

**R421 Aspects of the Novel**  
**OLLI Spring Session 2015 – Reston**  
**Kay Menchel**

**Class 7 – Thursday 5/07**

**Mystery, Suspense & Genre Fiction**

**A is for Alibi Sue Grafton**

My name is Kinsey Millhone. I'm a private investigator, licensed by the state of California. I'm thirty-two years old, twice divorced, no kids. The day before yesterday I killed someone and the fact weighs heavily on my mind.

***A Simple Plan* Scott Smith**

Looking back on it now, after all that's happened, it seems insane with what little fear I picked this path. It took me perhaps twenty seconds, a third of a minute's worth of debate. For a brief instant I was in complete control, not only of the money's destiny, but also of my own, and Jacob's and Lou's, yet I was utterly unconscious of this, had no feel for the weight of my decision, could not sense how, within the next few seconds, I was going to set into motion a series of events that would radically transform each of our lives.

***The Hunger Games* Suzanne Collins**

The rules of the Hunger Games are simple. In punishment for the uprising, each of the twelve districts must provide one girl and one boy, called tributes, to participate. The twenty-four tributes will be imprisoned in a vast outdoor arena that could hold anything from a burning desert to a frozen wasteland. Over a period of several weeks, the competitors must fight to the death. The last tribute standing wins.

***The Ghost Stories of Edith Wharton: The Lady's Maid's Bell* Edith Wharton**

Another flight of stairs led up to the servants' wing. It was almost dark now, and the housemaid excused herself for not having brought a light. "But there's matches in your room," she said, "and if you go careful you'll be all right. Mind the step at the end of the passage. Your room is just beyond."

I looked ahead as she spoke, and halfway down the passage I saw a woman standing. She drew back into a doorway as we passed and the housemaid didn't appear to notice her. She was a thin woman with a white face, and a dark gown and apron. I took her for the

housekeeper and thought it odd that she didn't speak, but just gave me a long look as she went by.

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She walked on steadily, and I followed at the same pace, till we passed out of the gates and reached the highroad. Then she struck across the open fields to the village. By this time the ground was white, and as she climbed the slope of a bare hill ahead of me I noticed that she left no footprints behind her. At the sight of that my heart shriveled up within me, and my knees were water. Somehow it was worse here than indoors. She made the whole countryside seem lonely as the grave, with none but us two in it, and no help in the wide world.

### ***Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince* J.K. Rowling**

He had been standing alone in this very office, savouring the triumph that was his after so many years of dreaming and scheming, when he had heard a cough behind him, just like tonight, and turned to find that ugly little portrait talking to him, announcing that the Minister of Magic was about to arrive and introduce himself.

Naturally, he had thought that the long campaign and the strain of the election had caused him to go mad. He had been utterly terrified to find a portrait talking to him, though this had been nothing to how he felt when a self-proclaimed wizard had bounced out of the fireplace and shaken his hand.

### ***The Shining* Stephen King**

“One reason that the Overlook has lost so much money lies in the depreciation that occurs each winter. It shortens the profit margin a great deal more than you might believe, Mr. Torrance. The winters are fantastically cruel. In order to cope with the problem, I've installed a full-time winter caretaker to run the boiler and to heat different parts of the hotel on a daily rotating basis. To repair breakage as it occurs and to do repairs, so the elements can't get a foothold. To be constantly alert to any and every contingency. During our first winter I hired a family instead of a single man. There was a tragedy. A horrible tragedy.”