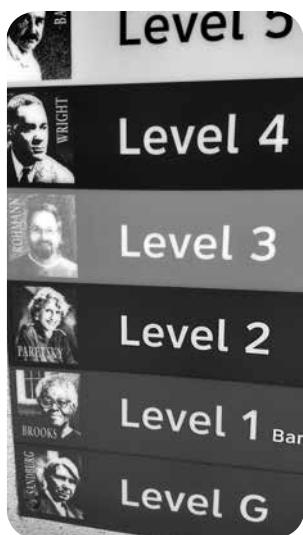


Photo by Mary Livoni

MUCH MORE THAN A MYSTERY WRITER

by Alex Kotlowitz

Many years ago, before I knew Sara, I was dining with my wife at La Sardine, a French restaurant in the West Loop, when this glamorous-looking woman walked in, her elegant face outlined in the shadow cast by a red, wide-brimmed hat. I heard whispers at the table next to us. “It’s Sara Paretsky,” one of them said, clearly in awe. “You know, the mystery writer.” My wife, Maria, and I have since become friends with Sara – and I can tell you she’s so much more than that. To call Sara a mystery writer, is like calling Dostoyevsky a crime novelist or Margaret Atwood a science fiction writer. Sara’s books – so beautifully written, so keenly observed, so quietly subversive – are about who we are and who we aspire to be. In her V.I. Warshawski novels, Sara has challenged the place of women in crime fiction. Here comes this private investigator who would more than hold her own alongside her male predecessors. Moreover, Sara writes about a corner of Chicago, a corner of America, that’s been written off, if not completely forgotten. That stretch along the Calumet River, in the shadows of these now closed behemoth steel mills, once symbols of America’s industrial might, is a place we should all come to know. In years to come, I have no doubt we will read and re-read novels to understand this confounding era.



But beyond her writing, I’ve come to know and love Sara as a friend. She’s of such generous spirit. So loyal and so kind. And a model for me as to the place of a writer in society. When Rahm Emanuel shut down our libraries one day a week, Sara protested. She’s been a major voice in the call to maintain a woman’s right to choose. And has decried the cavalier and ugly treatment of immigrants. Sara maintains this understated courage. In the wake of 9/11, Sara was asked to give a talk at a library in Toledo, and she planned to talk about the excesses of the Patriot Act which the authorities had used to access the records of

libraries. She was politely asked to speak about something more benign. She refused – and delivered her prepared remarks. She later wrote of the event:

“When I started graduate school, I could barely speak above a whisper. A good friend from those years says that when she first met me, she thought she was going deaf when I spoke. It was a long, slow journey for me, from the silence of the margins to speech. Because of my upbringing I don’t think I will ever turn away from questions of power or powerlessness, in my fiction, or in my lectures.”

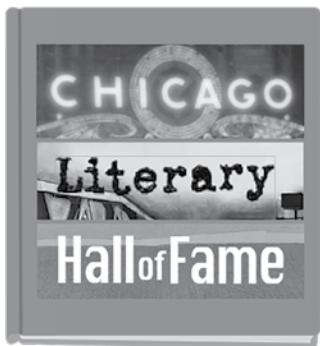
And for that, we are all so fortunate.

“The eye with which I see Chicago is always half cocked for alienation and despair, because for me the city is a dangerous place where both states are only just below the surface. When I fly in at night over the sprawl of lights, the feeling of tininess, of one lone unknown being, recurs. I have to scan the landscape trying to pick out landmarks of the south side that tell me I have a home here, friends, a lover, a life of warmth.”

– Sara Paretsky, Introduction to *Windy City Blues*, 1995



Photo by Mary Livoni



The Chicago Literary Hall of Fame (CLHOF) honors, celebrates, preserves, and promotes the development of Chicago's great literary heritage—past, present, and future. CLHOF seeks to realize this purpose by annual inductions of selected great writers from the past; ceremonies honoring living writers whose lifetime contributions to the literary arts warrant the highest recognition;

literary awards to young people; classes, panels, and other literary endeavors designed to encourage the development of writers at all ages. CLHOF also creates written materials that record the lives and works of Chicago's most important literary figures and presents these and other materials on its website, in exhibits, author events, public art installations, literary tours, and programming relevant to the organization's goal of promoting Chicago's vibrant literary tradition and culture. CLHOF formed as a project of the Chicago Writers Association in 2010, and splintered into its own nonprofit 501 c(3) entity in 2014.

Visit us at chicagoliteraryhof.org

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OUR HOST: THE NEWBERRY LIBRARY

by Donald G. Evans

When V.I. Warshawski finally wrangles control of a rare concerto in the short story “Grace Notes,” she entrusts Newberry Library’s music archivist Isabel Thompson with its indefinite preservation. On the dedication page of *Breakdown*, Paretsky credits past Newberry Library president Bill Towner as one of the librarians who helped her “navigate the great sea of learning.” And, of course, Paretsky arranged to house her first batch of papers in the Newberry holdings.



THE NEWBERRY

It is generally known that the Newberry Library ranks among the best research institutes in the world, but a less widespread truth that it relentlessly supports Chicago’s incredible literary heritage.

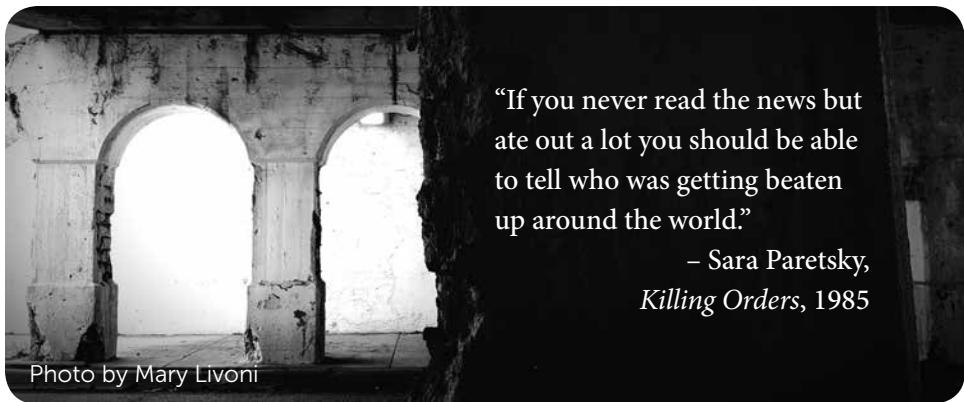
As with Paretsky’s relationship to Newberry, there is a long lineage of fictional and actual interactions between Chicago writers and the library. It is here that Henry DeTamble meets his future wife Clare Anne Abshire in Audrey Niffenegger’s bestselling novel *Time Traveler’s Wife*. Clare, in her first-person narrative, says, “The library is cool and smells like carpet cleaner, although all I can see is marble.”

Niffenegger is another of the many prominent living authors whose papers are held by the Newberry. Chicago historical authors in the Newberry Library Collection include Nelson Algren, Sherwood Anderson, Fanny Butcher, Jack Conroy, Malcolm Cowley, Mitchell Dawson, Floyd Dell, Finley Peter Dunne, James T. Farrell, Henry Blake Fuller, Harry Hansen, Ben Hecht, Ernest Hemingway, Ring Lardner, D’Arcy McNickle, Arthur Meeker, William Morton Payne, and Eunice Tietjens. Algren (2010), Anderson (2012), Butcher (2016), Dell (2015), Farrell (2012), Fuller (2017), Hecht (2013), Hemingway (2012), and Lardner (2016) have all been inducted into the Chicago Literary Hall of Fame. That accounts for nine of our 45 inductees.

The Newberry Library, over the years, has also supported prominent writers, like Era Bell Thompson, through fellowships. Thompson, then a clerk and journalism student at Northwestern University's Medill, pitched her biography *American Daughter* to win the fellowship, which she published in 1946 with the encouragement of Newberry librarian Stanley Pargellis. Thompson went on to have a successful literary career, publishing a second memoir and serving nearly four decades as an editor of *Ebony*, which hired her a year after her first book came out. Algren held a Newberry fellowship in 1948 during the time when he wrote *The Man with the Golden Arm*, which won the first National Book Award in 1950 and was translated into a successful Hollywood film starring Frank Sinatra as Frankie Machine. Contemporary writers, like Tara Betts, have also been Newberry fellows.

The Newberry Library is now more than 125 years old, recently updated and improved, speeding ahead into another inspiring era imbued with Chicago literary history. Liesl Olson, Newberry's Director of Chicago Studies, leads a talented staff—her 2017 nonfiction book, *Chicago Renaissance: Literature and Art in the Midwest Metropolis*, explores two great periods in the city's literary history, and bridges the gap between those late 19th and mid-20th century periods. It also, more so than any other book on the subject, highlights the incredible role that women played in establishing Chicago as a mecca of fine literature.

We're lucky and proud to have the Newberry Library host tonight's ceremony.



TRIBUTES

Sara is a wonder, a gift to the Chicago literary scene and the world of literature in general. Her V.I. Warshawski novels are superb reading, and also an important step forward for the way women have been seen in our society. And as they used to say, she is also a living doll. Hearty congratulations to her on a well-deserved recognition.

Scott Turow

The first time I met V.I. Warshawski, I thought – wow, here's a bit of magic. That's Sara.

Yes, she's the epitome of Chicago. Yes, she's been a pioneer for women, both on and off the page. Yes, she's the walking embodiment of grace and class. Beneath all of it, however, is that fierce, abiding talent – the heartbeat of a writer whose words inspire and compel.

Chandler once said of Hammett – “he did over and over again what only the best writers can ever do at all. He wrote scenes that seemed never to have written before.”

That's Sara. Pure magic.

Michael Harvey

“ ‘Women can be detectives, and I am one,’ I announced.”

– Sara Paretsky, *Hard Time*, 1999

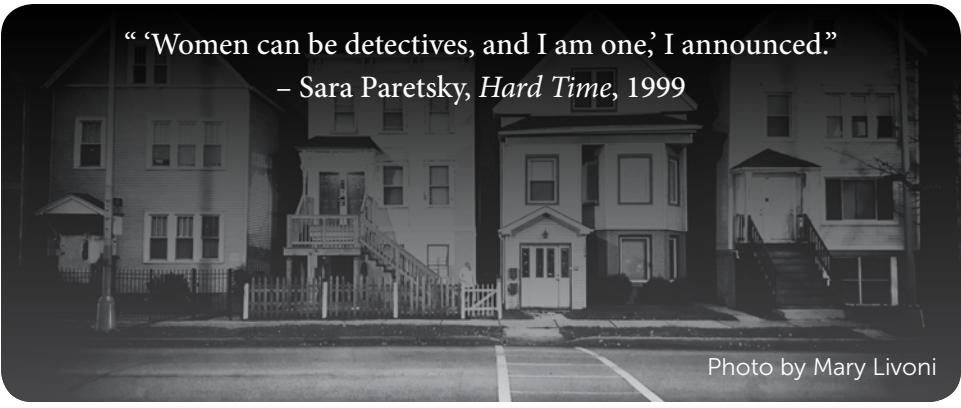


Photo by Mary Livoni

Sara doesn't know this, but she is my mentor. Before I thought about writing mysteries, I read Sara's. (I didn't even live in Chicago then). I remember thinking how courageous V.I. was, how smart, and how clever, especially given the times in which she lived. She wasn't afraid to take a punch or two, either. Even more important was how much V.I. cared about the injustices she tried to correct, sometimes with a snarky remark, sometimes by risking her life. Oh, and she loved dogs.

It wasn't until I got to know Sara that I realized she *is* V.I. Like each of her novels, which tackle a different variant of injustice, Sara, an activist herself, brings a special energy and urgency to whatever issue she's championing. Like V.I.'s stories, always diverse, complex and ultimately satisfying, Sara is a woman who can search out the perfect espresso in the morning, research atomic physics in the afternoon, and sing an aria in the evening. Besides being one of the most talented authors I know, she is also possibly the most well-read. Oh, and she loves dogs.

We will never be able to know for sure how many people she's inspired and touched, whether it's taking up a cause, rescuing an animal, or writing a damn good mystery. But I, for one, count myself among them.

Libby Fischer Hellmann

Sara Paretsky's impressive output of novels speaks for itself, and much has been written, justifiably, of her pioneering influence in women's emergence into publishing equality. But Sara belongs to another famous literary tradition of Chicago, the tradition of Dreiser and James T. Farrell, of Lorraine Hansberry and Nelson Algren and Jack Conroy, authors for whom writing was a way to move the needle, to effect change in an imperfect society. Sara writes in this Chicago street-fighting tradition. Read her books, listen to her talks, if you're lucky, sit on a panel with her. And take notes.

Michael Raleigh

After graduating from Encyclopedia Brown I discovered V.I. Warshawski and she was a revelation. Growing up in East Jesus, Georgia, I had never read a book where the woman was so unabashedly the hero. Sara's work not only influenced me as a writer, she influenced me as a woman. It's okay to be strong. It's okay to be smart. And, most importantly, it's okay to let people know that you're both. Sara Paretsky was/is a huge inspiration to me and to a whole generation of female crime writers.

Karin Slaughter

Sara embodies everything I love about the Chicago literary scene—she's smart, tough, humble, and generous. Her fine character is written through all the fine characters in her novels. To read her is to know her, and to know her is a gift.

Jonathan Eig

Sara could be the heroine of a powerful novel. She's as brave, brilliant, revolutionary, and inspiring as her own V.I. Warshawsky. I admire her enormously.

Nancy Pickard

Just hearing Sara Paretsky's name sends me back twenty-five years, listening to V.I. Warshawski fight for justice on the streets of Chicago while I drove the narrow roads of Western Montana. Here was a woman who didn't back down, who kept on fighting, who was fearless despite her bruises, and loved dogs. When I started writing fiction later, is there any wonder it came out as mystery? And then I met Sara, through Sisters in Crime, and learned she's just as fierce, just as determined, as V.I. to right wrongs and improve lives, particularly for women writers. It was an honor to lead the organization she founded, and to keep up the fierce, necessary work.

Leslie Budewitz

There is not a writer on the planet who hasn't emerged from a conversation with Sara Paretsky without being changed for the better. She's our rock star. Our icon. Our leader and teacher. Authentic and generous and ridiculously humble. Where would any woman crime fiction writer be without her? Well, actually, any crime writer. She's a living legend – whose bravery and trailblazing paves the way for us all. (Plus, she is unfailingly glamorous.) I'm not sure how she does it, but I am endlessly grateful.

Hank Phillipi Ryan

V. I. Warshawski. Private investigator. To her first client in INDEMNITY ONLY she snapped, "You don't like my looks, leave." Well, we liked her looks. A lot. Thanks, Sara Paretsky, for busting down the door for women to write kick-ass female sleuths who can hold the door for themselves, thank you very much.

Hallie Ephron

Sara Paretsky is truly one of Chicago's finest literary greats. From the wildly popular V. I. Warshawski mysteries to her stand-alone novels to her short stories to her nonfiction work, Paretsky has enthralled millions of readers worldwide. Her trailblazing work with Sisters in Crime has done much to promote and support female crime writers. Sara Paretsky is a treasure, a role model, and an inspiration. Congratulations and thank you!

Sara Paretsky was president of the Mystery Writers of America in 2015 and I had the honor of being on the board at the time. MWA president is often a ceremonial title – big-time authors lend their name to the organization, but the real work is done by the executive vice president. Not Sara – she was a hard-working president. She attended the board meetings and dedicated herself to working for a more diverse MWA. Sara never takes the easy way out.

Elaine Viets

Sara Paretsky touched my shoulder once. She also said my name. Twice. I'd love to say I played it cool, calm, and collected but there's photographic evidence to prove otherwise. I've been a huge fan of V.I. Warshawski since I was about thirteen, when my book-loving mother placed a copy of *Indemnity Only* in my hands and said, "You probably will like this." This is the only time I'm willing to admit that mom was right. Vic was independent and sarcastic and loved to eat—basically all the things I wanted to be growing up. I devoured the books like a good meal.

And then I got older and learned more about her creator. Sara Paretsky is someone I still want to be when I grow up. Not only did she find well-deserved success in a very male dominated field but she used—and still uses—that success to spotlight both others and issues in the crime fiction community. Besides being the guiding force of Sisters in Crime—which now boasts over 3,500 members – she also talked about the struggles of crime writers of color years before it became a hot topic. She kicked the door open and she's still holding it open for us 'til this day.

Kellye Garrett

V.I. Warshawski is a woman of my generation and as a lover of mysteries, I was delighted to find her. I was further inspired to learn that Sara had worked on the novels while holding down a real life job, as I was doing and writing on the side. Sisters in Crime had a positive impact on my career, as it had on many others. I admired the work to make sure women's books were reviewed as I admire the many social issues V.I. faces in the books. And I identify with her impulses. But perhaps the thing I love most about the books is the portrayal of a city, Chicago, through the people and places. I guess I'm a real lover of cities, not for the architecture but for the people and layers of history in the places. Sara has produced a wonderful portrait of the city in her books and it is both true to life and, in the end, like the city itself, beautiful. Congratulations Sara.

Frances McNamara

1982's *Indemnity Only* started a revolution that altered the image of women in crime fiction forever: girls could be "hard-boiled." too. The smart, witty and kickass heroines of today owe a deep debt of gratitude to Sara Paretsky's invincible creation, V.I. Warshawski. That I followed in Sara's footsteps as President of Sisters in Crime is a highlight of my professional career.

Marcia Talley

It's rare for a writer to move her genre in a completely new direction; it's rare for a writer to be great at plot, character, action and commentary all at once; and it's rare for a person to live uncompromisingly yet be a warm and delightful friend. Sara Paretsky does all those things and more, and it has been a lucky highlight for me - and many others - to be in the same world as her at the same time.

Lee Child



I stumbled upon Sara Paretsky's novel, *Blood Shot*, long before I even dreamed I could be a writer. The book spoke to me in a way few others did, because she wrote a strong female character set in a city I love, Chicago. Later, when I dipped my toe into the writing world, the first organization I joined was Sisters In Crime. Her books inspired me to write and her organization provided me the support and camaraderie I needed to fulfill that dream. I will be forever grateful.

Jamie Freveletti

When Sara Paretsky created V.I. Warshawski, an irascible, courageous, and caring Chicago private eye, a woman whose detective work is about justice on a grand scale, she transformed crime fiction and gave women a new sense of possibility and power.

Over the course of her 19 internationally best-selling Warshawski novels, Paretsky has brought Chicago into focus as a city of close-knit communities, rampant corruption, corrosive contradictions, valorous stoicism, and brash spirit. Marshalling intricate plots, unnerving suspense, wry wit, and intriguingly complex characters, Paretsky tells potent stories that explore urgent matters, from racism and sexism to domestic violence, genocide, homelessness, inadequate health care, industrial pollution, organized and corporate crime, immigration, police brutality, and assaults on free speech.

Paretsky's imagination, compassion, embrace of social responsibility, and righteous indignation have propelled her out of a writer's solitude and into the public square, where she advocates for girls and women, public education, public libraries, reproductive rights, and our constitutional freedoms. She is a positive and uplifting force as her involving fiction reaches a vast and diverse readership and raises crucial questions about how we live and how we can help others. Paretsky matches elegance with humility, irreverence with conviction, kindness with strength, making Chicago a better place and profoundly enriching literature.

Donna Seaman

I admire Sara Paretsky on so many levels. A few years ago, I had the opportunity to help write the history of Sisters in Crime, which was founded by Sara and several other women in the mid-1980s. Until I read through the documents, interviews and testimonials, I hadn't quite realized what she and the other founders had to overcome, and the collective impact that the organization has had in helping women's voices like mine be noticed and heard. Moreover, Sara's storytelling is fantastic and her books have certainly helped position Chicago as one of the great crime fiction cities. More personally, I have found Sara to be incredibly gracious, warm and supportive—an inspiration to all who have the pleasure to know her.

Susanna Calkins

I first met Sara long-distance when I was chairing the 1989 Edgar Award committee for the Best Film Screenplay category, and Sara was on the committee. We had a great group of judges that year and Sara was suitably outspoken and persuasive in her choices. Years later, I've had the pleasure to interact with Sara in Chicago via the MWA Midwest Chapter. We worked together again on a short story anthology that I co-edited (with Jeffery Deaver), and she submitted a sharp and engaging piece of fiction that was a highlight of the book. Of course, that wasn't a surprise, considering that she IS Sara Paretsky! While I don't know her personally as well as I'd like, I have always admired her intelligence, wit, and friendliness whenever we do cross paths in the Windy City. Congratulations, Sara, you are an inspiration to us all.

Raymond Benson

Sara Paretsky is not just a key figure in mystery fiction, and one of the most important mystery writers – if not the most important – to come out of Chicago, she is a sweetheart. Her generosity to other writers is both unusual and seemingly boundless. Her personal kindness to me has matched her talent as one of our finest writers in the detective genre. And she is a pioneer not only in developing a new slant on private eye fiction, but by bringing social concerns into popular fiction in a meaningful, well-integrated fashion.

Max Allan Collins



“In some ways, V.I. feels weighted down by responsibilities she has taken, and some of that, a lot of that, is a reflection of my own life. I’m 71 now. Things I hoped would change in my lifetime – social justice, women’s reproductive rights... – I’m going to die and those are going to be problems, intransigent problems. V.I. will keep speaking and I will keep writing.”

– Sara Paretsky

**Thank you, Sara for all
you've done to support
the mystery writing
community and for
telling such compelling
Chicago stories.**

Rescuing Chicago
from Capone
...one book at a time



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Congratulations to
our friend, neighbor,
and fellow reader,
Sara Paretsky, who
has, as both writer
and literary citizen,
elevated the Chicago
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“ WE WERE JUST BEGINNING TO HEAR FROM A LOT OF WOMEN IN FICTION AND IN MYSTERY IN PARTICULAR ABOUT WAYS IN WHICH THAT WORLD WAS VERY MUCH OUT OF BALANCE. A lot of women writers were being ignored by libraries and bookstores. FLO KENNEDY, ONE OF THE GREAT CIVIL RIGHTS & WOMEN'S RIGHTS LAWYERS, SAID, ‘Don’t agonize, organize.’ I THOUGHT, either we need to organize, or we need to button our lips.”

—Sara Paretsky

Sisters in Crime congratulates our Founding Mother Sara Paretsky on winning the Fuller Award for Lifetime Achievement and thanks her for her vision, inspiration, and friendship.

*Sisters
in Crime®*

Promoting the ongoing advancement, recognition, and professional development of women crime writers since 1986.

Sara, for your writings: fiction, both long and short, and collections and non-fiction; for your support of fellow writers, you didn't just follow your own dreams, you made the dreams of other writers possible through the founding of Sisters in Crime; and especially for your years of undying support for, and promotion of independent bookstores. Thank you!



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COVER DESIGN:
Hannah Jennings
hannahjennings.com

PROGRAM DESIGN:
Jeff Waggoner



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Food special made for a Warshawski.



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SPECIAL THANKS

To Kelli Christiansen, an unheralded hero of our literary community, for her magnanimous contribution to this program; Lori Rader-Day and Margaret Kinsman, for generous help in shaping this evening ; Jeff Waggoner for taking all the disparate parts and transforming them into a beautiful keepsake; Breaker Press, the city's finest family-owned print shop, for their above-and-beyond efforts; Harlan Kuhr, for diligent work on the printed program; Barry Jung, for proofing, chasing, herding and so forth and so on; Lorraine Brochu, for vital contributions to the planning; Mary Livoni, for offering up her stunning photographs; Hannah Jennings, for the perfect cover art; Rana Segal, for all her incredible video work; Don Seeley, for photographs that I know we'll be looking at years into the future; Floyd Sullivan, for his thorough attention in the proofing process; Karen Christianson and Elizabeth Cummings, for keeping this event centered and successful.

CHICAGO LITERARY HALL OF FAME 2019 EVENTS

Downtown Chicago Literary Tour

Saturday, May 11 • 10 a.m.-Noon
Chicago Cultural Center
78 E. Washington St., Chicago

From the Porch of Gwendolyn Brooks: High School Poetry Workshop (II) with Patricia Frazier

Saturday, May 25 • 10 a.m.-Noon
Carver 47 Cafe
1060 E. 47th Street, Chicago

Gwendolyn Brooks: The Oracle of Bronzeville

Saturday, June 1 • 2-4 p.m.
Carver 47 Cafe
and Gwendolyn Brooks Park
1060 E. 47th Street

and 4542 S. Greenwood Ave., Chicago

Printers Row Lit Fest

Saturday, June 8 and Sunday, June 9
9 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Printers Row, 620 S. Dearborn
(between Congress and Polk)

Downtown Chicago Literary Tour II

Saturday, June 15 • 10 a.m.-Noon
Chicago Cultural Center
78 E. Washington Street, Chicago

Wicker Park Literary Tour

Sunday, July 7
Nelson Algren Statue
Polish Triangle at Division, Ashland,
and Milwaukee Aves.

Bughouse Square Debates

Saturday, July 27 • 12-4 p.m.
Washington Square Park
901 N. Clark Street, Chicago

Great Chicago Books Club: Audrey Niffenegger

Sunday, July 28 • 5-7:30 p.m.
Private Home, Edgewater

Chicago Journalists Bus Tour

Saturday, August 10 • 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Tribune Tower
435 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago

Great Chicago Book Sale

Saturday, August 17 • 10 a.m.-3 p.m.
Euclid Avenue United Methodist Church
405 S. Euclid Ave., Oak Park

Great Chicago Books Club: Nate Marshall

Saturday, August 24 • 6-8:30 p.m.
Private Home, Chicago

Now I Lay Me Down: Hemingway in Paris

Sunday, September 8 • 6-8 p.m.
Hamburger Mary's Show Lounge
155 S. Oak Park Ave., Oak Park

Fuller Award: Sterling Plumm

Thursday, September 19 • 7-9 p.m.
Poetry Foundation
61 W. Superior Street, Chicago

Bye-Bye Summer Picnic

Saturday, September 21 • 2-7 p.m.
Gwendolyn Brooks Park
4542 S. Greenwood Ave., Chicago

Detecting Chicago: Exhibit Opening

Saturday, September 28 • 6-9 p.m.
Centuries & Sleuths Bookstore
7419 Madison Street, Forest Park

Great Chicago Books Club: Rene Rosen

Sunday, September 29 • 5-7:30 p.m.
Private Home, Lincoln Park

2019 Chicago Literary Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony

Thursday, October 24 • 6-9 p.m.
Cliff Dwellers, 200 S. Michigan Ave.
Penthouse (22nd Floor), Chicago

Great Chicago Books Club: James McManus

Saturday, November 16 • 6:30-9 p.m.
Private Home, Evanston

CLHOF Appreciation Party

Invitation Only
Saturday, December 7 • 7-10 p.m.