

# News Release

## Sweet Mystery: A Book of Remembering

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### READERS FIND THEMSELVES IN JUDITH PATERSON'S MOVING MEMOIR

Since the release of her critically acclaimed *Sweet Mystery: A Book of Remembering*, tearful readers of Judith Hillman Paterson's moving memoir sometimes greet her with their own deeply personal questions and confessions.

"How did you survive such a childhood?" they ask as she signs copies of her book after readings at bookstores. "Was writing the book cathartic?"

"What do members of your family think of the book?" is a frequent question. "Are they angry?"

"What about your brother and sisters?" readers want to know. "And your children, are they okay?"

Readers often ask Paterson, a professor who teaches writing at the University of Maryland, for advice on how to write their own family stories.

*Sweet Mystery* has exposed a deeply buried need to remember and recount the past. Readers tell Paterson her story of a childhood in a family devastated by alcoholism, drug addiction and mental illness has freed them to remember and confront their own family secrets.

"Everyone in my family must read your book," is a comment Paterson hears frequently from readers with a bagful of books to be signed. She tells them that living with family secrets is a burden too heavy to bear alone.

Artfully constructed, *Sweet Mystery* reads like engrossing fiction. Novelist Harper Lee, author of the classic *To Kill A Mockingbird*, called it "tender, excruciating, compelling, a must read!"

Here is what some of the reviews are saying:

- ⇒ Diane White in *The Boston Globe*: "Paterson has written a brilliant memoir."
- ⇒ Robert H. Williams in *The Washington Post*: "[an] excruciating collision of form and emotion, joy and pain, will power and self-examination. . . ."
- ⇒ Susan Kelly in *USA Today*: "That so great a pain forged so fine a writer is a sweet mystery of its own."
- ⇒ Steven Hill in *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*: ". . . a courageous account. . . that forcefully affirms the necessity of confronting the past."