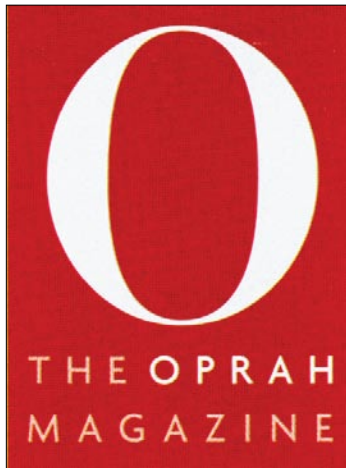


As seen in the
February 2008 *Oprah*



reading room

The Hunted

An explosive story of
a mad bomber and a
suspect scientist.



SUSAN CHOI is
fascinated by the
political eccentric
as a dramatic
figure. Her last
novel, *American
Woman*, a runner-

up for the 2004 Pulitzer Prize,
was based on the Patty Hearst
story, and her newest, **A Person
of Interest** (Viking), combines
elements from two recent series
of events, the antitechnological
terrorism of the Unabomber and
the government's misprosecution
of scientist Wen Ho Lee for
secrets allegedly, but apparently
not actually, given to the Chinese.
In Choi's eloquent, penetrating
novel, the two stories are brought
together. The "Brain Bomber,"
as he comes to be known, sends
his first bomb to a technology
guru in the math department at
an unnamed university. It kills its
intended victim and comes close
to maiming an Asian-American
mathematician named Lee,
whose office is next door and
who becomes wrongly suspected
in the bombing. From the first,
Choi makes this Lee's story: He is
the person of interest for her,
cold, haughty, and broken. She
takes us back to his first fumbled
attempts as a graduate student to
make friends and find love, and
returns to his surreal present, a
lonely academic, two divorces
behind him, longing to hear from
his estranged daughter. Behind
the headlines that trigger Choi's
imagination, she sees intricate,
difficult lives; she sees romance
and error and dignity and pain—
and finally, as with Lee, she sees
the possibility of redemption.

—V.P.

[READING ROOM>140]