

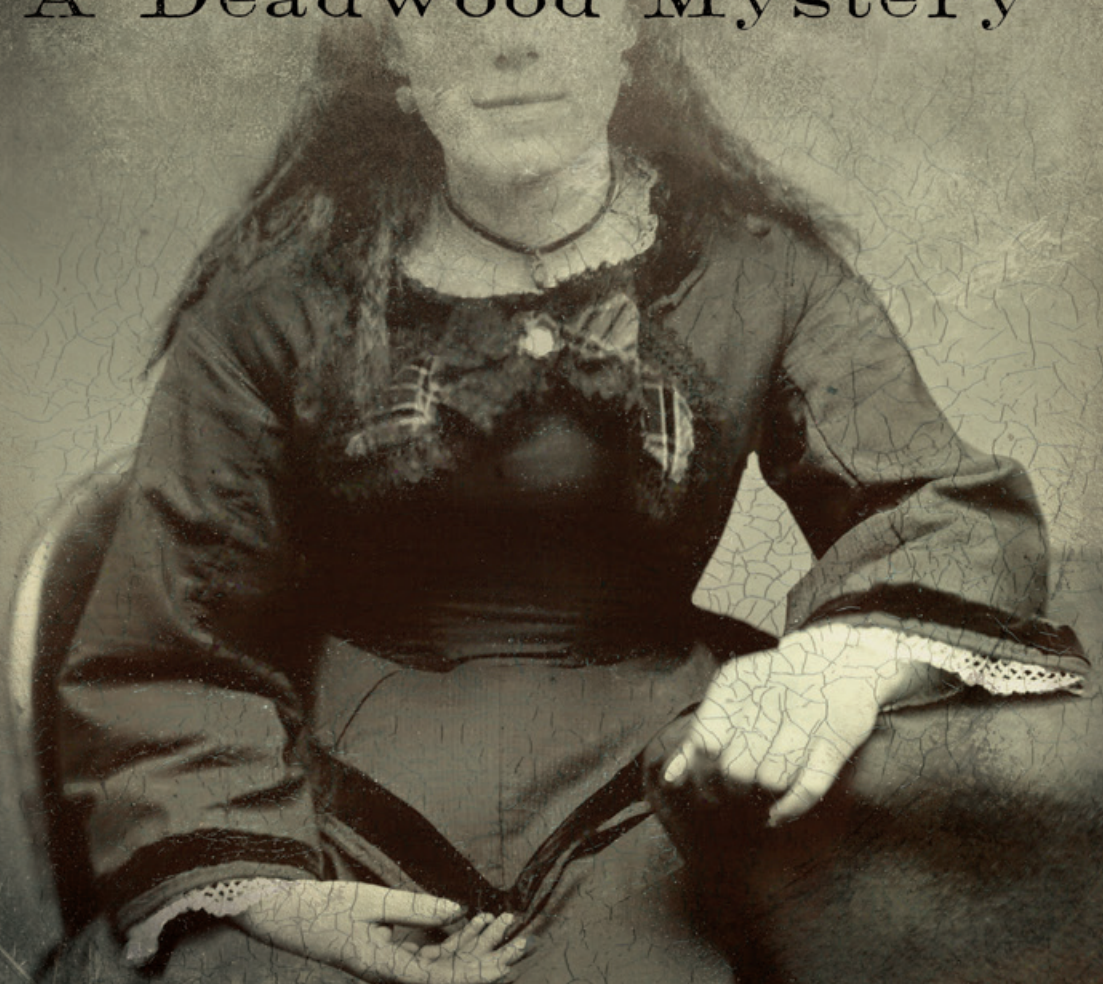
Author of the Claire Watkins Mysteries

MARY LOGUE

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STREET

A Deadwood Mystery



A BOOK DISCUSSION GUIDE

for *THE STREEL* by Mary Logue

PRAISE FOR THE BOOK

“A well-constructed plot, lilting prose, and a heroine who’s determined to escape constricting female roles make this an exceptional regional historical.”

—*PUBLISHERS WEEKLY* (STARRED REVIEW)

“Introduces a gritty, charming, clever protagonist whose musings provide a perfect period feel.”

—*KIRKUS REVIEWS*

“With a poet’s eye, Mary Logue evokes the harsh world of frontier Deadwood, South Dakota. *The Streeel* relates the journey of a scrappy young Irish woman as she’s forced from her homeland to the American midwest. Tersely and beautifully, Logue recreates the muddy streets of Deadwood, the haphazard keeping of the peace, and the rugged hearts and souls of those seeking their fortune in the Black Hills gold rush of the late 1800s. *The Streeel* is both a taut mystery and a cautionary tale of the evils of greed. I loved the redoubtable heroine, Brigid Reardon, and I loved every stunning line of this fine story.”

—WILLIAM KENT KRUEGER, author of *This Tender Land*

“Mary Logue is, hands down, one of my favorite writers. *The Streeel* shows her at the top of her game. The novel is a rich combination of elements—part history, part gripping mystery, and part immigrant saga. Highly recommended!”

—ELLEN HART, author of *Twisted at the Root*

“Mary Logue blends family lore and the history of the Irish diaspora in *The Streeel*, a lively tale of teenage immigrants in 1880s America.”

—ELIZABETH GUNN, author of *Burning Meredith*

ABOUT THIS BOOK

When I was fifteen and my brother Seamus sixteen, we attended our own wake. Our family was in mourning, forced to send us off to America.

The year is 1880, and of all the places Brigid Reardon and her brother might have dreamed of when escaping Ireland's potato famine, Deadwood, South Dakota was not one of them. But Deadwood, in the grip of gold fever, is where Seamus finds himself—and where Brigid joins him, eluding the attention of her rich employer's son—or so she hopes. But the morning after her arrival, a grisly tragedy occurs. Suspected of the crime, Seamus flees, and Brigid is left to clear his name—and to manage his mining claim, which suddenly looks more valuable than he and his partners supposed.

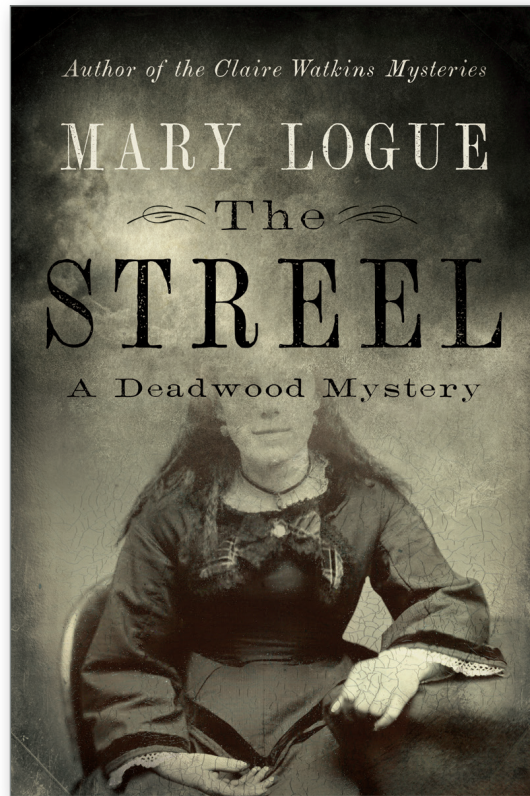
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When Mary Logue was doing research for a book about her grandmother Mae Kirwin, she discovered so much more than just her grandmother's history. She found how her great-great-grandparents had come from Ireland to America. She began to wonder how it must have felt for them to take this giant leap and move to a foreign country. And, as often happens when she's excited about an idea, she decided to write about this journey.

The end result is *The Streeel*, a mystery novel featuring, Brigid, a young Irish girl who travels with her brother Seamus, first to New York City, then to St. Paul, and finally to Deadwood, South Dakota.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. *The Streeel* opens with Brigid and her brother being forced to leave their home in Ireland and emigrate to America. Was there anything in this immigration story that surprised you? Do you know when and how your ancestors came to this country? Does reading this book change how you view immigration today?
2. A title like *The Streeel* brings to mind the paradox of women being either a sinner or a saint—“a virgin or a whore.” If Lily is the sinner, then is Brigid the saint? In what ways are they alike? How does the writer try to humanize Lily, make her likeable?
3. When you think of your own life, what would be comparable to Brigid’s immigration? Moving to a foreign country? How about being forced to colonize Mars?
4. Have you ever been to Deadwood? The Black Hills? If so, what was your impression of this area now?
5. Did you like Charlie? Was there a point at which you started to distrust him?
6. How important is it that the novel is set in Deadwood? In what ways does Logue utilize the setting?
7. Brigid is only fifteen when this novel opens. What were you like at fifteen? Can you imagine yourself, or someone you know who is this age, doing what she did?
8. The Irish at this time said short prayers throughout the day. Logue translated these prayers and had them start each section. How did these prayers work to set a tone in the book?
9. While Brigid is the main character, there are many other woman in the book. Which ones stood out for you? And how were they used in the story?
10. What do you think will happen to Brigid and Padraic after they leave Deadwood? What do you *want* to happen to them?



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mary Logue has published thirteen mysteries, nine in the Claire Watkins series, as well as poetry and young adult nonfiction and fiction, including the novel *Dancing with an Alien* (an ALA Best Book for Young Adults and a New York Public Library Book for the Teen Age) and the best-selling *Sleep like a Tiger*, which won a Caldecott and a Zolotow honor award. She has taught at Hamline University in St. Paul and lives on both sides of the Mississippi River, in Minnesota and Wisconsin, with writer Pete Hautman.

MORE INFO:

z.umn.edu/thestreel