

***Kansas Reads...In Cold Blood* Connects Readers with a Famous Story**

by Roy Bird, Director, Kansas Center for the Book

Promotion of *Kansas Reads...In Cold Blood* by Truman Capote by the Kansas Center for the Book at the State Library of Kansas concluded on February 29. It has been a tremendous success, and a learning experience for many involved.

Public libraries, schools and other book discussion groups took part in the widest participation of an adult statewide read in Kansas history. Some of the comments about the project include:



Law Enforcement and Attorneys Panel at an In Cold Blood Program, Kinsley Public Library

“Wow...the audience was able to look at the consequences of the murders and how they truly affected Kansans for years to come.

They also were exposed to Capote’s excellent writing style, and really enjoyed that.” - *public library*

“Most said they would never have picked the book to read but learned about a piece of our history in the process.” - *school library*

“Had 25 people with a few new ones—one who ‘had never been to a book talk before, but sure was going to come to all that we have from now on.” - *public library*

“The book discussion group was so successful that they did not want to stop with just one book, so we are going to read another before school lets out for the summer. Thanks for this opportunity!” - *school library*

“...I want to congratulate the KCFB committee for choosing *In Cold Blood*. It was a controversial title and that was its strength. Quite a few people in my community remember the actual event and some of them did not want to talk about it. But others did and we were able to provide a safe and controlled forum for discussion. I don’t know how many other communities would have launched a discussion built around *In Cold Blood* on their own. I know ours certainly wouldn’t have. But because it was a statewide initiative, it was easy for my library to take a chance with this title. It turned out to be a good decision. People talked about the event, the book, and several films...for an entire month! It was interesting to see people come together to explore a controversial topic and address it head-on. At each gathering it was obvious that people were really listening to each other and learning from each other. It was a

marvelous experience!" - *public library*

The Kansas Center for the Book appreciates all sponsors of the project and all who helped make 2008 *Kansas Reads...In Cold Blood* a success. It was an exciting year with a large variety of programs, book discussions in libraries of several types across the state, and interest from scholars, educators, law enforcement, book clubs, and many partners such as book sellers, public radio, the Kansas Humanities Council and many, many others!

The Kansas Center for the Book has been contacted by teachers and organizations from other states wanting to use information on the *In Cold Blood* website or asking how we were accomplishing a successful project.

If your library participated in *Kansas Reads...In Cold Blood*, please take a moment to fill out the survey on the website www.kcfb.info, then click on the *Kansas Reads...In Cold Blood* icon. Help us make the next *Kansas Reads* project even better!

In 2009, the project will be *Kansas Reads...The Virgin of Small Plains* by Nancy Pickard. The committee has already been formed and will soon start planning for January 2009! More exciting developments in this popular project can be expected, but only if you help. Keep those surveys coming in! Tell us how to help provide another great experience for the readers in your community!