



Nancy Pickard Biography

Kansas author Nancy Pickard has created a tangled web of deception and mystery through sixteen contemporary novels and the complex development of several enticing characters. But she has also written short fiction and edited collections of short stories, written nonfiction about the writer's experience, and most with the selection for **Kansas Reads...*The Virgin of Small Plains***, her latest novel at the time of the statewide reading and discussion initiative, she combines classic mystery writing with a literary novel to produce some of her finest work.

Nancy lives in Prairie Village, Kansas, and divides her time between there and Florida. She is the recipient of the Agatha, Macavity, American Mystery, Anthony, and Shamus awards and is a three-time Edgar nominee—including for *The Virgin of Small Plains*. This book was also honored to be on the 2007 Kansas Notable Books List.

She turned to fiction writing after a career in journalism. She created the popular characters of Jenny Crain and Marie Lightfoot, and completed some of author Virginia Rich's Eugenia Potter novels and wrote three of her own. In the process she has generated a loyal readership that continues to grow with each new book. In 2001 Susan McBride wrote: "A lifelong Midwesterner, she seems to maintain a perfect balance between the publishing world and her private life, a juggling act that's not easy to do."

When asked if she has a favorite library of memory or of current use, Nancy replied: "In Kansas City [Missouri, where she grew up], we used to have public libraries in some of our high schools. I remember frequenting those with my mother, and we also too the trolley (yes!) to the main library downtown. The very best thing about the libraries of my childhood was that they had Nancy Drew novels. Not every library in the country allowed those books on their shelves, because a lot of people considered the books to be trash and bad influences. My libraries allowed them, however—thank you!!—and I am convinced that is why I'm a mystery writer today."