

Hi everyone!

I thought the sorry spectacle of last year's presidential election had put me off politics for good, but then Kinky Friedman began his quixotic run for Governor of Texas.

You don't have to be a Republican or Democrat to appreciate the finer points of this freewheeling campaign—Kinky is a nonpartisan entertainer. He's already won a lot of affection over the years for his colorful shaggy dog mysteries and after you read Kevin Burton's Smith's profile of the candidate, he just might have your vote, too.



Stella Rimington had a brilliant career as head of Britain's top security agency, MI5. Now she's putting that resume to good use in her debut novel, *At Risk*. I enjoyed this one a lot. Her expertise is obvious and she has an unusual perspective on the rigors—and attractions—of an undercover life.

Wondering what movies to rent this weekend? Jon L. Breen steps forward with a terrific selection for your viewing pleasure.

There have been all sorts of events recently in honor of the 75th anniversary of *The Maltese Falcon's* publication. Mark Coggins takes us on a photo tour through the very San Francisco apartment that Dashiell Hammett once shared with Sam Spade.

Speaking of San Francisco and Hammett, Laurie King's latest Mary Russell mystery, *Locked Rooms*, makes very good use of both of these ingredients. Throw in Sherlock Holmes and the roaring '20s and you've got a very tasty read.

Moving closer to the present, Ron Miller looks back at 12 years of *NYPD Blue* and assesses the moral education of an unlikely hero.

And also in this issue, Martin Edwards offers an appreciation of one of our very favorite people—H.R.F. Keating. Harry will be coming from London to the Malice Domestic Conference in May to accept a well-deserved Lifetime Achievement Award.

Brian and I will also be at Malice Do-



mestic, one of our favorite conferences. *Mystery Scene* is sponsoring the "Meet the New Authors Breakfast" on Sunday so be sure and come by. You can find out more at <www.malicedomestic.org>.



Betty Webb, *Mystery Scene's* new Small Press review columnist.

Welcome Aboard

In this issue, we're very happy to introduce Betty Webb, *Mystery Scene's* new Small Press review columnist. Until June 2004, Betty was a book reviewer and feature writer for a major Phoenix-area newspaper. Many of you will already be familiar with Betty through her Lena Jones mystery series, most recently *Desert Shadows*.

Enjoy the issue!

KATE STINE
Editor-in-chief

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