

Murder most fascinating

THE MURDERERS' CLUB

by P.D. Martin
Pan Macmillan, rrp. \$32.95
ISBN: 1405037598

MURDER is on P.D. Martin's mind. Lots of it. Her second novel featuring Australian-born psychologist and criminal profiler Sophie Anderson is just as gripping and original as the first.

The Murderers' Club sees Anderson, who works in the United States with the FBI, visiting detective friend Darren Carter in Tucson, Arizona.

Soon after she arrives on her supposed holiday the murders start. It looks like a serial killer, but there is something strange about the crime scenes. Could there be more than one murderer?

Martin uses several twists, such as the multiple-killer angle, to great effect.

She also continues Anderson's psychic visions, which are not always welcome. They might help catch murderers, but they also traumatise her and remind her of dark episodes in her past.

Martin sets the murders up in a way sure to chill any would-be starlet.



The modus operandi is an original and scary take on how far serial killers are prepared to go to satisfy their urges.

Anderson ends up cancelling her holiday and working with Carter to solve the case.

She is still recovering from her own brush with death in the first book, *Body Count*, and is wary of getting too close to Carter, whom she really likes.

This sets the scene for a "will they,

won't they" sub-plot, perhaps the only slightly disappointing aspect.

It could have been explored more fully, to better explain why Anderson feels the way she does.

But *The Murderers' Club* is certainly a riveting read. The plot might seem far-fetched, but could happen to anyone, which gives it an added edge.

Martin, inspired to write her first book by a dream, is fascinated by the paranormal.

"I do believe in psychic ability. But in terms of actual psychics, I think there are a lot of people who claim to have this gift but don't," she says on her website.

"I believe psychic ability is another sense, but one that most people aren't aware of and/or haven't developed fully."

Martin is among a growing number of talented Australian female crime writers. They even have their own club, Sisters In Crime.

Thanks to writers like her, local crime-fiction lovers raised on a diet of American writers can now look closer to home.

Cheryl Critchley



◀ **Big talent:** P.D. Martin's new crime novel (above) is as gripping as the first and crime-fiction lovers need no longer look to American authors.