

Reader's Guide for FROZEN STIFF

When I'm starting a new book in the Claire Watkins mystery series, one of the first questions I ask myself is—what time of year will this story take place? Unlike many mysteries, my series is very dependent on the seasons. Certain crimes could only happen at certain times of year in Fort St. Antoine. This is absolutely true with *Frozen Stiff*.

I also like focusing on holidays for some reason. I think they hold a kind of psychic energy for all of us. So this story opens on New Year's Eve, a time when people evaluate their lives and try to make some changes.

Or have changes forced on them.

A few questions that your book club might want to consider:

Who changes in the book? Why?

Have you ever been in a sauna? Did you run outside and jump in a cold lake or roll in the snow? Was it fun?

Have you ever experienced hypothermia? (I froze my fingers one time when I was about ten and I was walking to Brownies on a cold day with no mittens, carrying a tin can in each hand for a project we were going to do.)

Do you know the laws in your state governing statutory rape? Do you think an 18-year-old boy who has sex with a 17-year-old girl should go to jail? What about if the girl is 18 and the boy is 17? Where would you draw the line, age-wise?

How does Claire begin to unthaw in this book? Are you happy with her decision to marry Rich? Do you feel it's about time? Or did you like them living in sin, did it make their relationship more interesting?

What do you think of the way that Meg is handling her relationship with Curt? Do you think it will last? Do you want it to last?

What do you think Mary is going to do next in this series? (If you have ideas, please send them to me.)