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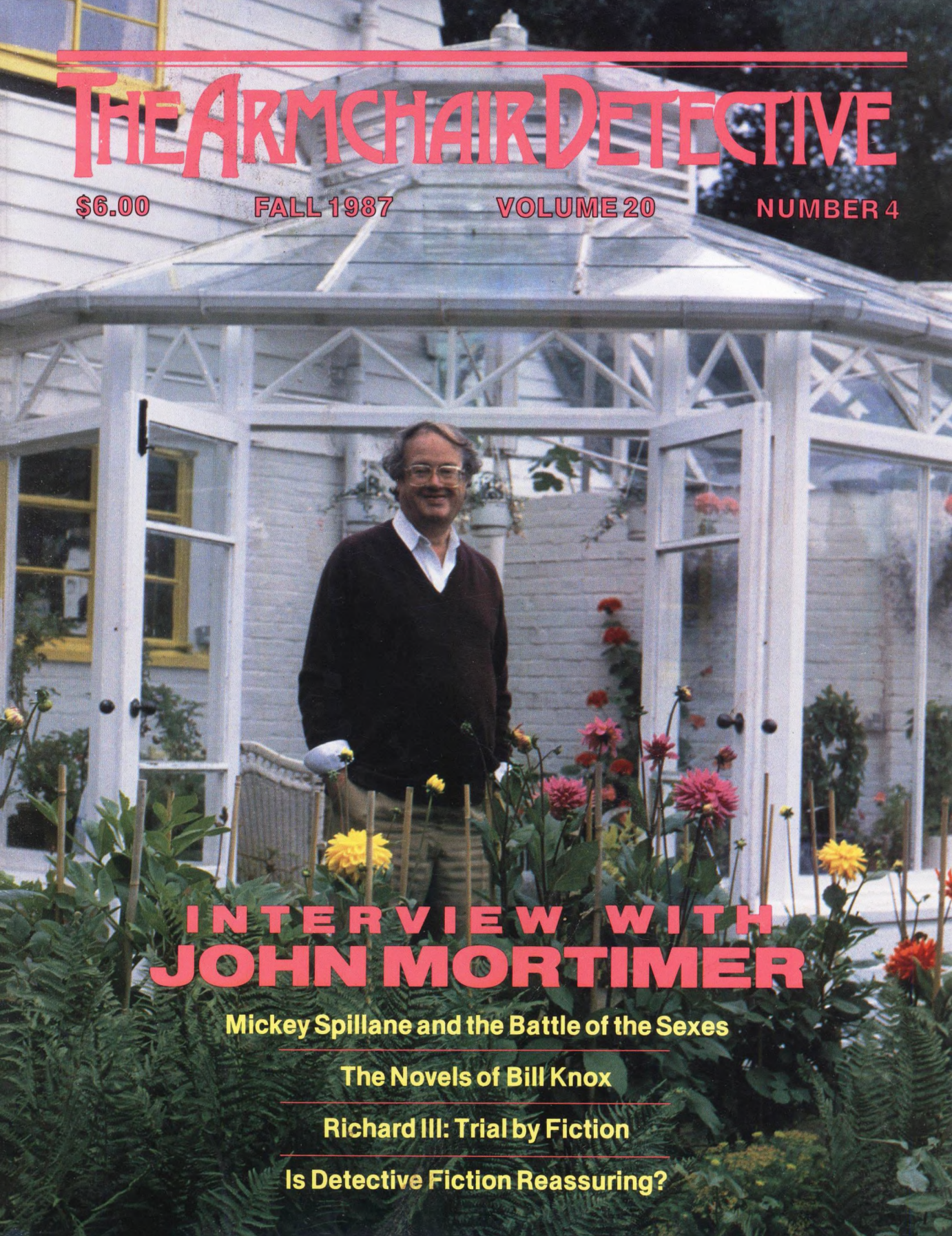

INTERVIEW WITH JOHN MORTIMER

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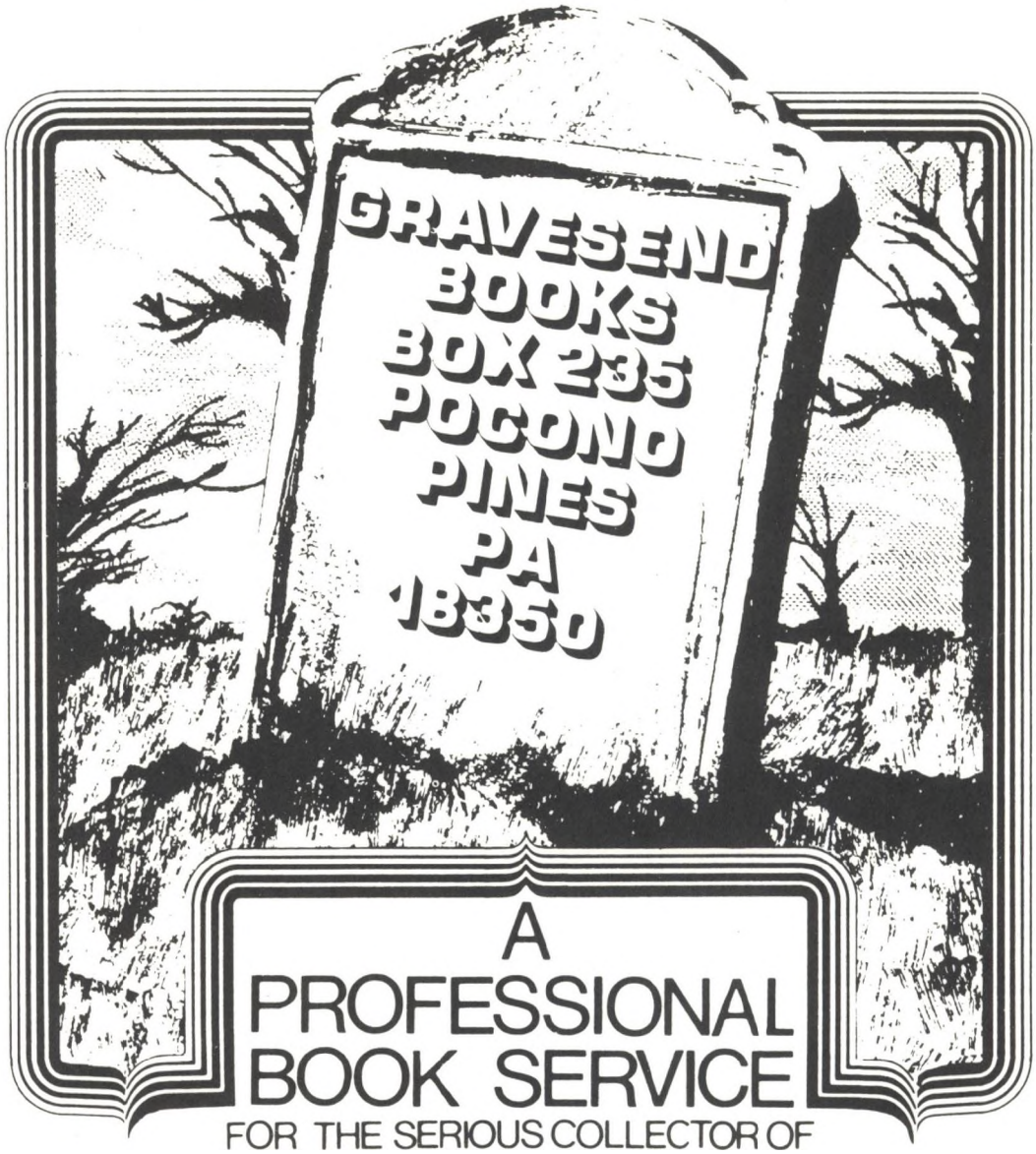
The Novels of Bill Knox

Richard III: Trial by Fiction

Is Detective Fiction Reassuring?



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The photograph of John Mortimer is by Rosemary Herbert.

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Subscriptions to *The Armchair Detective:* $20/year in the U.S., $24 elsewhere. Subscriptions and advertising correspondence should be addressed to: TAD, 129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019, U.S.A. Submissions of material for publication are welcomed and should be addressed to The Editor: Michael Seidman, 129 West 56th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019.

Second-class postage paid at New York, New York, and additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Please send address changes to: The Armchair Detective, 129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019.

The Armchair Detective, Vol. 20, No. 4. Fall 1987. Published quarterly by The Armchair Detective, Inc., 129 West 56th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019.

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ISSN: 0004-217Z
ISBN: 0-89296-336-0

The Uneasy Chair

Dear TADian:

The question of the treatment of women as writers (and, to a great extent, of their books as books) continues to be at the top of the list of topics for conversation whenever and wherever writers gather. TAD has been taken to task for not having enough by and about women, a charge with which I have little sympathy. As we have pointed out in the past, the articles are chosen for readability, and no one on the staff looks at submitted material from the point of view of whether the author is a man or a woman. The manuscript stands on its own.

The thought process which leads to considering the sex of an author as being as important as the work was brought into play this year, when members of the MWA Edgar Allan Poe Award-nominating committees were told to be "gender conscious." It is difficult, if not impossible, to judge the effectiveness—or, indeed, the effect—of the suggestion. Were the committee members to choose a title written by a woman over an equally good book written by a man? Obviously, at some point in the process of nominating a title for an award, decisions are made based on visceral reactions rather than something totally objective. I cannot accept the thought, however, that the sex of the author comes into play in the decision-making process . . . unless, it would seem, a seed has been planted. It is, to my mind, somewhat akin to telling someone not to think of a pink giraffe.

At Bouchercon last October, there was a panel devoted to the place of women writers in the scheme of things. One comment was made to the effect that men run the business. A look at *Literary Market Place*, or the January 23, 1987 edition of *Publishers Weekly*, which featured an article on the very subject, puts the lie to that belief. Indeed, publishing as an industry is dominated by women, and they are well represented on virtually all levels of the business. The major exception is in the sales forces, where women are beginning to make strong inroads. (It was, rightly or wrongly, often difficult for women to get sales positions; I suppose a certain paternalism resulted in the thought that women should not be driving around the country alone. As I said, however, and as any editor who has presented a book to a sales meeting recently will acknowledge, women are beginning to show up in force.)

I have heard it rumored, speaking of Bouchercon, that there was an attempt to boycott this year's event, led by some women who felt that such an occurrence would serve their purposes. I don't know enough about the attempt to speak more directly to it; that it failed to happen, however, strikes me as a positive sign.

There has also been talk and rumblings about the possibility of setting up a new category (or categories, ultimately) to deal with books which some writers feel are given short shrift. I did not like the idea when I heard it (there is too much genrefication as it is) and have yet to hear a convincing argument for it. Like everyone else, I have my disagreements every year with the nominees and winners, have been surprised to see books ignored or honored undeservedly. It is, I fear, inherent in the process, a process depending wholly on the foibles, tastes, dreams, and *angst* of our fellows, be they writers, actors, or the political electorate.

I have never seen proof of any conscious action against any one group of writers within MWA. I have never seen proof of any unconscious sexism, either. I have seen people voting for books based on the voter's tastes and knowledge of what is good, of what is best.

What is best. That is, certainly, what peer awards are supposed to be about. Until a computer program is devised which can make judgments of that nature (and I do not foresee that ever occurring; it will be a person programming the computer, after all), there will be dissatisfaction. As long as editors buy books or stories or articles, and as long as people buy the finished product, the decisions will be based on what the "I" enjoys. It would be nice if more men learned the particular pleasure of reading Elizabeth Peters and if more women read Mickey Spillane. I have tried, during my brief stint as a sales clerk in a bookstore, to make it happen that way.

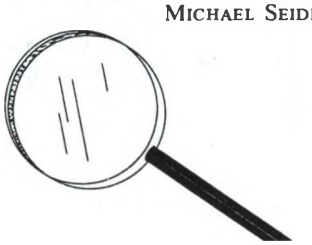
Maybe instead of arguing with each other, then, we would all be better served if we attempted to educate the public about the joy of reading.

Right after we teach them how to read.

Best mysterious wishes,

Michael Seidman

MICHAEL SEIDMAN



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*Joseph Heller in *No Laughing Matter*

BEECH TREE BOOKS
WILLIAM MORROW

It was a sultry summer day as I made my way through what I naturally thought of as John Mortimer Country. After all, I was retracing on foot the route along which I had been driven by John Mortimer during an earlier visit, and I was on my way to visit him once again. "Mortimer Revisited," I thought.

The way was lined on either side by hedgerows rising above my head in a profusion of summer blossoms. One could hardly call the thoroughfare a road; it was so narrow as to make me wonder if there were adequate space to pass the mackintosh- and Wellington-boot–clad lady approaching me, led along by a very determined-looking bulldog. In fact, the road was so narrow that it seemed rude not to acknowledge the passing pedestrian with a word or two as we nearly rubbed shoulders in passing.

"Good morning," I said accordingly.

"Lovely day," she said, glancing up at the English interval of sunshine which made her mackintosh unnecessary, at least for the moment. "Horace and I always walk along here in fine weather," she confided, indicating the dog straining at his leash.

"Horace," I said, with Mortimer on the mind. "Just like Rumpole!"

"I say!" the lady exclaimed. "I never thought of that." She regarded her canine critically and then smiled. "He does look rather barristerial, doesn't he?"

PHOTO: ROSEMARY HERBERT

Murder by Decree

AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN MORTIMER

By Rosemary Herbert

Such serendipitous moments are not uncommon in the countryside where John Mortimer spent most of his childhood and to which he has returned to raise his children. It is an idyllic vision of England, and, even when Mortimer confides that the current "locals" are no longer rustic farm laborers but are more likely to be advertising executives who commute to and from London, one feels transported to another place and time, to a Trollopian era. It is not surprising that Mortimer's latest novel, *Paradise Postponed,* set in this slice of English countryside, brings to mind the Victorian novel.

Today, John Mortimer resides with his second wife, Penny, and his two daughters, Emily, a teenager, and Rosamund, aged two, in the house that his father built during the 1930s. Here, in a study lined with caricatures of Leo McKern as Rumpole, theatrical posters, and family photographs, and in a sitting-room beside a well-stoked fire, John Mortimer spoke with me for the benefit of *The Armchair Detective.* He also treated me to a visit to the local pub, the Bull & Butcher, where gourmet meals and the local brew, Breakspear's Best Bitter, are to be had. Some of our conversation also occurred in the Mortimer residence in an area of London called Little Venice because of its proximity to the Regent's Canal.

In person, Mortimer is as engaging a conversationalist as his work would lead one to expect. Perhaps it is not surprising that his comments, when transcribed from tape unedited, form themselves into beautiful paragraphs, which, any veteran interviewer will tell you, is a far from common occurrence.

In addition to talking about the *modus operandi* of a crime writer, Mortimer reminisced about his blind and eccentric father, his school days and youthful escapades as a scriptwriter for the British Army's Crown Film Unit, his start in the law career, and his hilarious encounters with judges and the judged as Mortimer of the Bailey.

TAD: You must have some wonderful anecdotes to relate about your experiences in the law. Would you share some with us?

Mortimer: Yes. Well, I was very good at husband-and-wife murders. You know that murder goes on in the family circle like Christmas.

I was very good at husband-and-wife quarrels that ended up with the husband or wife being dead. These quarrels always seemed to take place in bathrooms.

I had one case that involved the vagal nerve. You can just put your hand on someone's throat and by mistake you can touch their vagal nerve and stop the blood going from their heart and the person dies immediately. *Perhaps* intendedly. And I had a couple who were quarreling while in the bath together, and it ended up with the wife drowned. The husband got out and went for a long walk, and finally he turned himself in to the police. And the question was whether he intended to kill the wife whose vagal nerve he had apparently touched in the bath.

So I started this case by saying that my client, the husband, was sitting at the tap end of the bath. And the judge said, "You mean the woman made her husband sit at the tap end!" So I said, "I'm sorry, my lord, but I'm afraid he always sat at the tap end so that he could wash her hair." And there was a horrified look on the judge's face. "The tap end? You mean the man had to sit at the tap end?" And, not surprisingly, my client was acquitted.

TAD: The poor, suffering husband!

Mortimer: And you might like to hear about a wonderful Old Bailey judge called Judge Maud. Judge Maud had a beautiful little profile; he had exquisite little gray sideburns; he had beautiful little golden half-glasses; he always used to adjourn the court every morning at 11:30 for a glass of cold chablis and a little nibble of cheese. That was Judge Maud.

It was Judge Maud who once had the painful duty of sentencing two men who had been found in an

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Rosemary Herbert is a Boston-based writer who specializes in articles related to the world of books. For articles that have appeared in PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, *the* CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, *and* DIAL: THE MAGAZINE FOR PUBLIC TELEVISION, *she has traveled here and abroad to meet authors in their home surroundings. This article is drawn from three meetings with John Mortimer, in New York and in his homes in London and Turville Heath, in the English countryside.*

MORTIMER (RIGHT) AND LEO McKERN, WHO IS "ABSOLUTELY PERFECT" AS RUMPOLE ON THE* MYSTERY! *SERIES

attitude of unusual friendliness under the Waterloo Bridge. And he looked at them over his little glasses and he said, "You two men have been found guilty of a most terrible act, an act which has been cursed down the centuries, an act the very mention of which makes strong women vomit and men faint. And what makes it so much worse," he said, "is you chose to do it at one of the most beautiful bridges in London."

TAD ***(laughing):*** **A judge possessed of delicate sensibilities!**

Mortimer: Yes. And I remember defending a trotter. I don't know if you know what a trotter is. He is a person who goes around saying, "Any old iron?" with a pony and a little trap. And this trotter was accused of attempting to murder the man next door with the penknife which he used to cut up the carrots for his pony.

Well, I made the best speech I could possibly make to the jury in defense of this trotter. And when you've finished that and the jury go out to consider their verdict, if you're a barrister at the Old Bailey you have to sit in the cells with your client and wait while the jury are out. It's a morbidly embarrassing occasion. You sit there and you don't really know what to say. I mean, you could, I suppose, say, "Well, see you again in about fourteen years." You could, perhaps, say, "Win a few, lose a few."

I didn't say either of those, and a sort of silence fell between the trotter and me. And then he said: "You know, your Mr. Rumpole could have won this case. I don't see why you couldn't."

So there comes a time when life and art become rather cruelly intermixed.

And so, you see, Rumpole hasn't been a *totally* unmixed advantage to me. You can't go into Old Vino's, the barristers' wine bar in Fleet Street, without finding at least seventeen fat, middle-aged barristers with black jackets and striped trousers, with cigar ash down the watch chain, pretending to be Rumpole.

TAD: In your autobiographical volume, ***Clinging to the Wreckage*** **[Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1982], you wrote: "As a barrister who wrote or, as I wanted to think of it, as a writer who did barristerring, I was stretched between two opposite extremes. The writer cannot help exposing himself, however indecently. Every performance he gives, although cloaked in fiction, reveals his secret identity." You went on to say how, in contrast, the barrister might only reveal his shell.**

Mortimer: That's right.

TAD: In writing the character of Rumpole, were you exposing yourself?

Mortimer: Yes. Oh, absolutely. Rumpole says the things that I think. But, if I say them, they sound rather sort of left-wing and abrasive. Whereas, if he says them, they sound cuddly and curmudgeonly and cute.

TAD: And does Rumpole also possess some of your father's characteristics?

Mortimer: Absolutely. You see, it was about the middle of the 1970s when I felt that I needed a character to keep me alive in my old age, like Maigret and Simenon. I was looking for a detective, like Sherlock Holmes or Maigret or even Lord Peter Wimsey, whom I could go on writing about. When I thought of Rumpole, at first I thought he was going to be just a detective like Sherlock Holmes, you know, but he would also be a barrister.

And then I thought of some Old Bailey barristers whom I knew who always referred to the judges as "Old Darling." And I thought of my father and my father's habit of quoting poetry at inapposite moments. And then I thought of my father's clothes, a sort of Winston Churchill set. And so I put all of that together.

TAD: When you were writing the early Rumpole pieces, did you have any idea that Leo McKern would be playing the role? He seems extraordinarily well suited to the part.

Mortimer: Yes. He's absolutely perfect. What happened was this: when I thought first of all of Rumpole, I began to write odd speeches, just to see how he talked. Then I was asked to write a *BBC Play for Today,* which was a one-act play. And so I wrote the first Rumpole play for the BBC. It didn't have any of the people in chambers in it; it just had Rumpole.

But I didn't know who would play Rumpole, and I hadn't thought of any actor at the time. But I had met Leo McKern, and when he was suggested for the

part I thought it was wonderful. So I didn't have any idea who would play Rumpole when I wrote the original first play, but after that, then, of course I knew.

TAD: I understand you are still writing Rumpole stories.

Mortimer: Yes. The most recent book to be published, *Rumpole's Last Case,* is out here and will be released in the States in October of 1987, when a new series of Rumpole stories will also be televised on your *Mystery!* program.

The last lot are the best Rumpole stories, I think. He's become a more sour and sad character. And he and Hilda part.

TAD: Really? They both must flounder without one another.

Mortimer: Oh, yes. *(Laughs.)* Absolutely.

TAD: They don't part permanently, I hope.

Mortimer: No. They come back together.

TAD: Our readers would be interested to know whether or not life in chambers, as portrayed in the Rumpole series, is an accurate picture of how that life is today. For instance, is the isolation of women barristers true to life?

Mortimer: Well, Rumpole *really* isn't very contemporary. That is, I don't think there could be any more Rumpoles because [to enter the law today] you have to get very high academic qualification, which he never did.

And Rumpole's approach to the law is in some ways frightfully unfashionable now. He had to think quickly, to get up and make his final speech, to rely on himself, his own talents. Most lawyers now are like computer engineers; they go at the law as a sort of technique, as a technical thing. It's terrible.

TAD: Are there women?

Mortimer: Well, in our chambers, there were about four women to twenty men. They had to be better than the men. And they were. *(Smiles.)*

TAD: You have said that barristers and lawyers in general are not necessarily in the business of discovering the truth. Instead, there is a contest going on, essentially, in the courtroom.

Mortimer: Yes. That's what really the Rumpole detection addresses. Rumpole discovers the truth which isn't emerging in the courtroom. As you say, a criminal trial under our systems, American and English, isn't an exercise in discovering the truth; it's a contest where the point at issue is whether the prosecution has proved somebody guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. And the fact is that, when they fail to prove that somebody is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt, it doesn't necessarily mean that the person is innocent. And so, criminal defense is never an exercise in establishing your client's innocence; it's always an exercise in trying to persuade the jury that the client has not been proven guilty. So therefore the main business of the defending counsel is not to call evidence but to try and stop evidence being called. So therefore it's a perpetual process of narrowing the limits of the inquiry.

TAD: Which is actually the opposite of trying to bring out the whole truth.

Mortimer: So that really *is* the drama in the Rumpole stories; it's the actual truth which lies behind the results of the trial.

TAD: What do you think of the other courtroom character who immediately leaps to mind, Perry Mason? He used to draw the truth out of people right on the stand.

Mortimer: Yes, that's right. Well, you can't ever do that, really.

TAD: It's very unrealistic.

Mortimer: Yes, with everyone breaking down on the stand. I've only ever done that once. I was once cross-examining a solicitor about a will and he *dropped.* And the judge happened to have been a doctor before he became a judge. So that this solicitor dropped,

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apparently with a heart attack, in the middle of my cross-examination, and the judge rushed down, opened his collar, conducted a quick medical examination, went back to the bench, put his wig back on, and said, "Carry on. He's only dead now."

TAD: Not really!

Mortimer: Yes!

TAD: I understand you've always served in the advocate's position.

Mortimer: Yes. I've only prosecuted in one case, which I lost.

TAD: Was this decision not to prosecute a philosophical one?

Mortimer: Well, I always felt that cross-examining people into prison, using all your skill and wiles to do that, was rather distasteful. I'd rather use that to keep people out of prison. And it's also much more fun being a defender.

TAD: I noticed references to Sherlock Holmes stories in the Rumpole series.

Mortimer: Oh, did you? I'm pleased. There are little references tucked in. In writing the Rumpole stories, the Sherlock Holmes stories are the closest influences on me. I used his shadow on the blind in "Rumpole's Return."

TAD: And then there's the one in which Rumpole pretends to be dead.

Mortimer: Yes. That one is "The Last Resort." It comes from a close study of Doyle's "The Dying Detective." That story is wonderful when he becomes delirious. Sherlock Holmes becomes delirious!

TAD: Do you think that Doyle exerted an influence on detective fiction that we can still feel today in crime writing?

Mortimer: I'm sure he did. I think that all central detectives have been influenced by Sherlock Holmes.

"Once, after I lost a case, the client said, 'Your Mr. Rumpole could have won this case.'"

TAD: We are told that the individual must be presumed innocent until guilt is proven. But, obviously, when someone is brought in because he or she is suspected of murdering someone, we don't regard the suspect as entirely innocent.

Mortimer: Of course we don't. And the Old Bailey judges assume *everybody* is guilty.

TAD: Have you ever defended anyone whom you knew had done it?

Mortimer: There's a long answer to this which is very satisfactory to lawyers and terribly unconvincing to other people. The first thing to say is that, if somebody tells you a story which is *only* consistent with him being guilty, you can't tell him to tell another story. In England, you can't call your client to say something which you know is untrue. So, if you *really* know that he's done it, you can't defend by having the client tell untruths. But, as I said earlier, whether he's guilty or not isn't the thing that you're really concentrating on. The thing you're concentrating on is trying to convince the jury that guilt hasn't been proved. You leave the question of guilt to the jury and the judge when you sit down exhausted [after presenting your case]. It isn't a question you have to decide, really, and you can get quite used to suspending your judgment about that, suspending your disbelief.

TAD: What, for you, is the particular appeal of the Holmes stories?

Mortimer: I don't know; they're so familiar to me. They're like Shakespeare and Browning, things that I grew up with. I think there's extraordinary character and there's extraordinary atmosphere; you can feel it coming on you like the London fog, it's so strong. And, of course, Holmes and Watson are such a wonderful matched couple.

But I think that Conan Doyle was a very decent chap. He believed in justice and honesty, and I think that quality comes out in Sherlock Holmes. There's a *decency* about the Sherlock Holmes stories, which there is sometimes in Dickens, the feeling that somewhere or other there is a goodness in the world. And, although there *are* the murderous Moriarties about, on the whole, decency, sanity, and reason can prevail. I think that's very attractive.

TAD: What do you think accounts for the continuing appeal of crime fiction?

Mortimer: Well, I think the best writers alive in England today are the mystery writers. I think that Ruth Rendell and P. D. James are two of the best novelists around.

TAD: Therefore, it is the quality of the writing that makes it popular?

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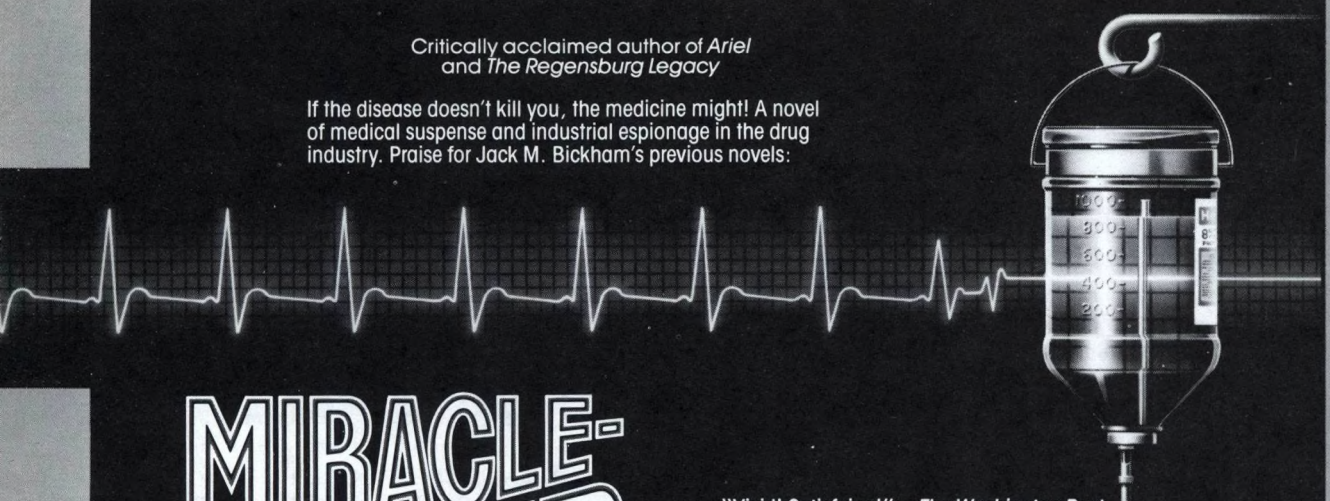

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Mortimer: That's part of it. But I think the great thing is that crime writing *does* have to have a plot. It does have to have a story, which carries the reader on. This is a great strength. And the construction of plot is a great discipline in writing. I've forgotten who it was, but one of the Booker Prize nominees was saying, "Oh, plots. We don't need plots any more; plots are for television." But we absolutely do need them.

TAD: Do you think the novel as a whole will eventually rediscover the importance of plot? It does become tedious after a while, reading about adultery in the suburbs.

Mortimer: Yes, adultery in North London, or the shimmering prose of Virginia Woolf. [These are tedious because] they haven't got any spine to them. The great secret about writing is suspense. It doesn't matter whether it's suspense about a love affair or suspense about a murder. Suspense is the great key. You've got to keep the audience on the edge of its seat, and that's what mystery writing achieves, really. I don't know who it was who said, "Make them laugh; make them cry; make them wait." *(Chuckles.)*

TAD: Although we think of your Rumpole stories as your work that fits most definitely into the mystery genre, almost all of your fiction contains elements of the mystery story.

Mortimer: Yes, that's right. *Paradise Postponed* is a mystery in a way.

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TAD: Yes, there's the central mystery of just why the rector left his estate to the odious Leslie Titmuss. With its question of a mysterious will, its portrayal of a small, church-centered country community, its complex intertwining of characters, and the question of illegitimacy, the book calls to mind a Victorian novel. Did you seek to write a novel which would bring to mind these associations, or did this just develop as you went along?

Mortimer: I knew that I wanted to write a long novel and that I wanted it to be a long television series. Yes, I wanted it to be as much like a long Victorian novel as possible. I think that Victorian novelists and television writers have got a lot in common because they have a large audience and their work comes out in parts. But, although it came out in parts, I knew it had to have one plot to keep people reading and watching it from the beginning to the end. I thought about *Bleak House,* and how, if you asked anyone about the plot of *Bleak House,* they wouldn't be able to describe it to you. What they would be able to tell you would be all the funny little things that happened along the way. But, if *Bleak House* didn't have a plot, they wouldn't have gone on reading it for all the little interesting things. So it needed a plot. This is where the mystery comes in; it really comes into everything. The whole detective story reading is the important thing, to my mind.

TAD: This must have been clear to you from the start of your career. Your first novel, *Charade,* also has a central mystery to it.

Mortimer: Yes, that is so.

TAD: I understand your current work in progress is a novel which you are writing, unlike *Paradise Postponed,* without television adaptation in mind. Is it a mystery as well?

Mortimer: As you know, I wrote *Paradise Postponed* more or less simultaneously with the television adaptation. This new one may eventually be adapted for television, but I am writing it as a novel. I am enjoying working directly with the reader and thinking of this work in a novelist's terms. In television, everything takes place in dramatic little episodes. Most people's lives don't happen that way. Most people's lives consist of what happens to them when they're sitting in the top of buses, or lying in the bath, or waiting for the doctor in surgery, thinking to themselves. And that's what novels are. But you asked if this will contain an element of mystery. Yes, I think it will. There always *has* to be an element of mystery. That's the key.

TAD: You have really succeeded in two careers, both as a lawyer or barrister and as a writer. When you think of your careers, do you think of yourself as more a lawyer or a writer?

Mortimer: I like to think of myself as a writer first, who was also a barrister.

TAD: Your readers are grateful to your career in the law because it has led to the creation of a favorite character, Rumpole of the Bailey. Has barristering helped your writing career in other regards, as well? And has it in any way hindered you?

Mortimer: Barristering helps in writing in that you meet a vast variety of people, in that you hear a lot of different dialogue. But the process of a barrister appearing for a client is the antithesis of what a writer is. To begin with, you don't have a personality of your own. You are a part of your client, and you're there to protect your client; you're really a little puppet on a string for him in many, many ways. That's why the great barrister of all time, Marshall Hall, was difficult to get to know. If you read a book about the life of Marshall Hall, you find out a great deal about all sorts of wonderful murderers, but at the end of the day you don't know who the hell Marshall Hall was—and I don't think he probably knew, himself! So, therefore, the personality, which is so important to the writer, is constantly suppressed in a barrister. The other thing is that the main preoccupation for a writer is to tell the truth of the world as he or she sees it. The great preoccupation of a defense barrister is to prevent too much of the truth leaking out!

TAD: In entering the law, you followed in the footsteps of your father, who was an accomplished divorce barrister. No doubt, you considered early in life the prospect of becoming a barrister. Did you also know at an early age that you wished to become a writer?

Mortimer: I always told my father that I wanted to be a writer. My father didn't say, "Oh, you can't possibly be a writer." He had far too much intelligence. What he said was, "Of course you'll be a writer, a wonderful writer. But just until you make a fortune by writing, learn to divorce a few people." And I didn't really resist his suggestion.

TAD: In your autobiographical volume, *Clinging to the Wreckage*, you describe life with a father who became blind but who carried on, traveling from your home in the country to the law courts, accompanied by your mother, to continue his career. He also remained devoted to the garden which he could no longer see. And, remarkably, his blindness was never mentioned.

Mortimer: Yes, that is so.

TAD: In much of your writing, you seem to enjoy—and to succeed at—telling us about what is happening with your characters without their stating it in words.

Mortimer: Yes. I'm interested in telling the readers, or the audience, what people mean by means of what they're *not* saying, instead of what they *are* saying. That's exactly right.

McKERN AND PEGGY THORPE-BATES, WHO PLAYS RUMPOLE'S WIFE HILDA; THE NEWS IS THAT THEY WILL SEPARATE NEXT SEASON.

TAD: No doubt your upbringing had some influence on your developing this particular talent.

Mortimer: Yes, well, it's also a rather sort of English trait, isn't it? If you're English, you should say everything *except* what you think.

TAD: Because your father was blind, you also had the task of reading extensively to him. This exposed you to a broad range of work and in effect added informally to your education.

Mortimer: Absolutely. And he shared a great deal of literature with me. He had total recall, you know. For instance, he knew the whole of the Sherlock Holmes stories by heart and could recite them. I got to Sherlock Holmes very young because of my father. He used to tell me the Sherlock Holmes stories whilst we were walking around Switzerland. We used to go a lot to Switzerland for his eye operations. I have very many memories about being there, when I was eight or nine, and staying at our hotel, and walking with my father while he recited the Holmes stories. I connect Switzerland terribly with Sherlock Holmes.

TAD: You use the term "terribly" here to mean "very much so," but of course Sherlock met a terrible crisis in another sense of the word at the Swiss Reichenbach Falls.

Mortimer: (Laughs.)

TAD: Tell us what you were like as a boy. Were you isolated, living in the country with an eccentric set of parents?

Mortimer: Well, yes, in a very real sense, I was, although of course I did play quite a bit with the village children and with the daughter of a local man who made chair legs for a living. But I can recall

"The great secret about writing is suspense . . . keep the audience on the edge of its seat."

myself as solitary for great stretches of time, playing with toy theatres and acting out *Hamlet* all by myself on a staircase to my father, or dueling with myself for hours in the garden.

TAD: Your village, Turville, is located between Henley-on-Thames and Oxford. Where did you attend school, and what was the experience of early schooling like for you?

Mortimer: First, I went to the Dragon School at Oxford.

TAD: What sort of a boy were you?

Mortimer: I think I was probably absolutely intolerable.

TAD: In what regard?

Mortimer: Well, I was an aesthete, I suppose. I used to sit in the library reading books and I was really uninclined to play any games. But they were really quite tolerant of me when I was in my prep school. I refused to play any games [sports] because I thought they were dangerous and boring—and they actually didn't force me to play. They used to give me a bar of chocolate and send me to the theatre. That was unusual for an English prep school before the war.

TAD: I should say so.

Mortimer: And then I went to Harrow. There I was just told to change into my games clothes and take exercise, any sort of exercise. I used to run off and sit in the lavatory and read books.

Yes, no doubt I was intolerable. I have read some of the letters that I had written to my mother from Harrow, and they were all written in Byronic stanzas and heroic couplets and they were very affected.

TAD: Did you have any friends there who were of the same mind as you, sort of kindred spirits?

Mortimer: Yes. I had a few friends, not many. I didn't stay there very long. It was very boring. But Byron became a great friend because he'd been to Harrow and there were all of these relics of his in the library. And there was the tomb in the Harrow churchyard where he used to lie and recite poetry. I used to go and sit there. He must have looked over the rolling countryside. Now, you look out over the gasworks and the suburbs.

But one thing about English public school is that, after surviving it, you can survive absolutely anything. There's a wonderful story told by a friend of mine called Parsons. He was captured by the Japanese during the war and had to work on a terrible road. He was absolutely miserable, and he was being kicked by the Japanese as he dug, when he looked up and saw another little posse of British prisoners being taken in the opposite direction. These prisoners were being beaten on by the rifle butts of the Japanese guards. And out of this little crowd of prisoners came a little voice that said, "Cheer up, Parsons, it's not nearly as bad as Marlborough."

Nothing, after public school, *nothing* would disturb you.

TAD: Later, you went on to Oxford. And, of course, many years later you wrote of the undergraduate experience of Oxford, as portrayed by Evelyn Waugh, when you adapted *Brideshead Revisited* for television. Was your experience of Oxford anything like Charles Ryder's?

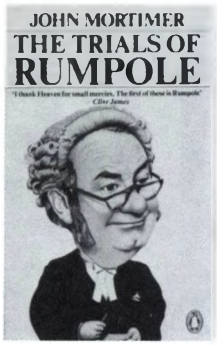
Mortimer: Well, the thing about *Brideshead Revisited* is that it is actually more revealing of the time in which it was written than it is of the time it's about. It was written during a period of austerity and bread rationing and the war. Everyone liked it because it talked of a past, vanished age and wonderful golden youth and all of that. I remember reading it when the book came dout, which was just during the war or just after. Although, when I was at Oxford, there *were* sort of relics of the old Evelyn Waugh period, my Oxford was very different.

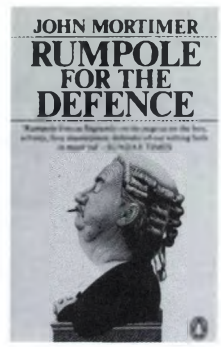
TAD: Were there flamboyant characters around?

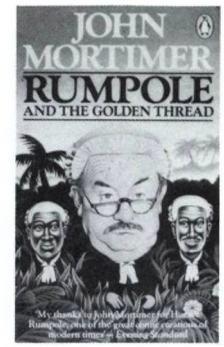
Mortimer: Yes, there were a few. They've all disappeared totally, without a trace. But yes, there were some great flamboyant homosexual characters. Homosexuality was the fashionable thing. You had to be sort of apologetic about being heterosexual. *(Laughs.)* Keep it quiet!

Of course, Oxford is different today. Of course, now all of the students have seen *Brideshead* and they've all got their teddy bears.

TAD: Before you entered the law, you enlisted in the Crown Film Unit, a branch of the Army that produced documentary films. Can you tell us a little bit about that?







Mortimer: Well, there was a man, who lived next to my father, called Jack Bennington, who was appointed head of propaganda films during the war. He was aware that I used to do Punch and Judy shows when I was a child. So he immediately thought of this wonderful boy who had done these superb Punch and Judy shows and thought I'd be just the man to nick Hitler. So he gave me a job in the Crown Film Unit, which I thought was very grand. I was made fourth assistant director, and all I had to do was make tea and fetch cigarettes and say, "Quiet, please!" at the beginning of every shot. I was a total disaster because when I said, "Quiet, please," no one took the slightest notice of me. Then I lost twenty electricians on the way to Liverpool. I was in charge of them and they just wandered off and were never seen again.

So, the Crown Film Unit were very nice and they said I'd do a great deal less harm as a scriptwriter. So I became a scriptwriter. And I was terribly happy. I earned £11 a week; I had a flat in Chelsea; and I had a uniform with "SCRIPTWRITER" on the front of it.

TAD: How did you feel about the process of making documentary films?

Mortimer: By and large, I reacted against it. We were pretending that on the home front everyone was thinking about the war and not indulging in the black market or making love to one another's wives. So it wasn't really a truthful way of approaching life, but I did learn a lot. And, of course, these were very formative years for me. I was working with a class of people that I'd never met at school. We were putting forward the ideas of J. B. Priestley—the victory of the common man.

TAD: You wrote your first novel about your experiences in the Crown Film Unit.

Mortimer: That's right.

TAD: And then you wrote six more novels, while also taking up the law and raising a large family.

Mortimer: I started out life and got married on an income of £5 a week, which my father paid me to draft all of his legal pleadings. So I had to draft out all these 35 paragraphs of cruelty and adultery and people throwing the toast rack at one another, and at the end of the week I got paid £5. I was called to the bar in 1947, and that was how I got started, in my father's room in the Inner Temple. Then, gradually, I got cases, and my father became less and less interested in leaving his garden, so I got more and more cases.

TAD: And, at this time, you had married your first wife, Penelope, who was also a novelist, and you had taken on the responsibility of raising her four children from her previous marriage, and your family grew to include two children of your own.

Mortimer: Yes. We had a daughter and a son. It was an extraordinary time because there I was, a young, fresh-faced divorce barrister of about 24, having left a large, chaotic family in the morning, after a row with my wife, with my bills unpaid, the mortgage about to be foreclosed, and I would arrive at my desk in chambers to advise fifty-year-old company directors on just exactly how they should conduct their married lives! What I learned at this young age was not to be surprised at any form of human behavior, really.

And I think that one of the greatest privileges of my life was to be able to meet an enormous range of people. I could have lunch with judges and tea with murderers in their cells.

TAD: And then later you became a "Q.C.," or Queen's Counsel, which meant that you could work in criminal law.

Mortimer: Yes. And then I took to murder; I took to crime; I took to obscenity; I took to the good things in life. *(Chuckles.)*

TAD: You have quite a reputation in Britain for fighting censorship.

Mortimer: Yes. One of the more important trials in which I was concerned was about a book called *The Little Red Schoolhouse.* This was a book that imparted some sort of sexual advice to young people but also a great deal of left-wing politics. I think really it was because of the left-wing politics that it was prosecuted. And then I began to think of censorship as a political weapon which should be resisted. So I took up the battle.

TAD: In this and other cases?

Mortimer: That's correct. □

THE BATTLE

In Mickey Spillane's books, it's not as violent as you would think

By Robert L. Sandels

THE ENORMOUS POPULARITY of the early Mickey Spillane novels led most of his early critics to wonder if the public had taken leave of their senses. "It is more than a little amazing," wrote Philip Wylie, "that the public, manifesting what sociological disturbances I can only guess, should respond so eagerly."[1] To Wylie, the real criminal in the Mike Hammer crime stories was Spillane himself.

Some more recent critics have said more or less the same thing: the Spillane hero is a Nazi in plain clothes or a monster masquerading as a hero.[2] Such commentary, though, fails to come to grips with the question Wylie had posed but left unanswered: what did readers see in Spillane? Here by way of a partial answer are some of the character traits of the Spillane hero which suggest that, far from being a perversion of postwar values, he is so deeply a part of them that it would have been amazing had Spillane's books failed to attract readers. The Spillane hero is a romantic, who is sentimentally committed to the principles of marriage, chastity (for women), and pre-marital sexual restraint; he likes children, especially orphans; he is a father figure to troubled youth, even to a teenaged murderer who repents under Mike Hammer's influence. By reflex, he attempts to save ladies of the street, bridge-jumpers, ex-cons, escapees from lunatic asylums. . . . He is fond of beat cops and hard-working reporters. He identifies himself with patriotism, with the working class, with the innocent pleasures of common people; he practices frankness and honesty; he keeps his word; he is loyal to friendships, even if they are only a minute old.

Several insightful studies have analyzed the Spillane world and how it relates to the real world of American culture in the 1950s.[3] But, with the exception of a recent reappraisal of Spillane's entire output by Max Allan Collins and James L. Traylor, little attention has been paid to Spillane's later works; and indeed, it often seems that critics have read only *I, the Jury*.[4] As a result, there has been little change in the notion that the Spillane hero is an incorrigible sex adventurer with a determination to find all beautiful women guilty of something very serious so that he may slay them under contrived circumstances of self-defense.

In fact, the Spillane hero does not generally come across evil women and does not have to kill women in every novel. He does find them a distraction though; or, if they are matronly, he finds them to be castrating tyrants practicing the smothering trade of the itinerant mom.[5] His method of dealing with female threats is not so often murder as it is emotional and sexual avoidance. Rather than a lascivious sex monster, the Spillane hero is more like the '50s male in revolt as chronicled in Barbara Ehrenreich's *The Hearts of Men*. He had taken one of the first flights away from the domestic responsibilities which '50s society imposed: to marry young, to support a housebound woman, to raise children in the suburbs,

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OF THE SEXES

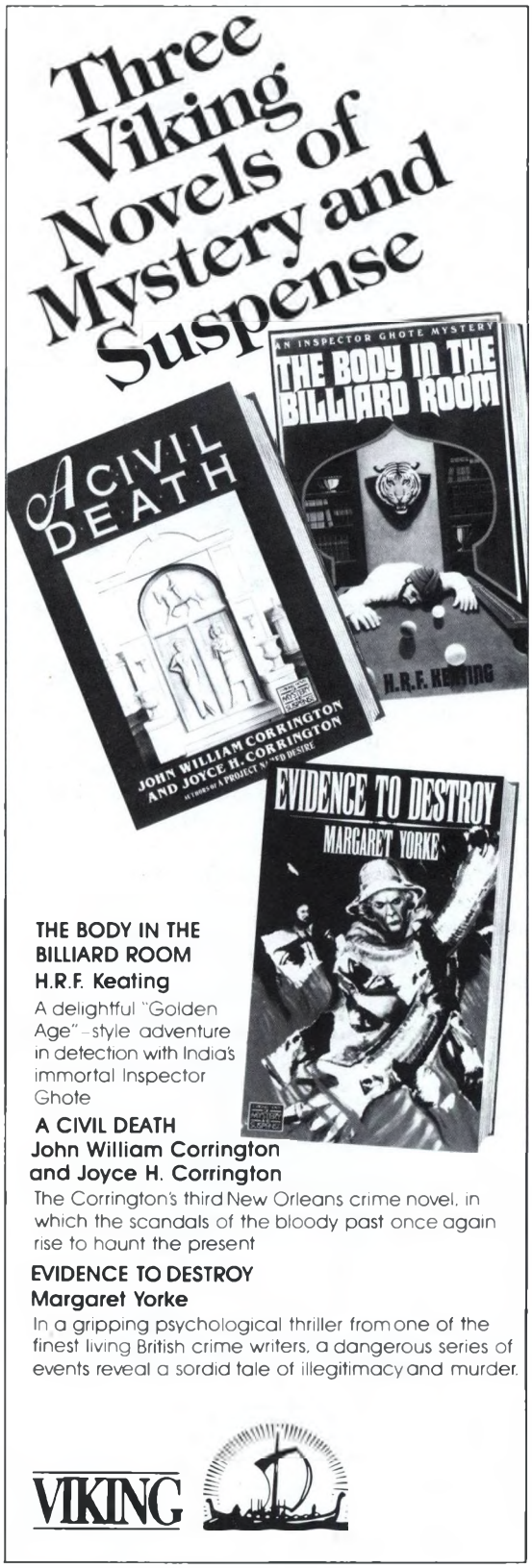
Stacey Keach and Tanya Roberts take the battle of Spillane's sexes onto the tube in an episode of *Mike Hammer.*

and to remain tied to a job in which compromises replaced personal victories. One of the most likely "sociological disturbances" which confounded Wylie was surely the smoldering dissatisfaction with postwar gender role assignments. Ehrenreich notes in this regard the appearance of *Playboy* in 1953, with its invitation to lead the life of the promiscuous bachelor without the suspicion of homosexuality.[6] In 1946, six years before the *Playboy* manifesto appeared, Mike Hammer was not only leading a working-class version of the *Playboy* swinger's life but was vigorously keeping women in their place. He went beyond the hard-boiled detective's traditional rejection of "commitment" to directly accuse women of trying to destroy his freedom and professional effectiveness. Sales figures for the six Hammer novels published between 1947 and 1952 suggest that a considerable number of male readers, who themselves may not have been in active rebellion against women, families, and adult male responsibilities, were nevertheless glad to read about a fictional character who was.

Since the last Hammer novel of the 1950s, *Kiss Me Deadly,* in which Mike Hammer ignites a female villain with his Zippo, Spillane has published eighteen more books of crime and cold-war spy stories—the latest in 1973. These books are not re-enactments of the ritual gut-shooting of Charlotte Manning in *I, the Jury.* There is, of course, stylized brutality in them to one degree or another, as well as rightist political rhetoric, but there are also examples of Spillane's growth as a writer. *The Erection Set* and *The Last Cop Out,* for instance, show considerably more skill in the handling of plot and character than do the early Hammer novels. They and others, including a novel written in 1948 but not published until 1966, have messages which co-exist with and in some cases crowd out the sex and sadism of the quintessential Spillane. By 1973, Spillane had undergone changes in his development of female characters, while his heroes were taking second looks at certain established values they had always despised or ignored, chiefly family, wealth, social power, and position.

When the first Hammer novels were published, it soon became apparent that Spillane's major contribution to the art of detective fiction writing was the explicit linking of brutal sex and brutal violence. Sex and violence were hardly new to this kind of fiction; but somehow Hammer's relish for mayhem, his self-righteous defenses of it, and his salacious and detailed interior monologues about the ebb and flow of his sexual impulses, made him a true original.

John G. Cawelti calls this "violence as orgasm." He argues that this theme results from the "fear, hostility and ambiguity toward society and particularly toward women that are built into the hard-boiled formula."[7] This idea works well enough as a means of focusing on the way sex and violence intersect in Spillane's novels. Likewise, Kay Weidel's portrayal of Mike Hammer as a schizophrenic sexist is also useful. Critics must be careful, however, not to take orgasmic fixation too literally as a unifying device. Spillane, according to Weibel, provides male readers with a way to resolve their conflicting desires



to be both husband and "adventure-seeking bachelor." Hammer has both the inviolate secretary (Velda) and a parade of sexually available women. The promiscuous ones meet death as a way of resolving the problem.[8] Cawelti's view is that: "The only possible resolution to the insecurity caused by the conflict between the need for women as sexual and social fulfillment and the threat of feminine independence and domination is the simultaneous possession and destruction of the female."[9] This analysis fits the infamous final scene in *I, the Jury* when Hammer shoots Charlotte Manning and "obsession and destruction reach a simultaneous climax."[10] It may even serve as a loose metaphor for Spillane's handling of women in general. But it is misleading if applied to most of the thirty-odd novels and collections of shorter works that came after *I, the Jury*. Typically, commentators have generalized too much from Hammer's killing of Charlotte. However ambiguous the Spillane hero's feelings about women, they are not always or even usually resolved by pinning murder raps on women and then shooting them in self-defense. Grella and Weibel, among others, grossly exaggerate the incidence of female killers in Spillane's novels.[11] Nor does the Spillane hero really need women seriously enough that he must possess/destroy them. The emphasis in the early novels—the ones which have received the most critical comment—is more upon rejection of women than it is upon their destruction. The simplest solution to the problem of male insecurity to which Cawelti refers is to ignore the sexually bothersome woman, and that is the preferred Spillane solution. Women are the villains in only a third of Spillane's crime and spy novels, and only in one is a woman the sole villain. In all the others, the villainous woman is part of a male-female combination. We find such a team of assassins—two men and a woman—in *The Girl Hunters,* for instance. Furthermore, Charlotte in *I, the Jury* is the only example of the evil temptress with whom the hero has a fully played-out possession/destruction fantasy. Only in *I, the Jury* is the hero in love with the villain. Mike Hammer romanticizes his feelings for Charlotte and lavishes on her a shameless sentimentality. They have innocent dates over home-cooked (by her) meals. They talk of children. They stroll in Central Park with a borrowed baby. They talk of how Charlotte will give up her psychiatric practice on Park Avenue to become the wife and companion to the male provider whose assets are several guns, two suits, and a five-year-old car. She will be protected from the outside world and become the keeper of family proprieties. When Hammer shoots Charlotte, he destroys his hopes for achieving the standardized future of the postwar era. Mike Hammer, detective, tracks down and kills off a cloying relic of the Victorian era at the same time that he disposes of a killer. He never again falls in love

with a killer, and the only other woman for whom he appears to have a love attachment is Velda. But look at her: she is free of the taint of domination which men fear. She shares Hammer's social views and is a competent private investigator in her own right. Velda is the perfect companion for the man in retreat because she has been made to order for his narcissistic fantasies. She is Mike Hammer, his anima, but with nicer legs.

Without the romantic, sentimental kind of love, the possession/destruction requirement loses much of its urgency. Hammer scrupulously observes the prohibition on pre-marital sex with Charlotte; but, as he actually does sexually possess all the other guilty women in the Hammer series, none of whom he loves or sentimentalizes, his need to destroy them with symbolic orgasms can hardly be necessary. The women who throw themselves at him with such indelicate abandon, like the spoiled little upper-class Communist dupe, Ethel Brighton in *One Lonely Night,* are clearly no threat to Hammer's independence.

Going beyond symbolic acts to an examination of what actually takes place in a Spillane novel, we find a discrepancy between the hero's sexual notoriety and his sexual activity. The Spillane hero is sexy, not sexual. James Bond is sexual—that is, sexually aggressive, seductive, and determined to initiate sexual play. Mike Hammer and his spy equivalent Tiger Mann, like many heroes of the hardboiled genre, are not sexually very aggressive, and there is a surprisingly high incidence of purposeful abstention. Hammer may easily fool the reader by his compulsive sexual banter into assuming that his adventures are chiefly in bed. In fact, he uses every excuse to avoid or to postpone sex. He is afraid of venereal disease; he is fearful of nymphomania. With the two women to whom he becomes engaged, he will observe pre-marital restraint despite their pleas. For all their discussion of women's bodies, Hammer and the other Spillane heroes average about two acts of sexual intercourse per book. In several, the frequency approaches zero. Two of his heroes, Joe Scanlon and The Deep, lead nearly celibate lives. There is no clear example in any of the novels of a hero actually setting out to seduce a specific woman. It is the women who have no restraints. No likely female in any Spillane novel can resist making frank sexual offers. But Hammer will not undress in front of a woman: "There are some things I'm prudish about, baby," he says in *The Girl Hunters.* He will not go skinny-dipping with Laura Knapp in the same book. He keeps Velda in a state of sexual frustration for over twenty years by saying that he is saving her for marriage, which he finally proposes in *One Lonely Night* but forgets about later. In *The Snake,* the now perpetually engaged Velda is frozen sexually in time. Resorting to desperate measures, she enters Hammer's hotel room, strips, and lies upon the bedsheets. Nothing daunted, Hammer crawls *between* the sheets and goes to sleep. The novel ends with only the implication of a completed sexual encounter.

Hammer shows more interest in leering at women than in going to bed with them.

Hammer shows more interest in leering at women than in going to bed with them. He seems to have the sexual urges of a pre-pubescent boy for whom the viewing of the female's forbidden zones is the apogee of sexual possession. When women strip for him, he marvels that they let him look as long as he likes. Such women often inquire if he would "like to see the rest of me." Their blouses fall open; bath towels fall off. A number of these women have mechanical contrivances which permit their clothing, with the pull on a tassle, to open like a curtain on a play to reveal flamboyant activity of the stomach muscles. They have eruptive, aggressive bodies. Their breasts and thighs fight for freedom. They seem always about to jump out of their clothes to attack men. "Her body seemed to want to explode and only the tailored suit kept it confined." Much of this is lost on the Spillane hero. Tiger Mann rips the gown from Vey Locca in *The Death Dealers,* describes her body in detail, and then carries on a lascivious conversation with the willing woman. "I never took my eyes off her." This viewing completed, he terminates the encounter and departs.

Velda's sexual readiness, indeed the voracious sexual appetites of the Spillane women, are a recurrent pattern which creates dangers from which the hero must find an escape. Sex and marriage are postponed as the hero finds himself drawn into new challenges from the underworld. At the beginning of *Bloody Sunrise,* Tiger Mann receives a call ordering him to combat a Communist plot, "involving the total security of the country," which is apparently scheduled for the same day as his marriage to Rondine. "Broads aren't an asset when you're setting a deal," Tiger explains while on the case of *The Day of the Guns.* "They're too distracting." In *The Snake,* after a series of narrow escapes from Velda's advances, Hammer is enticed into some advanced foreplay in the bushes during a time-out from stalking a killer. Velda foolishly removes Mike's .45

from its holster because it is in the way; but, when the killer shows up, Hammer is powerless. This scene, so freighted with Freudian significance, is an eloquent commentary on the consequences of sexual capitulation. Hammer has failed to heed the lesson which appears in the following soliloquy in *One Lonely Night*:

> Any woman should know when a man is nothing but a man and when he'll promise or tell anything. I knew all those things too and it didn't do me any good because I was still a man.

He is then seduced by a Communist. It works the same way for the enemy. Of a Russian who has defected because of a woman, Tiger Mann observes: "One goddamn dame and you're dead." And the greatest example of this challenge—the heavily armed, high-powered Sherman tank of deadly female sexuality—is the nymphomaniac. When Hammer runs into one in *I, the Jury,* he grabs his hat and, as he goes out the door, decides that she has been placed in his path as a booby trap to impede his investigation.

Fending off women becomes then a heroic necessity which requires the hero's rejection of ploys ranging from meek variants of the headache gambit to "I can't take the time," or even to "You'll get a slap in the ear if you don't shut up."

The clearest statement of the need for heroic sex avoidance occurs at the end of *I, the Jury,* as Hammer explains to Charlotte her own tragic criminal motivations:

> You are a woman who wanted wealth and power. . . . How many times have you gone into the frailty of men and seen their weaknesses? It made you afraid. You no longer had the social instinct of a woman—that of being dependent upon a man. You were afraid, so you found a way to increase your bank account.

The chief frailty and weakness of men is seen clearly enough in Hammer's weakness for Charlotte, a weakness which blinds him to her guilt long enough for her to kill six people after he has set out to solve the initial murder of his wartime friend, Jack. In the simplest terms, Hammer has discovered that men are suckers for women. Thus, the most serious threat to the detective's effectiveness in his war on crime is not the female as criminal but the deflecting power of women's sexuality.

In Hammer's speech to Charlotte, he also notes how her knowledge of men's frailties told her that if she wished security she must find it in herself, not in men, a truth curiously never denied by Hammer. This knowledge so frightens Charlotte that she has been driven to set up a drug business to augment her income as a psychiatrist. Earlier in the novel, she has observed that most of the men she has known in her practice

> are such little men. . . . So many have repressions or obsessions, and they come to me with their pitiful stories; well, when you constantly see men with their masculinity gone . . . you get so you actually search for a real man.

Had she met Mike Hammer before committing her first murder in order to protect her drug dealing, Charlotte might have escaped her fate. "Mike," she says, "is a real man."

The typical Spillane hero, then, was an anomaly for a man of his time: a real man capable of solving two of modern life's most perplexing problems—crime and women's feminization and domestication of men.

Most men in Spillane's books, except for street cops and friends of the hero, are weak. The average man is "a squirt," nervous and "thin-necked"—a "mousey-type." The average man is a victim of the theft of his masculinity by women who have lost their femininity. When the domineering wife of a building superintendent in *Kiss Me Deadly* tries to speak for her husband, Mike Hammer tells her to shut up. Her mouth stops.

> "I'm looking for the super."
> "I'm the. . ."
> "You're not anything to me lady. Tell your boy to come out."

Simpering, she steps inside to fetch the super. Inspired by Hammer's example, the super turns to his now cowering wife: "You wait right there until I come back. . . . I'm the super." Hammer muses: "When men learn to be men maybe they can handle dames." Like Charlotte, the super's wife, in her own way, must have learned men's secrets and used that knowledge to steal her husband's manhood.

The Spillane hero has a problem with older women, too. He reacts quickly to counter any

perceived attempt by an older woman to treat him as though he were not a real man by trying to exercise maternal authority over him. In *The Long Wait,* an older woman asks Johnny McBride to close a bus window. He tells her to shut up because, "The way she said it you'd think I was a damn kid." Of another woman, he says: "She was more like my mother waiting to hear why I got a low grade at school."

How can ordinary men be anything but squirts or do anything but cringe in the face of the bullying, corrupting criminal forces all around them when they have traded their masculinity in for a woman? Mike Hammer's heroic appeal seems to derive from his ability to free his energies for combat against crime by placing women under his control, not theirs, and to survive the consequences when he loses that control.

The Spillane hero's adherence to the double standard has led most scholars who have examined him to dismiss him as a hopeless Neanderthal, psychotically committed to carrying on a long struggle for revenge against female killers and to sexually mauling all the women in sight. In doing so, scholars have generally overlooked the distinctions which the hero makes among women characters and the degree to which the hero, especially in Spillane's last two novels of the 1970s, comes to share with women the struggle against evil. The only continuing female character in the Hammer series, Velda, is not just a virgin whose sole function is to be captured by thugs and sadistically tortured so that Hammer may save her, though this is sometimes her fate. Spillane has also made her tough, competent with a gun, composed in time of danger, and so heroically resourceful that in *The Girl Hunters* she is able to operate in Eastern Europe for seven years, posing as a member of an international Communist terrorist organization, a woman so dangerous to the opposition that she is described as capable of rocking "the whole Soviet system." Combining all this with her earlier exploits in wartime military intelligence, Velda is quite frankly far better equipped than Mike Hammer to handle the new menace of Cold War Communism. Where has Hammer been these past seven years as the threat grew? He was for the seven years of Velda's mysterious disappearance—while she managed quite well without him, thank you—on a continuous alcoholic binge of self-pity and helplessness.

As early as 1951, in *One Lonely Night,* Spillane's fourth Hammer novel, the hero is forced to see that he cannot go it alone and to accept help from Velda. This is the first book in which a Spillane hero fights Communism. The simple stories of a detective's revenge on a killer broaden to take in the wider world of the Cold War. When Spillane began the Tiger Mann series in the 1960s, the individualistic hero, working alone or with only a loyal secretary, merged with a large and ominously powerful syndicate organized to fight international threats. Velda and the other good women had little part in Hammer's earlier pursuits of ordinary killers except to serve as snoops and decoys. In *One Lonely Night,* Velda rebels against Mike's stubborn insistence on male heroics: "Mike...there are times when you have to let somebody else in on things." And, striking a theme of male-female solidarity against massive new dangers—a theme to which Spillane returns time and again over the next twenty years—she says:

> Mike, there are men and women in this country. They made it together even when it was worse than now. Women learned how to shoot. . . . I said we do it together.

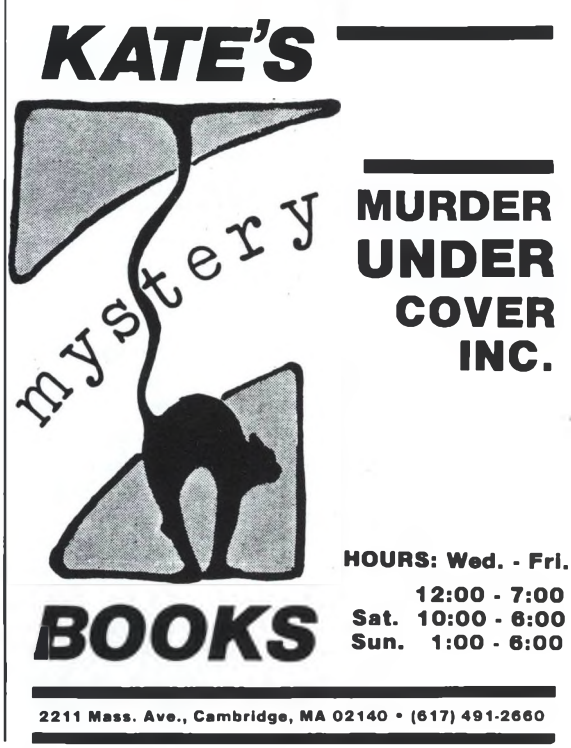
Succumbing to this argument, Hammer inducts her into the eroticism of killing. After they agree to hunt Communists together, he gives Velda an engagement ring. They then go out and in a dark room kill two Communists, one each. Velda kills hers with cool competence. Alone, but together in this dark abatoir, they consummate their engagement with the killing of intruders. Afterwards, they talk about it.

"My conscience doesn't hurt me Mike. . . . Is this how you feel, Mike. Is it all right for me to feel like this?"

"I feel happy," Mike says.

"So do I," replies Velda.

For Velda, this adventure has only re-awakened her sexual interest in Mike, just as it has extinguished



his interest in her. Velda invites Mike to her apartment for the remainder of the night. He refuses, claiming that sex between them would be wrong since they are now engaged. Another reason emerges as Mike reflects on the recent killings while driving home.

> There had been too much. . . . You get wound up like a watch spring, tighter and tighter until the limit is reached and you let go with a bang that leaves you empty and gasping.

Hammer is quite simply sexually spent. The evening of killing would not have been possible had his sexual energies been consumed by Velda. Later, he tells her

that they were only "engaged to be engaged," and in the next novel nothing more is said about marriage. Scenes like these reveal the role women play more accurately than all the drooling descriptions of women's bodies. There are no heroic possibilities in sex. Real excitement and fulfillment are to be found only in the pursuit and the destruction of criminals and Communists. Noting that the "Superman" comic strip is drawn without reproductive organs—having no need for them—Jules Feiffer points out that the true hero has no interest in women except to help them and then to get the hell out. Real rapport is, for the true hero, not with women but with villains.[12]

Yet, at the same time, the Spillane men and women combine to fight evil. In some of his novels of the 1960s, Spillane's heroes team up with capable and feminine women. In *Killer Mine,* the hero is a middle-aged cop named Joe Scanlon who lives a lonely, celibate life. He is well-off, comfortable, and middle-class. Assigned to work with a policewoman, Marty Borlig, of nearly equal experience, he returns to his boyhood slum neighborhood to find a killer. Their relationship is that of mutually respectful professionals. As the search narrows down to a single suspect, Joe puts his daughter Helen aside as Mike often did Velda and goes into a Western shoot-out mode to trap the killer, who turns out to be very like himself—his twin brother, a morally stunted likeness which measures for the reader the distance Joe has traveled from what he might have become or remained.

The male-female alliance may develop in another direction, too, toward marriage based on the kind of equality that war veterans have. In *Man Alone,* another hero-cop, Pat Regan, sets out to clear himself of a murder charge with help from Madaline. In several Spillane novels, the hero treats hookers with sympathy and even takes them as temporary lovers. In *Man Alone,* Madaline is not only a prostitute but a madam as well, and her reasons for remaining a madam are the time-honored, working-from-the-inside theory:

> "I know what you're thinking. I was still involved, but I got to know the right people and had enough going for me so that I could kill any heat that landed on the kids who got to know too much. There are those who say prostitution is better controlled. Funny enough, I'm not one. I'd like it abolished, but as long as the damn public demands it, I'll stay in where I can do some good when the time comes."

Purified by her motives as an undercover madam and finally redeemed by sadistic torture, Madaline is made fit to become the hero's consort and future wife. Regan saves her from her tormentors, and she saves him by killing the chief villain. They save each other and go off to a presumably mutually satisfying life together.

In *The Erection Set,* much of the early Hammer formula remains intact. There is the usual vigorous male physicality and gross brutality—a hoodlum has his testicles nailed to the floor, and heads are blown off with the ubiquitous .45 cannon—but there is also the significant elaboration of a theme only primitively thrust upon the reader in the earliest Hammer adventures: the theme of position and legitimacy. The young Mike Hammer takes women to cheap bars to see if they share his liking for beer and for working-class values. He often travels to the Lower East Side to find common people who are his kind and who "didn't have dough" and "didn't have flash," but who understand the corrupt monster of the city and even like it. As Spillane's heroes age and grow accustomed to a middle-class life themselves, they seek legitimacy as often as they seek vengeance. In *The Long Wait,* this theme is made explicit as the amnesiac hero returns to his home town to avenge wrongs done to him and there discovers his true identity and reclaims his forgotten wife. In *Killer Mine* and in *The Erection Set,* the middle-aged protagonists look for re-attachment to their roots and try to realign their identities with what they were as youths. Dogeron Kelly in *The Erection Set* seeks power and wealth—that is, he seeks to become a more moral part of the very class so despised by Mike Hammer—in order to acquire status where once he

was a rejected misfit because of his bastardy. Domesticity, or at least marriage, becomes an acceptable necessity in the pursuit, even to the point that Kelly prescribes marriage between his best friend and a lovable, loyal whore. In a warm speech that runs counter to Hammer's double standard, Kelly talks Rose the whore into marrying his buddy: "He needs somebody like you." He arranges one marriage and saves another by freeing the wife from frigidity, and he prepares to enter marriage himself with a 32-year-old virgin who has waited for him because she believes in his goodness. This is a book about the positive value of wealth and power in the hands of good men. It is not about the vitriolic anti-establishment attitudes of Mike Hammer, who pursues criminals according to his personal criminal justice system. About the only good thing Hammer can bring himself to say about the rich is that their furniture is more comfortable than it looks.

Kelly mashes several criminals, but that is incidental. He uses money, not a .45, to oppose his decayed relatives—a faded family of homosexuals and silly women with botched marriages, a family which has allowed its inherited business to decline to the point at which a fine old town faces extinction. Kelly uses his stake—a kind of starter fortune earned in legitimate trade overseas—to hire lawyers, restore family houses, and thwart the grasping ambitions of Cross, his ruthless business opponent. The older theme of simple vengeance against killers and mobsters is replaced in this novel by a desire to re-establish traditional domestic virtues, as demonstrated by the three marriages. Cross, out of gratitude to Kelly for sexing-up his frigid wife, surrenders his hold on the old family corporation. Cross is not bashed. Revenge is not taken. His testicles are not nailed to the floor. In the end, the town, the business, and the loyal old workers are restored. Kelly's honor has been established as he prepares to marry the semi-virgin and take his place as the town's leading business luminary.

Spillane's last novel, before he turned to writing adventure stories for young people, was *The Last Cop Out* (1973). Of all his novels, it conforms least to Spillane's basic style, and it comes to terms most directly with the changed social circumstances of the 1960s and 1970s. *The Last Cop Out* is the bloodiest of Spillane's books. Aside from assorted minor hoods, hit men, guilty bystanders, and three higher-ups who are killed before the novel even begins, there are 44 killings of more or less highly placed mobsters, 32 of them dispatched at once by a single shot from an anti-tank weapon. An undisclosed number of bad men, plus one square block of Miami, are demolished in another incident.

In outline, *The Last Cop Out* is indistinguishable from early Spillane tales. It is the story of a heroic fight to defeat great forces masterminding corruption and crime. There are the usual bitter speeches against liberals, and the conspiratorial view of the world remains intact. This could have been said of Mike Hammer in 1947:

> It was law-and-order time with the soft courts and liberals all over the place protecting this right or that, but with a guy like Burke all that was a lot of garbage, and if he was satisfied the pieces fit he'd go in shooting and take his chances with an explanation later.

And Mike Hammer would have echoed the simple declaration: "Screw the Miranda or the Ecobedo decisions."

The Last Cop Out features as its hero an ex-cop, Gillian Burke, who has been kicked off the force ostensibly for his unorthodox, Hammer-like methods, but in reality because the national leadership of organized crime, "The Big Board," wanted him out of the way.

Burke is asked to return as a special agent to help solve the mystery, embarrassing to police everywhere, of who is killing off the great criminal executives. The chief mobster in New York, Papa Menes, goes into hiding in the Florida Keys to wait things out, leaving a subaltern, Mark Shelby, in New York, secretly plotting to take over. The Big Board sends a sadistic executive assassin, Frank Verdun, to find the nemesis of its vast organization.

Because this novel is written in the third person, we are raised above the action which in other books of the hardboiled genre is so steadfastly restricted to what the hero knows and sees. Only we and Burke know that Burke is behind the systematic elimination of the mob. We know, but Burke doesn't know, where Menes is and that his whore seeks to revenge herself upon him. Several other characters have prominent roles besides the hero: Menes, Shelby, Verdun, Burke's lover Helen Scanlon, Shelby's mistress Helga, and the Menes's whore Louise Belhander. Menes and Shelby are as prominent in the narrative as is Burke. The novel is constructed as a series of short, rapid, cinematic takes. Scenes of Burke in action are spliced between scenes in which the gangsters plot and fret and other scenes wherein prostitutes go about their work and calculate their prospects for self-improvement.

The effect of all this is to flatten out the heroic peaks in the Spillane formula. Burke must share the stage with the scheming multitudes. Though we have a commanding view of the action as a whole, we never see Burke actually kill anyone or order an assassination. Thus, he never takes control of our attention in heroic postures. Instead, Spillane presses to the front of the narrative plane an array of characters. It is *their* internal monologues we listen to, *their* miscalculations and blundering violence we witness. How reminiscent they are of the old Mike Hammer—he would be about 56—who plowed

blindly ahead, leading with his skull in search of killers, ignorant of the mortal dangers behind each door, seeing so little of the general landscape of the plot.

This structure allows Spillane to chronicle the attacks on the Big Board while keeping Burke's hand hidden in the same way that vast criminal and foreign conspiracies have been presented in his earlier novels. Freed from the structural straitjacket of the first-person narration, Spillane breaks away from the flat posturing of the typical Spillane stick figures.

The women in *The Last Cop Out* are not the degenerates and psychopaths of earlier Spillane novels. None is a vicious killer like Charlotte Manning in *I, the Jury,* who uses her knowledge of men's weaknesses for her criminal ends, and none is the good virgin of Mike Hammer's sexual fantasies, who pants after the hero who won't have her because he is saving her for a marriage which recedes forever into the future. Missing too is the threat which women's sexuality once posed for the detective-saviour as he goes about his grim tasks.

Three women play crucial roles in *The Last Cop Out*. They are neither good virgins nor sinister dragon ladies. Burke falls in love with Helen Scanlon, the daughter of Joe Scanlon of *Killer Mine.* Helen works for Frank Verdun and becomes Burke's ally, spying upon the mob from the inside. We have been prepared for this by similar alliances in *The Deep* and in *Man Alone* and by Helen's own father's collaborating with Marty Borlig. Helen is no crook; and, though Burke wonders at first if she may be double-crossing him, he is free from the paralyzing susceptibility to women's sexuality that so often forced Mike Hammer into abstention. If Helen were going to cross him, "He'd know about it soon enough. He wasn't that dumb even though his cock wasn't too bright." Helen and Burke spend a weekend together in a New Jersey motel; he plans to marry her anyway.

Louise Belhander is a cheap prostitute whose story of betrayal and degradation provides her with an understandable motive for killing Papa Menes. Her motive is Hammerian revenge, of course, and not anything of Burke's depersonalized crusading.

The old Hammer *persona* is split up and scattered among the three female characters. Helen harbors feelings of vengeance for her father's suffering at the hands of a corrupt police department which she blames for his death. Fate brings Louise to the mobster's bed, where she can seek revenge for the rape which brought her into the prostitute's life—and she seeks her revenge in a way of which Hammer would have approved. Even the hapless Helga, who thinks her sadistic lover is a New Jersey businessman, plays a part in the mob's undoing. She is a victim, slapped around by Shelby, cheated out of her chance for happiness with her true love. Cruelly abused and thwarted, she is defeated because she is just a small-time hustler, too innocent to know the stakes of the game she is playing. None of these women is a villain, and none is portrayed without flaws. Their femininity does not depend upon virginity or submissiveness. The prototypes of these women are present in earlier Spillane books, but they paid a heavy price for their flaws: death or rejection by the hero, no chance of an agreeable future with a good man. True, women in *The Last Cop Out* have lost their virtue through the duplicity of corrupt men. Helen, for instance, cannot just be a woman with previous sexual experience. Her loss of virginity has to be explained: raped at fourteen, a love affair at eighteen, a career as a club entertainer requiring her to take lovers in order to get contracts. This is pure Mickey Spillane. What happens in *The Last Cop Out* is not that women are no longer identified by their degree of impurity but that the hero doesn't give a damn. Burke takes a sullied lover and makes no speeches about chastity, V.D., or disrobing in front of a woman.

The Spillane hero, who first came with Old Testament vengefulness to purify postwar society, stayed long enough or grew old enough to join it. He accepted, finally, the weakness of its "thin-necked men" and the humanity of its threatening women.

Notes

An earlier version of this paper was presented to an NEH Summer Seminar, "Women, Men, and Popular Culture," at George Washington University, directed by Lois W. Banner, University of Southern California, 1984.

1. Philip Wylie, "The Crime of Mickey Spillane," *Good Housekeeping* 140:207 (Feb. 1955).
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4. Max Allan Collins and James L. Traylor, *One Lonely Knight: Mickey Spillane's Mike Hammer* (Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1984).
5. Reminiscent of the notorious discussion of "momism" in Philip Wylie, *Generation of Vipers* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1942).
6. Barbara Ehrenreich, *The Hearts of Men: American Dreams and the Flight from Commitment* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983).
7. Cawelti, pp. 185, 187.
8. Weibel, p. 122.
9. Cawelti, p. 159.
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11. Grella, p. 119; Weibel, p. 122.
12. Jules Feiffer, *The Great Comic Book Heroes* (New York: Dial Press, 1965), p. 21. □

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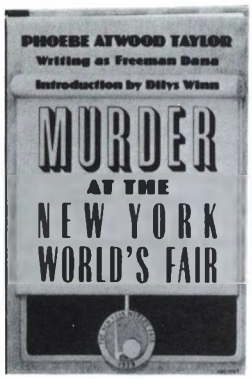

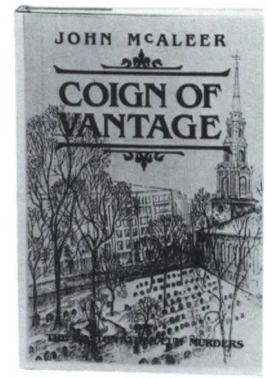

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J'Accuse!

BY WILLIAM L. DeANDREA

When I lived in Manhattan, going to the Edgars was a simple process. I would sleep late, get up, hang around, shave, shower, dress, and get a cab. Saturday's post-Edgar festivities were just as easy. Now, however, that I am rusticating in Northwestern Connecticut with a wife and baby (both doing fine, thanks), Edgar weekend has become an undertaking we like to think of as the E-Day invasion. It involves arranging for hotel rooms in New York, packing Matt off to Grandma and Grandpa for the weekend (who would believe that one little baby would need *so much stuff),* finding someplace safe to leave the car, grabbing the train, checking into the hotel, and collapsing.

It also involves cleaning-up chores I should have done long ago, like this column.

It's become a lot of work, but I wouldn't miss it. I love Edgar dinners. Three wonderful things have happened to me on Edgar nights. (1) I won one. (2) I won another one. (3) Orania and I got engaged. Very romantic, in a Checker taxi on Central Park South.

Anyway, the Edgars will be old news by the time you read this, but I'm going to make a few predictions. For one thing, no one will admit liking the food. For another, the crowding, heat, and smoke during the pre-dinner mill-around will lead me to spend $2.50 for six ounces of 7-Up. I will grouse about this. Somebody's winning will be wildly popular; somebody else's will lead to a lot of dark mumbling about sexism or national prejudice or cronyism or whatever. A significant percentage of it will be justified. Ridiculously few women win Edgars in the novel categories; ridiculously many British writers win for best novel. More about that in a minute.

Mainly, though, I will have a good time seeing people I like and admire but get to talk to all too seldom. If any of these predictions goes seriously wrong, I'll let you know.

This will be the first Edgar dinner to be held in the wake of the Committee of Ten, not to be confused with the Gang of Four. I don't know if you know about this. The controversy blew up from the mumbling stage when Phyllis A. Whitney wrote a letter to *The Third Degree,* the organ of the New York chapter of MWA, pointing out the lack of women Edgar winners and lamenting the short shrift her specialty, romantic suspense, had gotten in comparison with hardboiled and espionage. She suggested separate awards for different kinds of mysteries. This, I think, was an incredibly bad idea, which would have led to chaos. One of the reasons I no longer belong to the Private Eye Writers of America is the *tsouris* I kept getting about was Matt Cobb or was he not a private eye. Originality, it seems to me, would lead to good books that defied categorization (at least, I hope it would), and what would happen to them?

But Phyllis Whitney's point was well taken. Boy, was it well taken. It was taken, it seemed, by practically every woman writer (and some men) in the organization. Things were not helped when some yutz talked about whodunits *vs.* "the traditional hardboiled mystery," thereby ignoring the existence of Collins, Doyle, Morrison, Chesterton, Bailey, Christie, Rodrigues Ottolengui (he wasn't any good, really, but I love his name), Anna Katherine Green, Baroness Orczy, Leroux, and some guy by the name of Edgar, who had a fair reputation going before Race Williams ever dropped to one knee and fired. It was not, perhaps, the most foolish statement since George McGovern called Watergate "the most serious constitutional crisis in our history," thereby proving he had never heard of the Civil War, but it did call for a second look.

Anyway, when it became obvious the problem was not going to go back to sleep, the MWA acted in classic fashion: it appointed a committee—the Committee of Ten. Every time I say or write it, I see people in long robes in a darkened room talking about whom they're going to let live, but then, if I didn't have a sick imagination, I probably wouldn't be a crime writer in the first place. This Committee of Ten was made up of perfectly nice, respectable, conscientious people. And it differed from your traditional committee in another way, too. It was heard from again. They came out with recommendations. What they recommended boiled down to "We should try to do better," but what the hell. It was basically too late for the 1987 Edgars to be done better, especially after someone referred in *The Third Degree* to an Edgar-connected panel discussion of the issue as "Ladies' Day," but the eyes of the world (such of it that cares, at least) will be on the 1988 awards.

And, just to prove, possibly to myself, that MWA and the ugly little statuette deserve more from me than mockery, I am on a committee for 1988. Best Paperback Original. Nancy Pickard is the chairman. Chairlady. Chairperson. I refuse to refer to a human being as a "chair." Nancy Pickard is running the thing, and she's already got us more organized than any of the three Edgar committees I have served on previously.

I estimate that this column will appear in October or November of 1987. That means you still have a few weeks. If you have written a paperback original, and it has appeared or is to appear in 1987, get in touch with Nancy Pickard right away. MWA in New York will tell you how.

Don't Let This Happen to You! Department

A while back, I wrote in this space that *The Underground Empire* by James Mills would be a tough book to beat for best fact crime. I thought (and still think) that it is one of the best fact-crime books ever written. Imagine my chagrin when I got a letter from the chairman of that committee, informing me that *The Underground Empire* would not even be listed among the nominees and that it was *my fault!* Instead of writing about it, and having it appear in TAD too late, I should have brought it to the committee's attention immediately.

It's touching, in a way. Here is a book that was reviewed in the daily *New York Times,* the *New York Times Book Review, Publishers Weekly, Time,* and *Newsweek,* with full-page ads in the first three, and this person, apparently a professional writer of fact crime, has to hear about it in my little column in the World's Finest Magazine of Specialized Literary Criticism. Maybe Otto should raise the ad rates.

So don't wait around for me to fawn over you in TAD. You want that Edgar, go get it. Hound your publisher to get the book out; check with the relevant committee to make sure they've received it. As the New York State Lottery says, You've got to be in it to win it.

As long as I'm at at, I might as well tell you the three main things wrong with the Mystery Writers of America. In reverse order, they are:

Too Many Affiliate Members. Affiliate members are the MWA equivalent of Madonna wanna-bes. To be sure, many of them are working at becoming pros and will make it, but most of them aren't and won't. I think the organization should require at least a rejection slip from a book or magazine publisher for affiliate membership.

Lack of turnover at the top. This is everybody's fault. On the one hand, the people who are doing the work are the people who have always done the work, who have shown they are willing to do the work, and they deserve something for that. On the other hand, if you think you've got a better idea, or that the work isn't being done really well or creatively, you are not encouraged to run for the Board of Directors. You have to be asked. And who asks? The current Board of Directors. This, as you might expect, leads to a certain sameness of outlook.

Small-time mentality. This is the biggie. The MWA was founded in the '40s, when the genre was fighting for respect, and a lot of members were making what money they made pounding out stories for the pulps. Those days are over; Edmund Wilson is dead, and nobody misses him. Undoubtedly, some

of you reading this are wondering who the hell Edmund Wilson was, or, if you know, what did he have to do with the mystery.

But it seems to me that MWA is still fighting the late Bunny, and, worse, it is fighting him with tactics of appeasement. It is not necessary to give the best novel Edgar, as has been done, to a book that reads like a *New Yorker* short story with a murder in it simply because it reads like a *New Yorker* short story. It is not necessary to tell people in advance that they have won the award in order to make sure they show up at the dinner. If they don't think the Edgar is important enough to stand a little suspense over, to hell with them.

What we need here is a little arrogance. Mystery fiction *is* important and worthwhile. That argument is *over*, and we *won* it. In my opinion, it is the most important and worthwhile writing being done today, and I don't waste time on people who don't respect it.

What else we need here is glitz. The Edgars needs to be a black-tie—a *mandatory* black-tie affair. It needs to be produced; people need to be gotten to the podium in less than the epoch it now seems to take.

In order to be big time, you've got to live up to it.

Deep Thought Department

One thing that mystery-crime-suspense writers (and horror and science-fiction writers, too) have always had to deal with is the question of violence. The how-can-you-make-a-living-depicting-such-terrible-acts question. I've already addressed this issue in the pages of TAD back when I was doing the "Paper Crimes" column. The artistic (you should excuse the expression) justification for the depiction of violence is to demonstrate the depravity of your villains and therefore the courage and loyalty of your good guys in opposing him. That's a simplification, of course, but I think it's a pretty good guideline. It will show you the difference between, say, *Deliverance* or *Alien* and something like *Friday the 13th* (you pick the part number). In the first, you are shown just what our protagonists are up against: the violence shows the immensity of the occasion to which they must rise. The *Friday the 13th* pictures and their imitators, in which attractive young people are lined up and snuffed like cattle at a slaughterhouse, are pornography. Knives take the place of erections and blood fills in for mineral oil.

But, since I've started writing spy stories, in which I'm concerned with issues on a broader scale than person-to-person violence—*not* more important, mind you, just on a broader scale—I've seen that it goes even deeper than that.

Now, I am not ordinarily an admirer of the gentlemen I am about to quote, but you have to take wisdom where you find it.

H. Rap Brown said: "Violence is as American as cherry pie." Two comments: (1) What happened to apple? (2) He's on the right track, but he doesn't go far enough.

Mao Zedong said: "All power springs from the muzzle of a gun." *That's* got it. Mao may have been talking about one particular revolution, but he hit on a universal truth.

Civilization is based on violence and the threat of violence. I know, I know, civilization is based on the Social Contract. But a contract is nothing but an enforceable agreement, and the key syllable there is *force.* The Bill of Rights states that no one shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property "without due process of law." Which means that, whatever else law is, it's also a process for depriving you of your life, liberty, or property when you screw up. To put it in terms so simple they sound ludicrous, a Social Contract isn't worth diddly if nothing bad will happen to you if you break it.

There was a letter in the *New York Times Magazine* this week, all sad and sorrowful, saying that, while abolishing nuclear weapons is a start, what we really have to abolish is the idea of war. It is amazing that a person that foolish is capable of *reading* the *New York Times.* Abolish war—like *how?* If you forswear all use of violence, how do you stop someone from killing you? Please, Mr. Hitler, give back France, it wasn't nice to conquer it, you know. And while you're at it, ease up on the Jews a little, will you? There's a good fellow. What if you don't? Why, then, we'll. . . we'll. . .

What we'll do in that case is die in our turn when he gets around to us.

I suppose (I hope) that I'm preaching to the converted here. The basic conflict in the literature to which this magazine is devoted is that between wild violence *vs.* licensed and/or justified counterviolence and the endless ramifications of that conflict. If you haven't accepted it on those terms, consciously or unconsciously, I have to admit I don't know what you're doing here. It's not an easy question, and, thank God, for most of us, the experiments can be carried out in the imagination exclusively. But it's an important question, and a fascinating one, and it will be that way as long as people are human.

A Personal Request

Will somebody please review my damn books for this magazine? I mean, I can hardly do it myself, can I? I just know instinctively that, if I took my space in this magazine to praise my latest opus, many would think it unbecoming.

Yet why should I be denied exposure simply because I write for TAD? Hah? I mean, I've written thirteen books, won two Edgars, done humorous mysteries, historical mysteries, damn-near private eye mysteries, and one classic-type whodunit, and Jacques Barzun has yet to put me into the "Catalogue of Crime." And not because I'm too proud to beg him to, either.

Now, it may be that there are dozens of readers who would be delighted to help me Improve My Craft with constructive criticism but are afraid of my using this column to hit them with the Now-Legendary DeAndrea Massive Retaliation.

Please stop worrying. For one thing, the N-LDMR is used in the defense of the innocent, especially friends and relatives, but never myself. Furthermore, it is used only against those who practice blatant bad faith or egregious stupidity. And finally, I promise that, even if you commit those two faults, this column will say nothing about your review. Praise or blame, I will maintain silence.

Just because a man has as many opinions as I do, that doesn't mean I'm not interested in somebody else's. Thank you.

I've put this last section off to the end of the column because I don't want to do it. I've got to say goodbye to two friends.

Eugene Franklin Bandy died a short time ago. He was one of the first professional mystery writers I ever met. I think, in fact, that it was he who opened the door for me when I went nervously to my first MWA meeting. Frank was a large man, but there was something elfin about him. He had an off-center sense of humor that showed up in all his work, from the Nero-Wolfish Berkeley Barnes series he wrote under the name Eugene Franklin to the Edgar-winning *Deceit and Deadly Lies* and its successors, published under the Franklin Bandy byline. I think he would have been a much bigger name as a writer if he hadn't had a successful career in business to look after, too.

Frank and his wife Beth lived in my home town, and, when I was home visiting my parents, it was always nice to run into them in the supermarket or on the street. Frank was a frequent board member and officer of MWA, and a good man to know.

Bernhardt J. Hurwood died of cancer earlier in the year. Bern was also an MWA board member, and he wrote a biographical novel about Poe called *My Savage Muse,* but his interests and his career ranged far beyond the mystery. Bern was a pro writer; he could write about computers or sex clubs with equal facility and enthusiasm.

Enthusiasm was the key word with Bern. He was perpetually excited by life, and he wanted you to share it. And share it you did. Everybody did. There was a memorial service for Bern, and, as the old joke goes, five hundred of his most intimate friends turned out for it. Except in Bern's case it was the literal truth.

I not only liked Bern, I admired him. He faced more bad breaks with better spirits than anyone I ever knew. His beloved first wife died. He had a publisher go bankrupt out from under him. He needed operations on his eyes. Then the cancer came and knocked him for a loop financially. He never complained. He always smiled. He probably kept smiling because of Marcie, his second wife and the perfect complement to Bern's zest and courage.

Bern Hurwood's work in the mystery field won't have a lot of influence as time goes by, but the influence of the man himself will show in the work of all of us who were his friends. If you knew him, you know what I mean. For those who didn't—well, I wish I could be him for just a minute, to share with you the way Bern shared with everybody.

For Frank and for Bern, memory is a poor substitute for a living presence, but it's all I've got. I will hold tight to my memories of both these fine men. □

ARE CRITICS CORRECT WHEN THEY SUGGEST THAT DETECTIVE FICTION REASSURES US?

The Lullaby of Murder

By Robert M. Ryley

Let me begin with a few words of autobiography. I began reading mystery stories of the classic British type when I was about thirteen and read them regularly until I went to college. As far as I can remember, I didn't pick up another until I was nearly thirty, when I resumed the habit for maybe two or three years. Then, around 1980, I decided to write a biography of a poet who was also a writer of detective stories, so for the first time I started reading criticism of the genre other than reviews in the Sunday *Times*. A lot of what I read tried my patience. I'd always thought of detective stories as fun to read—no great shakes, really, but occasionally exquisite in a minor way, and, even less occasionally, brilliant. But many of the critics presumed to tell me that what I'd thought of as a harmless, civilized pleasure was fraught with sinister psycho-socio-political significance. I was told that I read for reassurance—reassurance about the rationality of the universe, reassurance about the power of the human mind, reassurance about the eternal legitimacy of the bourgeois social order, reassurance about almost anything that anybody might need to be reassured about. Since I was unaware of harboring the anxieties my reading was supposed to allay, and since I doubted that detective stories could have allayed them even if they'd existed, I was more than once tempted to stomp a critical book or article into the kitty litter. Instead, I've written this paper. I'm afraid it's only a list of gripes, but at least it's a short list. I want to complain about two things: first about the notion that detective fiction is reassuring; and second about a cast of mind that I don't really know how to name. It has to do with inconsistencies between the positions critics take with regard to detective fiction and those they take with regard to everything else in the world, including their own criticism.

So that I won't be suspected of attacking a straw man, let me quote a passage from *The Doomed Detective*, a good book by Stefano Tani:

> The classic British detective story...evokes in the reader two basic feelings, both largely unconscious. One is a sense of escape from reality, since the story is stereotypic. . . . The other...is a sense of reassurance, since the detective's rationality restores the order violated by the murder.

The only unusual thing about his passage is that it brings together ideas that are usually scattered throughout whole essays. Otherwise, it expresses the conventional wisdom. Passing over the amusing assumption that the critic has access to the unconscious of millions, notice the word "reassurance." If you want to know what it means, whether in this incarnation or in that of several synonyms, you won't

This paper was read at the Seventh Annual CUNY English Forum at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York on March 29, 1985.

be told by Tani or by any other critic I'm aware of. In fact, it's probably the fuzziness of the idea that accounts for its insidious persuasiveness. If the word means only the pleasurable relief one feels at a happy ending, it's both apt and innocuous. But notice what happens when, in his book *The Pursuit of Crime,* Dennis Porter says that readers feel reassured by Simenon's detective, Maigret, because "in spite of *débacle* and occupation, postwar self-doubt, social strife, and the destructive impact of economic prosperity on traditional living patterns, as long as Maigret survived the implication was that nothing fundamental had changed." Here "reassurance" clearly refers to the relief of anxieties aroused by conditions in the real world. And the term is almost abusive. It implies that the reader uses detective stories not to enjoy a harmless pleasure but to invite a pernicious delusion. Begin by accepting the belief that detective stories are reassuring in the first sense, and it's all too easy to slide into the belief that they're reassuring in the second.

At this point, I wish I could announce that I've just finished interviewing ten thousand readers and hold in my hand a computer printout of the results. The truth is, I lack training in psychology and wouldn't even know how to begin to formulate the questions. But at least I realize that the questions need to be asked, something that can't be said of the critics of the reassurance school, who seem to assume that the responses of readers are to be found in texts rather than in people. They don't even admit to feeling themselves the sense of reassurance they insist the texts are calculated to evoke. If I can't claim to have more psychological evidence than they do, at least I can use what little is available. I can test their pronouncements against my own experience as a reader.

For example, two related ideas that detective fiction is supposed to reassure me about are the orderliness of the universe and the power of reason to explain it—all of it. Here is a representative quotation, from an essay by Erlene Hubly in *Modern Fiction Studies:*

> Central to the classical detective story are two assumptions. . . . The first . . . is that the world is a limited place where all things can be known. . . . The second . . . follows from the first: if the universe is a knowable one, it is also an orderly one.

Now, it would be reassuring, all right, to suppose that reason is omnipotent, but I for one have never supposed that it was, whether before, during, or after reading a mystery. How can it be assumed that I'm so dumb? It can't be said that my credulity is induced by explicit propaganda in detective stories, for this would surely be quoted if it existed, and besides, Hubly implies that faith in the omnipotence of reason is essential to the genre, irrespective of any instance of authorial commentary. And even if every plot is a form of synecdoche, nothing says that the whole of which it's a part must be the world or the universe. No, the error, I think, derives from an abuse of metaphor. First it's noticed that reason in a classical detective story solves all of the problems posed by the plot. And because it's conventional to speak of a work of fiction as bodying forth a "world," it's asserted that reason solves all of the problems in the world of the story. Then the metaphorical sense of "world" drops away, and reason is said to solve all of the problems in the world, or, synonymously, the universe. Well, whether my account of the error is right or not, what's important is that, with rare exceptions such as *The Moonstone* and *The Nine Tailors,* both of which are intended to illustrate the workings of providence, the classical mystery doesn't seem to be about the universe at all, but about a very narrowly defined area of human experience. Writing in *New Literary History* on "Whodunit and Other Questions," Michael Holquist cites as evidence of the detective's faith in the omnipotence of reason Poe's "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," but in my view he couldn't have made a worse choice. Though Dupin explains the series of accidents by which two innocent women are torn to pieces in a locked room, he neither explains, nor presumes to be able to explain, why the universe is so constituted as to make such horrors possible. Howard Haycraft says—and I agree—that what sticks in the mind isn't Dupin's elaborate explanation but the grotesque details of the killings. If I thought that Poe's story really had metaphysical

implications, I'd be led to the less than reassuring conclusion that the universe is guilty of a ferocious brutality.

Another aspect of detective fiction that I'm supposed to find reassuring is an alleged reaffirmation of the socio-political *status quo*. This tack is taken in John G. Cawelti's justly admired *Adventure, Mystery and Romance*. Cawelti says that the classical detective story "absolves" society of guilt. First it

> threatens the serene domestic circles of bourgeois life with anarchy and chaos. . . . The finger of suspicion points to everybody. The ordered rationality of society momentarily seems a flimsy surface over a seething pit of guilt and disorder. Then the detective intervenes and proves that the general suspicion is false. He proves the social order is not responsible for the crime.

I confess that I can't recognize in this quotation any classical detective story I've ever read. Do phrases like "anarchy and chaos" and "seething pit of guilt and disorder" seem even remotely appropriate to the atmosphere of a classical detective story? The word "anarchy" would be hyperbolical for any social situation in which one or two crimes are committed, but to use it for the social situation in a classical mystery is more than hyperbole, it's an abuse of language. Formal dinners are served, inquests are held, wills are read: life after the crime probably goes on in a more orderly way than it ever does in the best of conditions in the real world as we know it. Or consider Cawelti's notion that society is "absolved" of guilt. Nobody can be absolved unless he's first accused, and society isn't absolved because its possible complicity is never at issue. Cawelti's attempt to prove otherwise rests on an equivocation. His proposition that "the finger of suspicion points to everybody" is true if it means that any one of the suspects might have committed the crime; but it's false if it means, as Cawelti evidently intends it to, that all of the characters are thought collectively guilty and therefore represent the guilt of society. The solution to the mystery in *Murder on the Orient Express* is a surprise, to me and to everybody else, precisely because collective guilt is never considered a possibility.

My second gripe concerns what I've called inconsistencies between the positions critics take with regard to detective fiction and those they take with regard to everything else. These inconsistencies are legion, but I'll consider only one, that having to do with post-modernist detective stories such as Borges's "Death and the Compass," in which the detective brings about his own murder by interpreting clues planted for this purpose by the killer. Porter, Tani, Holquist, and Cawelti all extoll this kind of story, in part because it's *not* reassuring. But the most extraordinary argument in this vein appears in an essay by William V. Spanos entitled "The Detective and the Boundary: Some Notes on the Postmodern Literary Imagination."

Spanos declares that post-modernism consists of a rejection of what he calls "positivistic humanism," the belief that nature exists to be manipulated by man for rational ends. To this belief, many evils can be attributed: scientism, totalitarianism, even the Vietnam War. The detective story is both a symptom and a cause of positivistic humanism: it's a symptom in that it reflects the belief that life conforms to the logic of a well-made plot; it's a cause in that it creates a demand for scientific solutions to insoluble mysteries. Post-modernist works therefore take the form of anti-detective stories because they're intended not to reassure readers but to increase their anxieties by exposing them to "the existential realm of history, where Nothing is certain."

Some French theorists of the Freudian persuasion believe that critics unwittingly repeat, in a displaced form, the plots they try to elucidate. Something like this happens to Spanos. His argument is a detective story, with Spanos playing Holmes to positivistic humanism's Professor Moriarty. Dr. Watson, of course, is the reader, who is expected to be suitably awed by the brilliance of Spanos-Holmes's deductions, and the role of the blundering police is taken by those intellectuals sympathetic to post-modernism but insufficiently alert to realize that Positivist Moriarty has masterminded every major Western crime since the Renaissance. Only Spanos-Holmes divines that apparently meaningless details are in fact clues, telltale traces of Positivist Moriarty's ubiquity —in television detective series, in an editorial in the *Daily News*, in a metaphor in the Pentagon Papers. Making light of his own intellectual achievements, Spanos-Holmes even manages to sound something like his illustrious predecessor by adopting a tone of patronizing arrogance: "[M]y definition of the Western structure of consciousness . . . is not a *tour de force* of the critical imagination. It is discoverable everywhere in the language and the shape of action of men from all social levels of the Western city. All that is necessary to perceive it is attention." Elementary, my dear Watson. (By the way, you know and I know that "Elementary, my dear Watson" never appears in the Doyle canon, but Spanos doesn't know it. He uses the phrase as an epigraph. There is thus some poetic justice in turning it against him.)

My little allegory contains less Freud than *Schadenfreude*, but it also makes a serious point—that Spanos is trapped in a paradox. Nearly sixty years ago, Marjorie Nicolson pointed out a parallel between the methods of scholarship and the methods of detection as they appear in the classic British mystery. More recently, Dennis Porter has devoted the whole of a brilliant chapter to showing how close the parallel really is. He stops short of applying the parallel to himself, however, or to the other critics

who compare the conventional detective story with the post-modernist. It's just as well. He would have had to convict himself and the others of using the methods of detection to disparage the methods of detection. Popular fiction, he declares, "offers the certainties of myth for the confusions of history," but no confusions of history are permitted to disturb the certainties of his own criticism. Inference from cause to effect and from effect to cause, induction, deduction – every mode of reasoning practiced by the classical detective – is to be found leading to no uncertain conclusions in Porter, in Spanos, in Tani, in Holquist, in Cawelti. The only significant difference between the detective and the critic is that the former's goals are limited, the latter's boundless. The detective wants to reconstruct a chain of cause and effect extending over a few days and involving maybe six or seven people; the critic wants to reconstruct a chain of cause and effect extending over the 150 years between Poe and the present, and involving the social, economic, political, psychological, and literary conditions of millions upon millions of the living and the dead. I needn't point out who has the deeper faith in an orderly and knowable universe.

Is every champion of the post-modernist detective story thus fated to subvert the grounds of his own authority? Yes – as long as he insists that conventional detective stories assume the omnipotence of reason. Holquist writes: "Post-Modernists use as a foil the assumption of detective fiction that the mind can solve all: by twisting the details just the opposite becomes the case." But the opposite assumption – that the mind can solve nothing – is an absurdity exposed by the very essays that try to defend it. The paradox can be resolved, though, if it's recognized that conventional and post-modernist detective stories involve different orders of being. Woody Allen's one-liner is to the point: "Not only is God dead, but try getting a plumber on weekends." The post-modernist story, it might be said, is about the death of God; the conventional story – not to mention literary criticism – is about the plumbing. Reason may be inadequate to find order in the universe, but champions of post-modernism rely on it as much as any fictional detective, both in their scholarship and in their daily lives. When post-modernists call the plumber and tell him that the sewage from the toilet is bubbling up into the sink, they expect him to play detective and figure out what's wrong. They don't expect him to throw up his hands, exclaiming that all is uncertainty and flux in a godless world.

So one way to escape the paradox of using reason to disparage reason is to deny that the conventional detective story and the post-modernist address the same problem. Another way is to treat the problem as the same but the two conflicting solutions as partial truths. From this perspective, the traditional story celebrates reason not, as Holquist would have it, by implying that reason can solve all, but by praising its undeniable virtues, not least of which is its capacity for discovering order in apparent chaos, literary or other. But reason has its limits, and of this the anti-detective story is a salutary reminder. Tani quotes as evidence of a post-modernist sensibility the following words of William of Baskerville, the detective in *The Name of the Rose:*

> I arrived at Jorge pursuing the plan of a perverse and rational mind, and there was no plan, or, rather, Jorge himself was overcome by his own initial design and there began a sequence of causes, and concauses, and of causes contradicting one another which proceeded on their own, creating relations that did not stem from any plan. Where is all my wisdom, then?

Oh, if critics would only talk like this! For if it's truly believed that the post-modernist attack on reason is in any way relevant to our intellectual lives, then this belief must express itself first of all in a willingness to admit uncertainty and ignorance. Critics who insist on the limits of reason in general must recognize the limits of their own reason in particular.

My title is a question – is detective fiction reassuring? I'm going to try to practice what I preach by giving a tentative answer. *I* don't find it reassuring, and I don't find persuasive the arguments advanced to show that other readers do. I may be wrong. But my mind will never be changed by those who deplore in fiction the rationalism they practice in fact. □

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BY WILLIAM A. S. SARJEANT AND JOHN SUTHERLAND

A TALE OF ONE CITY

Bill Knox's police procedurals give an excellent picture of the underworld of Glasgow, Scotland

THE SLUMS of the industrial cities of Great Britain have served as all-too-fruitful forcing-frames for crime for almost two hundred years. When industry was first spreading its tentacles into the green countryside—tentacles not yet very grimy, since steam power was still new—the bright rows of houses in the new or growing towns must have seemed attractive places to men rallying to the promise of higher wages. If those houses contained no bathrooms, no toilets—well, neither had the cottages from which those men had come. If they were tiny, those cottages had been yet tinier. Though built in rows, the houses had a certain character, a degree of individuality. Any percipient observer could tell, from details such as the shapes of doorways, the steps beneath those doorways, the presence or absence of eavestroughs, the color and size of the bricks, and the style of the windows, just what town he was in, for each showed many local individualities in design. (He could not do it today!) Above all, those houses were stone- or brick-built and slate-roofed. They were much more substantial, if less picturesque, than the wattle-and-daub, thatched-roof structures the men had left behind—much less likely to catch fire or fall down, much more likely to last.

The trouble was that they lasted too long. Moreover, in general, they were rented, not owned by their occupiers. A mere tenant of a house will not take the same pride in it as a resident owner; a landlord who is renting out the property for profit does not like having to spend money on repairs that reduce his profit. Furthermore, as the years went by and expectations rose, the more competent and successful men moved their families into more modern houses in newer neighborhoods. The families left behind were the poorer, the more unfortunate, the more feckless—the people least able, and least likely, to take care of property, whether their own or another's. As year upon year of grime was thrown out from the smokestacks of the factories and of the busy train-engines in freightyards, stone blackened and bricks became dirty. Only the slates of the roofs, washed by the frequent rains, remained relatively clean—and those slates were grey anyway.

Now that they are vanishing, it is hard to picture those decaying districts as they were in the early 1950s, before urban redevelopment programs began to gnaw them away. It is harder still to picture them in the bright newness of stone and brick, to understand how attractive they must once have seemed, when one knew them only as places where people lived simply because they could afford to live nowhere else. The houses were typically very tightly packed, of course, but the pattern of that packing varied from city to city. In Sheffield, the first author's birthplace, most houses had their own yards, minute enough but affording some sort of a private place where the children could play and washing could be hung. Some houses surrounded a common yard, usually flagged or asphalted and called, with unconscious irony, a "court." Back-to-back houses were virtually unknown, and there were a reasonable number of parks. In nearby Leeds, conditions were markedly worse. Parks were fewer, and there were mile upon mile of back-to-back houses, the children of which must play in the street perforce and where

the washing was strung on lines across the street from one house to another. In all the towns, winding behind and between houses and factories, crossing or skirting the grimy canals and such rivers as had not been culverted, were narrow passages, usually gas-lit. There were almost as many names for such passages as there were cities—"alley" or "close," "genel," "jinnel," or "twitchell" are just some of those names. They were forbidding places to traverse at night, with too many dark spaces between the gas-lamps, too many strange noises from the closed factories, too many scurrying rats. Outside the parks, trees were few; one Sheffield streetcar route, the Neepsend line, went from city centre to terminus without affording even a distant prospect of a tree. Even the weeds were sparse and straggly, until German bombing made new spaces where they could flourish.

In such a grim environment, crime sprouts more naturally than any weed. One tends to think of the inter-war years as halcyon days, but a reading of social history soon contradicts that impression. Maybe the British gangs were not so spectacular as those of the United States. They executed vengeance with bicycle chains and heavily booted feet rather than with revolvers or machine guns; they intimidated by razor-slashing or direct physical brutality rather than by throwing bombs. Nevertheless, several British cities were gang-dominated in the '20s and '30s. Derby had its race-gangs, Sheffield its Mooney and Garvin gangs (a major menace when the parents of the first author were courting), and Glasgow had many gangs, among them the Beehives, the South Side Stickers, the San Toys, and the Parlour Boys, with their leader James "Razzle-Dazzle" Dalziel. Glasgow was unusual in that many of the gangs had religious connections, Protestants fighting Catholics, Catholics striving to break up Orange Day parades.

For a while, these gangs, like those of North America, attained some measure of political and legal immunity. Though eventually public opinion was aroused enough to cause effective action to be taken against them, they never quite vanished from the pre-war scene. During World War II, however, most of them ceased to exist. The petty criminals were away at the war, facing greater or lesser dangers in places that might be better or worse than, but were at least different from, their home cities. Some became good soldiers; others found a new outlet for their scurvy skills in thieving from comrades, the misappropriation of war supplies, or looting. When the war ended, back they all came to a Britain where, after six years of hardship, urban deterioration had been faster, bombing had provided novel eyesores, and the new and hastily erected housing—the Portal houses and the prefabs—promised to deteriorate even faster than anything built before.

There was rationing to be faced also, of food and fuel, for many more dreary years after the war had ended. In a crisis, rationing can be endured and understood; buy why was it continuing, now that the war was won? A black market had come into being during the war, but most citizens had been too patriotic to take advantage of it. Now that the war was over, they felt no such compunctions. There had been jobs enough before the war, or so it seemed in retrospect; the Depression tended to be forgotten. Why were there so few jobs now? Why were the factories, the mines, and the dockyards doing so much less business, even closing? No one yet understood that the British Empire was collapsing, that the British world markets were being taken over by others. What men did realize was that they had risked their lives for nothing. Now this deal, it wasn't really a crime, was it? Just a little fiddle. Everyone's doing it, aren't they? Why not you; why not me? The churches emptied as public morality slipped; the prevailing philosophy was, not service and selflessness, but "Blow you, Jack—I'm all right!"

Having lived through that time in such a city, the first author saw much of this changing scene and learned more, for his mother was a solicitor's managing clerk, regularly meeting the sufferers from crime and the criminals, the persons for whom her employers were sometimes conducting prosecutions, sometimes defenses. The second author has seen even more, for he served for eleven years with the South Strathclyde police in Glasgow. Perhaps that is why we both read with such appreciation the stories of Maurice Procter and Bill Knox, for their characters are of a sort known to us, whether they be police or criminals, victims or bystanders. We can walk with their detectives down those imaginary streets and see (and smell) the houses and the people.

Procter and Knox are two of the three leading British writers of "police procedurals," the third being John Creasey in his "J.J. Marric" manifestation. Maurice Procter strikes nearest to home for the first author, since Procter's "Granchester," actually Manchester, is just across the Pennines from Sheffield. (The first author hopes to write about "Granchester" some time soon.) The Marric stories are set in London—rather a different kettle of fish, with a greater variety of slippery inhabitants.

Bill Knox is a Scot and places his mystery stories firmly in his homeland. There are two principal series. One features Fishery Protection Officer Webb Carrick, whose adventures take place along the Scottish coast and among its many islands and channels. We like these stories well enough, but we are not seafarers and we cannot empathize with such characters, even though we are entertained by them. In contrast, the second series is set very largely on dry land, only one adventure [5] involving a voyaging to seaward; its heroes are two police detectives, Thane and Moss. Principally, the books have been set in Glasgow, a city and environment with which both

authors are familiar.

As is clear from his writing, Bill Knox knows that particular environment very thoroughly. Born in 1928, he has been a reporter or news editor for three newspapers, the Glasgow *Evening Citizen* and *Evening News* and the *Scottish Empire News;* News Editor for Scottish Television; and, since 1962, a freelance author and broadcaster. He has written a history of the more spectacular murder trials in the Glasgow High Court **[20]** and has recently been presenting on Scottish television a series of recountings of Victorian murder trials in Scotland. He writes as a reporter should, sparely but vividly, and his stories have all the impact of good reportage. Moreover, he has not only witnessed, but has also analyzed, the changes for better or for worse that have overtaken his home city since the Second World War ended. His books evoke very directly its environments, whether old or new:

> Seen in daylight Glasgow's Fortrose scheme could be almost intimidating in its size and dull uniformity. It sprawled its brick and concrete bulk over what had once been rich grazing for three of the best dairy farms in the West of Scotland. But the cattle and the farm cottages had given way to towering blocks of flats and lower, almost endless lines of terraced, identical four-storey houses, all knitted together by a grey web of roads, paths and overhead lighting cables.
>
> It was still spreading. A street of neatly curtained homes would end in a swamp of mud, throbbing cement-mixers and half-completed buildings. Fortrose had been building for two years. When it was finished, the equivalent of a new medium-sized town would have been grafted onto the city —a town of people rescued from the filth and squalor of overcrowded stinking, tumbledown slums.
>
> Fortrose meant such luxuries as a bathroom in every home, hot water from a tap, being able to leave a baby sunning in its pram without worrying about rats. It meant an end to whole families sleeping in one damp room.
>
> It also meant petty vandalism, bricked-up staircase windows, smashed street lights and, after the first ecstasies, a chronic boredom. The planners had built houses and built them well. But in all Fortrose there was not one cinema, one dance-hall, one bar or cafe. When it was finished, there would be a community centre and a playing field. Until then, it was a place in which to sleep, to eat—but, for many, not much more. Its busiest point was the bus terminus from which a constant fleet of vehicles ferried Fortrose's population back to the city to work and play.
>
> Its greatest pride was the laughter of its children, their strong limbs and sun-tanned faces.
>
> Its greatest tragedy was the sight of the old people who, torn from the only life they'd ever known, headed back every other day to taste and savour the slums they couldn't do without. **[7,** p. 54]

Knox's fictional "Fortrose" is probably the Castlemilk-Drumchapel development of reality.

The move to such developments proved indeed a painful one for most of those involved. They were people who had hitherto lived in communities that had grown over many generations, close-knit communities with an integrated social life, neighbors always nearby in the closes and streets, public houses, dance halls, and shops always within reach. Now they had been uprooted and dropped down in an environment that was totally unfamiliar and sterile.

The moving had been not voluntary, but compulsory. It made matters worse that, after the uprooting, the tenements from which these people had been moved were not always pulled down. Instead, new immigrants to Scotland—Pakistanis, Sikhs, West Indians, people from many parts of the globe—moved in. The unwilling inhabitants of the new developments felt betrayed. They developed a smouldering resentment against the immigrants who, they felt, had invaded their homes and transformed their city into a new, cosmopolitan place with which they could no longer identify. Such resentments—against the city administration, against the immigrants—served as fertilizer to the growth of crime in post-war Glasgow.

Bill Knox is able to view the crime of the city in a historical perspective:

> Glasgow was sensitive about its gangs, always had been since they'd brought her an international reputation in the razor-slashing days between the wars.
>
> They'd been smashed then, and top officials had carefully erased the word from the police vocabulary. Rehousing and a better understanding of social needs, they pointed out, made it certain the gangs belonged to past history.
>
> Nobody told the gangs. They crept back in the fifties and grew like weeds in the sixties. Chief Constables loathed them, courts puzzled over them, city councillors squirmed at their mention, business howled at the effect on the city's public relations image. **[9,** p. 24]

The new gangs had new names: the Tongs-YaBass and the Wee Cumbie were the biggest, the smaller ones taking their names from their particular districts (the Blackhill gang was an example). Many fights were to define territories, just as animals do. The violent, and often deadly, resolve of the gang leaders to walk the streets of their own territory with impunity—indeed, to be able to strut along those streets —instilled fear into the hearts of the local populace

and made witnesses to their gang-fights hard to find. A solitary policeman on his beat in the days before radio communication, who heard the war-cries of the gangs, would not be so foolish as to try to intercede in the coming battle. Instead, he would find what shelter he could, as quickly as he could, and stay there till the fight was over.

These gang-fights, as Knox perceived, took on a different character after the war:

> The old gangs had fought for the love of it, as a relief from the monotony of poverty. The new gangs were younger, vicious, rat-packs with money in their pocket and contempt for the meek. Outsiders stayed clear. . . . [9, p. 11]
>
> When ned killed ned in some individual brawl it was just part of the pattern and no-one created much fuss provided things were tidied up quickly. The usual gang fight... leaned more towards blood and scars than critical injury. . . . [9, p. 24]

its ilk, despite the good intentions of councillors, sociologists and planners—in part because the virus came in along with the people, in part because the inhumanity, the cultural sterility of those new environments, permitted it to spread all too readily.

Then there are those others who batten upon the poor, whether in their natural slum habitat or in the new places to which they have been transplanted—the unlicensed moneylenders, for instance:

> "... The police have a name for them. Ah—"
>
> "Tallymen," growled Ilford. "Because they keep tally on what's owed—and the interest."
>
> "Quite." Lord Mains gave a wintry smile. "The interest rates, I gather, are unusually well commensurate to risk?"
>
> "Twenty to twenty-five per cent per week," agreed Thane in a soft, bitter voice. "The clients take the terms because they've no alternative. Banks wouldn't touch them. They're such poor risks that regular money-lenders would kick them downstairs."
>
> "Thank you. And payment is rigorously enforced?" Lord Mains had his fingertips together, teacher taking pupil through a lesson they both knew backward.
>
> "Pay up and everything's fine," nodded Thane. "Fall behind, and the tallyman sends round a couple of heavies to jog your memory."
>
> "And if, like the unfortunate Fergan, you still can't pay?"
>
> "Then the tallyman fixes a lower weekly figure. The interest keeps mounting, and the poor devil involved is on the hook till he dies..." [10, pp. 19-20]

Knox has witnessed and analyzed the changes—for better or worse—in Glasgow since WWII.

Their weapons have changed a little in kind over the years, but not in essential character.

> ...[Thane] could have explained a great deal...about the average ned's armoury. Razors, for instance. Few neds now used the old cut-throat razor. The curved bill of a fine-honed cobbler's knife was more effective for what they had in mind. But a safety blade could be thrown protruding from a potato, or used as a fine edge protruding from the brim of a hat. A bicycle chain, each link sharpened, was worn like a thin scarf under a jacket collar. Then there were the less obvious items. The plaited leather dog-leash, loaded with lead, the sharpened pennies used with a folded newspaper to make a vicious knuckleduster, the industrial safety shoes bought for their hard steel toe-caps—they were only the start of the list.
>
> He might even have gone on to the female of the species, the Lady Rays, the Lady Beavers, and the rest. They favoured big, chunky dress rings on their fingers for a very practical purpose, as practical as their own little knives and the special inside-skirt pockets that could take a boy-friend's knife or hatchet till he needed it. Or the cadet branches, the Young Rays and the Baby Rays, both for up-and-coming juveniles. The whole thing was a sickening blight against civilised standards. [9, p. 62].

One particular weapon was made by taking a pair of the multi-needle-bearing metal plates to be found in the scrapheaps of woollen mills and screwing them together, needles outermost, to make an especially vicious sort of knuckleduster. Indeed, anything that could be turned into a weapon was used in their fights.

The gangs flourished in such places as Fortrose and

The intimidation by the tallyman's bullies was applied often to the wives of the borrowers, who were even accosted with menaces outside post offices where they had been cashing the weekly family allowance check, so important to the survival of poor families in Britain.

Other crimes there were in plenty. The crimes of domestic assault—the battering of children, wives or, yes, even husbands when the wife is stronger—flourish in such an environment, as does drunkenness; drink permits one to forget for a while one's surroundings and one's personal failings and failures. Add to this all the other crimes general in every large city—the thievery, the confidence tricks, the traffic offenses, the drug-peddling, and the catering to other vices; mix in the special extra problems of a city that is also a port; and one can understand why the Glasgow police should be perpetually harried and overworked. It has not helped that they have been perpetually understaffed:

They certainly needed more men. The amount of compulsory overtime having to be worked in every division was a constant headache. But there was no alternative when the force was five hundred short of its authorized strength of three thousand men.

Even rising unemployment had hardly dented that figure. Though recruits did trickle in—Thane smiled a fraction at the thought. Average age about twenty three, average height a shade over five foot ten inches, they arrived bright-eyed and bushy-tailed, ready to put the whole city to rights. But too many bailed out again, back to civilian life and regular hours, before their probationary constable period was halfway through, while the men who did stay found themselves part of an unending battle to control a city producing a regular hundred thousand crimes and offences a year. By some miracle a one in three crime-clearance rate was achieved in the process, which was a good enough record by any city's standards. Except the result was that the prisons kept moaning they were overcrowded. [**13**, pp. 53–54]

In the period after the war, many police recruits came from the Highlands, where no work at all was to be found. Such men tended to stay in Glasgow and in the police; more local recruits were less likely to stay. Attempts to compensate for the manpower deficiency by mechanization have succeeded only in part:

"How much do you pick up on the gossip grapevine?"

"Damned little, sir." Seaforth shook his head sadly. "It was bad enough when we walked the beat. Now, wi' the cars, it's ruddy impossible."

The two Millside men exchanged a glance. It was the same old story. The Panda radio-car system of one-man patrols covered more ground and meant a quick response to trouble. But the basic contact was lessened. . . . [**12**, p. 61].

The Glasgow policemen are thus striving perpetually against odds, not only in terms of the sheer volume of work to be done, and the lack of a reliable leisure in which to recuperate from the stresses this induces, but also because of an inadequate liaison with a public that is never altogether sympathetic with their activities. They are like shepherds guarding sheep from wolves, scarcely ever appreciated and not very often aided. Thane recognizes why this is so:

"When you're a cop, what you've got to remember is that your average John Citizen may be all for law and order but he'll still feel as uneasy as hell when you land on his doorstep. That's human nature. Some will either be aggressive or on the defensive before you even open your mouth—and that's human nature too. A cop isn't part of their normal life pattern. You'll worry them, even when they need you." [**14**, p. 1]

The principal setting of Thane and Moss's endeavors is the Millside Police Division, situated on the north bank of the Clyde, with Central Division across the other bank [**12**, p. 72].

Once upon a time someone took a city map, a ruler and a newly sharpened pencil and drew the arbitrary lines which chopped Glasgow's urban sprawl into a series of apparently neat police divisions.

He's been cursed ever since, nowhere with better reason than in Millside Division. An oblong slab of the northwest area, Millside seemed to incorporate a little bit of everything that could possibly spell trouble.

It had dockland and rat-infested slums along the Clyde, backed by dark, grim factories, more tenement buildings and occasional waste ground where demolition hammers had performed their acts of mercy. Further out, a thin fringe of suburban bungalows had once been on the edge of open country. Now they were overshadowed by multistorey low-rent council flats—and by new industrial plants where operatives wore white coats and complained about lack of car-park spaces.

Millside had the worst pockets of unemployed and unemployable, the highest welfare roll and some of the toughest hooligan "neds" in the city. Just as it had some of the best-paid industrial workers, a Better Gardens League, and old ladies who kicked up hell if their street wasn't swept on schedule. [**10**, p. 25]

We believe we can place "Millside Division" on the map of Glasgow with reasonable confidence—as an oblong slab in the northwest of the city, a rectangle traversing Dumbarton Road, Crow Road, Great Western Road, and Byers Road. The second author lived in this area and knows it well. It includes the gray and blackened redstone tenements of the Dumbarton Road region, an eyesore for more affluent Glaswegions living on the hill in Bowmont or Westbourne Gardens. It embraces also the student "Bedsitland" between Byers Road and Crow Road and the wealthy West End. A diverse area, indeed.

The Millside Division office from which Thane and Moss long worked is not a prepossessing place:

Round about the turn of the century, when the new Millside Division office was freshly open for business, a normally stolid police superintendent had taken his first look at it and had promptly described it as "an architectural abomination against God and the City of Glasgow."

Set as it was, surrounded by soot encrusted tenements with a backdrop of Clydeside dock cranes and factory chimneys, that had been no mean condemnation. Since then it had become, if anything, worse. Additions like the red brick garage at the rear, the tall communications aerial, and two rapid extensions to the cell-blocks only served to highlight the basic mock-Gothic ugliness of the original. The squat two-storey building, built of a dull grey granite, had a heavily robed carving of a female figure above its main door. An enthusiastic architect had intended her to represent the spirit of justice—but generations of police, fascinated by her anatomical imperfections, had named her Expectant Ethel. [**9**, p. 33]

Though plans for a replacement building have been around for a while [**14**, p. 10], budget cuts have so far prevented any progress toward its erection [**16**, p. 19]. The surroundings of the Millside office have been changing, however:

Cigarette dangling, [Thane] quit the chair and went over to the window. It was still raining and the street glinted wet

below. Beyond it was raw, scarred earth which had been a block of rat-infested tenements till a month before. Then the demolition squad had moved in, slicing them open, hammering them down.

For a moment he remembered the tattered wallpapers suddenly exposed to light. The crazy irrelevance of a housewife's forgotten apron hanging on a hook behind a door with nothing below it but a three-storey drop. The neds who'd stolen anything salvageable from the ruins after dark – until the desk sergeant arrested six of them single-handed in one night. He'd complained it was the only way he could get peace to read the racing results. [12, p. 26]

Even though Thane ranks as Detective Chief Inspector – he has been the youngest in the city to attain to that position [14, p. 5] – his office is modest in size and furnishings, with a desk, a filing cabinet, a crime occurrence map (occupying most of one wall), and, inevitably, a telephone [9, p. 36]. It has also a private washroom and a folding camp-bed [13, p. 26] for the nights when he cannot get home at all. On the whole, he prefers to be away from that office; being there means encountering fresh problems and coping with the paperwork which his soul loathes [13, p. 32]. When he is there, he seems almost to fill that little office, for he is a big man and easy to remember:

In his early forties, Colin Thane had close-clipped dark hair and a face even those in a friendly mood classed as cheerfully rugged. Wearing a soft brown lovat tweed suit, he filled its tailored lines in a burly, muscular fashion and moved with the controlled, athletic ease of a man still close to peak condition – though he carried more poundage than when he'd been a moderately amateur heavyweight with the police boxing team. [13, p. 6]

It is to be presumed that Thane was born and grew up in Glasgow. We have learned little about his background, however, though we know his family cannot have been wealthy [13 p. 12]. His parents have gained only passing mention, his mother when apparently generating stresses with his mother-in-law [9, p. 37], his father when Thane recalls an anecdote:

An old story his father had loved to tell threaded into his mind. The one about the Free Kirk minister in a Highland glen who'd been lambasting his congregation for their sinful ways. Yes, he thundered from the pulpit, there would be a "day of reckoning, a time for a wailing and a universal gnashing of teeth."

Which was when the minister had seen toothless Old Davie grinning bare-gummed from one of the front pews. And had quickly added:

"On that day, where necessary, teeth will be supplied by the Good Lord." [12, p. 114]

Indeed, Thane is not one for reminiscence or introspection, though he will occasionally hark back to his earlier police days. Encountering two young policemen, "keen as mustard, eager to learn," he recollects:

Once – it seemed a long time ago – he'd been like these two young cops. Except that a senior C.I.D. man had given him a monumental chewing over for getting in the road. Thane hadn't forgotten how he had felt that night. [3, p. 48].

Smoking is an occasional relaxation for him, usually cigarettes [3, p. 66; 12, p. 44], and he enjoys the occasional drink, especially if it is a single malt whisky [14, p. 182]. When he has the leisure, he will play golf [7, p. 12], though he is not an outstanding player [7, p. 21] and is well aware that, even on the course, the calls of duty may disturb his game [11, p. 1-3].

More often, though, he spends his meagre leisure time at home with his family. This is in part, no doubt, because his wife is still an attractive woman.

Mary...was darkhaired, small and had a smooth fresh complexion. Even in the old red dressing-gown that was her pre-breakfast uniform she still showed the kind of figure no woman with two school-age children had any right to retain. [12, p. 74]

She is also eminently sensible: –

Mary Thane had two golden rules as far as her husband was concerned – he had to have dry socks and a full stomach. The rest she was prepared to take on chance. [7, p. 91]

With a husband whose job so often forces the cancellation of what few social engagements they can ever attempt and which can play havoc even with their love-life [14, pp. 17-18], yet which gives little financial recompense for such inconveniences [14, p. 16], she needs also to be patient and endlessly understanding:

A solitary policeman on his beat who heard the cries of the gangs would not be so foolish as to intercede in the coming battle.

If there did happen to be any compensations to the task of being a policeman's wife, mused Mary Thane, it was high time someone told her about them. [3, p. 85]

Their home is in no way exceptional:

The small suburban bungalow was identical with a hundred others in the same street—except, [Thane] had to admit, that the front garden grass required cutting more than most lawns around and the rose bushes were in urgent need of an anti-blight spray. Gardening was the privilege of civil servants, bookmakers, and other characters who could plan their life with routine purpose. [5, p. 74]

Nor can the Thanes afford an expensive car. Instead, they have had to be content with a vehicle already venerable on acquisition:

[H]e cursed the amount of clutch-pedal work involved as he steered his small five-year-old Austin at the tail of one of the snaking queues of vehicles. Three registered owners and a lot of past mileage had put plenty of wear on the Thane family's personal transport, and the clutch was beginning to show it. [6, p. 33]

Indeed, in view of the combination of hard work, small leisure, and not-very-generous pay, there is little wonder that, at times, Colin Thane can envy men in more ordinary jobs [3, p. 46]. Nevertheless, when the offer of a better-paid and easier job does come along [10, p. 15], he turns it down—not really for any satisfactory reason, simply because "He was a cop, and he was stuck with the face" [10, p. 188].

Mary and Colin have two children. They are not always quite what he would wish, in appearance at least!

Dunbar. . . nodded ahead. "Look at that pair of grubby young villains."

Thane loooked at the two tousled children in school clothes who were using a schoolbag as a football, kicking it along the gutter.

"They're mine," he said sadly, honking the horn and waving to Tommy and Kate as the car went past them. [16, p. 64]

Like any other parent, if rather more intermittently, he has exposed himself to the excruciation of school concerts [11, pp. 180–81] and, rather more enthusiastically perhaps, has attended school sporting events [14, p. 16]. Since Colin is a strong swimmer himself [16, pp. 153–54], it is not surprising that Tommy has had ambitions in that sport:

Thane carried the bear mascot into the house as his share of the loads, then turned up the heating and turned on the TV. He heard Mary fighting a patient battle which ended with the two youngsters admitting defeat and going to bed, then she came through and flopped down on the couch beside him, laughing.

"What's so funny?" he demanded.

"Our two," Mary shook her head. "Tommy told Kate he'll go for gold at the next Olympics, then turn professional. Now they're rowing about how much commission she'd get as his manager." [14, p. 17]

Kate Thane is eleven at last encounter and, like most teenaged girls, adores long telephone conversations [17, p. 54]. Tommy, recently thirteen, aids his father with crucial information on one occasion [5, p. 90]. He has found, however, that having a policeman as father can cause strain with one's peers and has come dangerously close to straying into juvenile delinquency [5, p. 113]. That he did not is in large part a tribute to the efforts of Moss, whom the children call "Uncle Phil" [3, p. 85] and who can talk to them as their father cannot [17, pp. 125, 153].

Also part of the Thane household is a brindle boxer dog, called Clyde, "a reminder of the rivulets of wet it had made as a pup" [14, p. 17]. He is large and unruly, welcoming Colin Thane rapturously on his returns home:

[A]s he got [out of his car], a familiar tan-and-white bullet streaked barking towards him down the garden path. Then, tail-stump wagging, Clyde escorted him to the front door. [6, p. 33]

Detective-Inspector Phil Moss, Thane's second-in-command at Millside [9, p. 17], is also a close personal friend. Though he is prepared to tease Colin about his marriage [3, p. 24], Moss enjoys his visits to the Thane household, where he is almost always a welcome guest—though perhaps not when Colin and Mary have been apart too long! For his own part, he is a bachelor, long residing in lodgings run by a Mrs. Robertson [9, p. 134], who, because Phil takes such poor care of his clothes, "lives in perpetual fear of her star boarder being arrested for vagrancy" [7, p. 73]. She has abandoned more personal ambitions:

"At this hour, Mary would have been justified in turfing us both right out again," grinned his friend. "No, just coming home like this to the kids, a fireside, and knowing there's a welcome, I mean. You're a lucky man, Colin."

"Then why guard your bachelor status so fervently?" asked Thane slyly, pouring another cup of coffee. "Don't tell me your landlady has ceased making eyes at you?"

"Since she found out that her new bank manager's a widower, she's lost interest in humble coppers," said Moss. "And a good thing too—it was getting beyond a joke." [3, p. 86]

His lodgings are not necessarily always comfortable for Moss, for other reasons also—as when his landlady is "on a cleaning jag" [7, p. 157] or when:

"The idiot woman rented a couple a spare bedrooms to a mad horde of Dutch football fans and they had a party most of the night." The memory made him sigh. "Red-currant gin and folk dances—wild men. I gave up and went back to the office. At least I got my head down there for a spell, which was better than nothing." [13, p. 114]

Moss is indeed very different in almost all ways from Thane—

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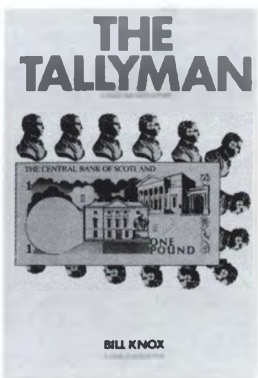
. . . thinner, older, and with a grey outlook on the world in general. He barely met the minimum height requirements of the police medical, and was alleged to have squeezed through by quietly standing on tip-toe. [5, p. 15]

He is sandy-haired and usually looks as "though he had slept in his clothes and, if he'd shaved at all, the razor blade had jumped a few times" [12, p. 12]. A Highlands postmistress describes him cogently as "a thin, miserable-looking soul" [5, p. 87].

Phil Moss comes from a much tougher background than Colin Thane, for, like the eminent American detective Allen Pinkerton, he was born in the Gorbals, the very worst of Glasgow's slum districts [7, pp. 54-55]. His family earned extra money by such expedients as potato-picking [12, p. 168], and cinemas were an unaffordable luxury:

"Phil, how did you get into a cinema when you were a kid?"
"Me?" Moss sucked his teeth . . . "Well, none of us paid. We sneaked in through a lavatory window and hoped we'd land in the men's room." [13, p. 170]



Whereas Thane is essentially a hearty extrovert, Moss is very decidedly introverted, a born worrier and with a host of prejudices and anxieties. He feels himself buffeted by Fate and wonders "if he'd been designed by nature to serve as an unwilling whetstone for other people's indignation" [7, p. 15]. When Thane is recovering from poison, Moss acts "like a mother hen that has laid a square egg. Hurt and confused" [12, p. 60]. He hates flying [3, p. 61] and is no sort of outdoorsman, for he suffers acutely from seasickness [5, p. 3], is apprehensive of sunburn [5, p. 52], and is not only afraid of snakes but also has "the city man's distrust of any creature that didn't have a collar round its neck or wouldn't answer to a whistle" [7, p. 174]. Though traveling with Thane to investigate cases out in the Scottish countryside [11] or among the Hebridean islands [5], he is never happy away from his native Glasgow, admitting the fact frankly: "like that song goes, keep me where the cement grows. I know my limitations" [15, p. 93]. While he has a wry sense of humor [11, p. 44, 131], it serves "as only partial release for the inward tension of investigation—a tension that was the root cause of his grumbling stomach ulcer" [5, p. 15].

That ulcer is cherished for more than ten years [10, p. 28], during which time Moss resists all advice to have it operated upon, despite the agonies it produces:

A faint gnawing pain was giving him sullen warning of his body's refusal to tolerate much more work that night. Well, he reckoned, he had a few hours to go before the pain reached the mincing machine stage. [3, p. 94]

He smokes to reduce his tensions, cadging cigarettes from Thane [9, p. 18] and purchasing herbal cigarettes himself which, since they "burned like a scrap-tyre dump!" [10, p. 30], obviate any likelihood that Thane will try to cadge them back! An attempt to break the smoking habit proves brief [11, pp. 132, 178]. The herbal cigarettes are one of many devices to pacify the ulcer: he follows strange and demanding diets [6, p. 10], eats at fruit-and-nut restaurants [6, p. 20], gargles [11, p. 26], drinks potions of liquorice root and frangula [9, p. 41], and swallows so formidable a variety of pills—of bismuth [15, p. 31], activated charcoal [5, p. 31], activated methylpolysiloxane [6, p. 77], aluminum glycinate [7, p. 17], and many other unattractive substances—that Thane calls him "a walking chemist's shop" [3, p. 24]. The ulcer, a "magnificent duodenal" [12, p. 14], "served as a day-to-day barometer on life as second-in-command at Millside" [13, p. 9] and becomes part of the Division's folklore [12, p. 14]. Cures effected by the advice of a lady friend [11] or through benign witchcraft [12, pp. 104, 130], prove only temporary. His eventual decision to have the ulcer removed by operation is a response to changing circumstances at Millside and, rather strangely, to Colin Thane's promotion [15, pp. 107, 184]. The operation seems to have been a complete success [16, p. 3] but to have had little beneficial effect on his temperament!

Like Thane, he enjoys an occasional drink; this has caused problems with the ulcer in the past, but will now be easier for him. He is perhaps more catholic than Thane in drinking habits, enjoying port [11, p. 98] and gin [10, p. 78] as well as good whisky.

Despite the ulcer and despite all his anxieties, Phil

Moss is pretty tough. Boxing is a favorite sport, though nowadays more as spectator than participant [3, p. 10]. He learned how to use a rifle while in the Home Guard during the Second World War [3, p. 17] and is a skilled revolver shot, using that weapon without compunction when necessary [10, p. 167] and even shooting to kill [13, p. 178].

The partnership of Moss with Thane begins on the very day when Thane takes up his duties at Millside [13, p. 32]. It is perhaps because they are so different that the partnership works so well:

> Colin Thane was a thruster, a man who loathed deskwork and found it a strain on patience to follow the rules—even though he accepted the need for both. Scientific aid was something he grabbed, yet he'd equally go out on a limb on his own, back a hunch, then sweat out the result. Moss was the researcher, the sifter of the two. Given his own pace, he'd happily absorb detail, cope with routine, then, without any change in attitude, insinuate his wiry frame into a back-street battle with devastating results.
>
> Moss had another value. Others might have grumbled at being outranked by a younger man. Instead, he came to his friend's rescue when hunches were crumbling at the edges. He could offer both the safety-valve effect of his acid humour and a frequent ability to give a new twist to the situation, one which gave Thane that second chance. [9, p. 23]

He and Thane bicker at times, but the bickering is usually amiable [e.g. 14, p. 139; 15, p. 38]. He is quite capable of giving Thane a salutary reprimand:

> Thane shrugged and met his gaze reluctantly. "Gibb and Raddock—I made a mess of it, Phil."
>
> "You've done better," said Moss bluntly. "You've also done worse. But you earned your keep." He paused, mouth tightening. "Anyway, who the hell gave you the right to presume you should be God—always perfect?"
>
> For several seconds, Thane didn't answer, looking at the thin, indignant face beside him. Then he nodded and gave a faint, wry grin.
>
> "Nobody round here, that's for sure," he agreed resignedly. [12, p. 183]

Over the years, quite a number of other Millside policemen have entered the story—and some, indeed, like Police Sergeant Francey Lang, who is responsible for Community Relations [13] all too briefly. We have seen little of Chief Inspector Craig, in charge of the uniformed branch at Millside [6, p. 17], or of Detective Inspector Lincoln, the solitary Englishman at Millside who "every now and then...claimed he needed protection under the Race Relations Act" [15, p. 152]. Chief Inspector Greystone of the administration section is sketched equally briefly, but more memorably:

> The whole division knew him better as the "Olympic Flame" because he never went out—of the office. Not if he could help it, anyway. [14, p. 65]

Of the policemen under Thane's command, we have encountered most frequently Detective Constables Erickson and Beech. Erickson, a big, blond Viking of a man who is studying so that he can quit the force and become a lawyer [14, p. 44], is the usual driver when Thane requires a C.I.D. car in his investigations—and, indeed, a brilliant driver when needful, though one to alarm the nervous Moss! [14, p. 161] Beech has aroused Thane's exasperation at times, as when he interrupts a game of golf:

> Thane took the five iron, teed the ball high, and prepared to swing. A flicker of movement off to the right caught the corner of his eye and the swing became a slice. He swore as the ball performed a near vertical take-off, then plummeted onto the rough.
>
> "Hard luck." The loud, cheerful comment came from an all too familiar figure now loping towards the tee. Oblivious of his offence, the lanky young man arrived and greeted him with a grin. "I'd say you raised your head, sir. It's easily done."
>
> "Maybe." Not for the first time Colin Thane decided that life would be a lot easier if he could have Detective Constable Beech transferred out of the Millside Division. Into the Mounted Branch, for example. As a horse, for preference. [11, p. 2].

Beech is keen enough and, if sometimes he blunders, does so with the best of intentions. Like all Glasgow policemen, he finds his job to be one that plays havoc with his private life:

> Beech settled deeper into the car seat, cursing his luck. Another couple of minutes and he'd have been out of the police station and on his way home. Wednesday was his wife's bingo night, but she wouldn't have much chance now. When you'd a set of twins still at the nappy [diaper] stage, baby-sitters went into hiding.
>
> But they never mentioned that kind of problem in the recruiting posters. [12, p. 140]

Superintendent Dan Laurence is in charge of the Scientific Bureau (actually the Forensic Department) of the Glasgow police, turning up in the saga whenever his services, and those of his numerous white-coated assistants, are required. He is an "untidy bear of a man" [14, p. 21] with "a mop of white hair with a yellow streak of nicotine staining at the front" [12, p. 65]. Indeed, there is always a cigarette dangling from his mouth, its ash "trickling down his ancient sheepskin jacket" when out of doors [12, p. 63] or down the front of the frayed jacket that he wears in the laboratory, unbuttoned and with "pockets bulging with everything from acid-stained handkerchiefs to a dog-eared black notebook" [3, p. 29]. Thane has a high respect for his abilities:

> He'd lost count of the number of times Dan Laurence and his squad had used their test tubes and microscopes to clinch the case against hoodlums with seemingly water-tight stories, or to point to a completely new possible solution to a crime. [3, p. 30]

The assistant director of the Forensic Laboratory is

Matthew Amos, a very different personality:

> Most of the new laboratory team were civilians but in Amos' case the correct description was an aggressive civilian. On the day he arrived, Matthew Amos had pinned a magazine picture of Che Guevara on his office wall, then had gone around declaring he wanted to inspect everyone's Union card. Even Special Branch still weren't sure whether it had been done purely to annoy.
>
> But Matt Amos knew his job and once in that white coat he was impartial as a steel rule. [**15**, p. 21]

Another valued colleague is Doc Williams, the city's senior police surgeon. In contrast to Dan Laurence, Williams is always immaculate and, unlike Laurence, wears a white overall whenever necessary to protect his suit during an autopsy. He treats death as an everyday business and wears an acid humor like battered armour:

> Thane. . . glanced toward the table. "Is this — "
>
> "Uh-huh. One Herbert Cullen." Doc Williams twisted a grin. "It goes like a poem. 'Our city is now one ned less — he fell in front of an underground express'."
>
> The Central man winced disapprovingly, but Thane was more used to Doc Williams' ways. [**10**, p. 84]

Thane and Moss are capable of responding in kind. On one occasion, when Thane has been wounded,

> Phil Moss put his head outside the door. . . and bellowed for an orderly. "Tea coming up," he reported, and turned to Doc Williams, who was already unfastening his medical bag. "Got all your plumbing kit, Doc?"
>
> "All I need," grunted the doctor. "Still, I suppose this will give me a line or two for my autobiography."
>
> "Doc keeps threatening to write a book," explained Thane. "He's got a ready-made title too. . . ouch, easy with that shirt," he pleaded as the medical man began his examination. "As I was saying, he's going to call it 'Those we have lost', dedicated to. . . ouch. . . absent patients."
>
> "It's a pity they didn't kick you in the teeth while they were at it," Williams replied sweetly. "Seems a clean enough wound, Colin. Of course, the best thing to use on you would be a humane killer." [**3**, p. 121]

Williams studied at the Forensic Medicine Department at Glasgow University, but both he and Laurence are reluctant to invoke the aid of its head, Regius Professor Andrew MacMaster [**11**, p. 118] — largely because MacMaster treats them still as if they were merely students [**14**, p. 131]. MacMaster is old and skeletally tall, with an expression "close to that of a benevolent vulture" [**14**, p. 130]. Originally, he drove an ancient Rolls-Royce [**3**, p. 63], but now he drives "a big, regally old-fashioned Daimler limousine" [**11**, p. 118] that has become a trade-mark known to all Glasgow policemen. MacMaster can be condescending, demanding, and profoundly irritating — Moss has called him "a rat-faced old devil" [**11**, p. 120] — but he is undoubtedly at the top of his own particular league. He has provided, not just crucial evidence, but also crucial interpretations of that evidence on several occasions. [e.g. **11**].

An associate from outside the Glasgow Police Force itself is John Kelso, Surveyor of Customs and Excise, "a plump, weather-beaten barrel of a man with mild brown eyes half-hidden behind the thick lenses of his horn-rimmed spectacles" [**7**, p. 47]. He has appeared in two adventures and has proved a sympathetic ally, though at times disconcerted by Thane's methods:

> "It's Thane — ." The exciseman paused lamely. "He's a good officer, I know. But after last night. . . there could have been serious trouble! I couldn't sleep for thinking about what might have happened. Can't you — "
>
> "Control him?" Moss gave a dry sympathetic chuckle. "Man, if it was possible Buddha Ilford would have done it long ago. But those chances he takes have a habit of coming off. And he got us both out at the very first, remember? Any time he does something which could backfire, he takes good care nobody else is liable to be hurt." He shook his head. "Stop worrying until you have to, that's my advice." [**7**, p. 159]

And strange advice, at that, to come from Phil Moss! Yet maybe Moss feels he *does* have to worry, quite a lot of the time.

William "Buddha" Ilford was for long the immediate superior of Thane and Moss and, indeed, remains Moss's superior. Chief Superintendent of the Glasgow City Police when first encountered, he is now Assistant Chief Constable of the Strathclyde Police, following promotion and a reorganization of the Scottish police structure [**15**, p. 12]. He is large, somber-faced, heavy-jowled, and balding [**6**, p. 35; **12**, p. 81; **15**, p. 12], most often wearing "an old tweed suit that looked as though it had been knitted from barbed wire" [**15**, p. 12]. He served in the Black Watch during the Second World War and cherishes friendships from those days [**12**, p. 91]. His long police service has left him with a sense of humor "bent as a corkscrew" [**11**, p. 13], little residual faith in his fellow men, and a capacity for power politics that can be head-spinning for his subordinates [**9**, p. 95]. It is Ilford's habit of hunching in a chair and "scowling down at his navel in. . . studied contemplation" [**10**, p. 20] that has gained him his unusual nickname. He is a habitual pipe-smoker, favoring an aluminum-stemmed pipe [**12**, p. 81]; but this does not soothe him. On one occasion he recalls:

> "Colin, when I was a youngster my kind of religion was the strict old Scottish variety with the Devil and hell as real as wearing a clean shirt on Sunday. That wasn't yesterday, but some of it sticks." [**12**, p. 84]

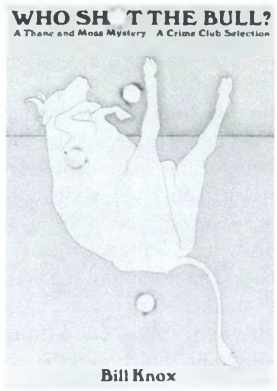
He remains self-confessedly "Old Testament material" in his attitude to the administration of justice [**13**, p. 180] and is much more prone to blame his subordinates for their inadequacies [e.g. **15**, p. 57] than to praise them for their successes: all too often he is a "blend of heated outrage and acid criticism"

[9, p. 123]. Usually, he has been an angry voice on the telephone for Thane—and always a loud one, for Ilford had "a firm conviction that telephones were meant for shouting, whatever the distance involved" [14, p. 76]. Then, at least, there is a chance that Thane might be officially out and unavailable. A summons to Ilford's office, in the old headquarters building in St. Andrews Square, can be distinctly chilling. Ilford's room is long and narrow, "dark, dull and in need of redecoration...an inevitable litter of discarded files and reference books" [7, p. 76]. There is a threadbare section of carpet before Ilford's desk "where a generation of C.I.D. men had rubbed a worn patch while wondering what the man on the other side of the desk had in store for them" [6, p. 35]. The desk itself is broad and old-fashioned, with "the city's violence, crookery and corruption... represented by an untidy bundle of cardboard files perched precariously on one end" [6, p. 35] and an old hand-grenade serving as paperweight [12, p. 125]. Behind it, Ilford might be smoking benignly or might even have a "newspaper opened at the comic-strip section" [5, p. 68]. Much more often, though, he would be displaying "all the animosity of a caged bull" [7, p. 76]. Thane and he have fought many a battle across that desk [e.g. 6, p. 117]; but Ilford has been known to apologize [13, p. 153] and even, once, to praise [10, p. 178].

During the 1970s, the police headquarters was moved to a new building in Pitt Street—irreverently called "Royal David's City" by Glasgow policemen "for reasons more associated with the name of the chief constable than biblical" [14, p. 45]. (The Chief Constable in question was David McNee, nicknamed "The Hammer" because of his forcefulness in attacking police corruption in Glasgow; later he was to be appointed Commissioner of the London Metropolitan Police to deal with similar problems in that city.) The move brought Ilford a new office and the facilities of a sophisticated computer system, which he enjoys playing with [14, p. 47]. The old desk, however, has traveled there with him, and the strain of visits remains undiminished. Visitors have need still to be apprehensive!

Of course, Thane and Moss have their contacts outside the police force, from whom assistance can be sought or information obtained. Jock Mills, the red-headed reporter from the *Evening Bugle*, "as inevitable a part of any murder case as lost sleep" [9, p. 19], is enough of a friend to indulge in verbal byplay with them at times:

> "That's only the beginning," complained Jock Mills. "[Willie MacPherson's] sitting in the hotel bar now, offering signed account of how he found the body—on sale to the highest bidder."
>
> "They're simple people, these Highlanders," said Phil Moss unsympathetically. "If you're polite, he'll maybe give it you on hire-purchase."
>
> "Your ulcer's showing," poked Jock Mills. [5, p. 64]



Less savory, but still very useful, is Snouty Leith:

> "Snouty" earned his name from his acknowledged skill in smuggling tobacco, any prison's unofficial currency, to smoke-starved inmates. His other, less-known function was to act as an occasional ear for the law in places where a policeman would have stood out like a temperance worker at a meth-drinking competition." [3, p. 66]

These are all personalities created in the imagination of Bill Knox, not based directly on any particular individuals of Glasgow present or Glasgow past. Nevertheless, so well are they drawn that they bring immediately to mind, for the second author, persons he knew during his own police service. Strong parallels to Colin Thane are to be found, for example, in Detective Chief Inspector James "Jimmie" Binnie, youngest of that rank in the Glasgow C.I.C. during the mid-'50s to early '60s and subsequently Assistant Chief Constable, Crime; or in Superintendent Grant of the Fraud Squad, who, like Thane, flew to Switzerland while on one case. Both these men were loners, however. Detective Superintendent Joe Beattie had some of the qualities of Phil Moss, without sharing his mannerisms. Buddha Ilford's formidable presence has strong echoes in that of the equally formidable Chief Constable McNee, while the personality and abilities of Professor Andrew MacMaster recall those of Professor Harland of the University of Glasgow, who likewise drove a Daimler. The parallels are no more than that; the characters of the Glaswegian law-enforcers named above do not truly correspond with those of Bill Knox's creations. The fact that such parallels can be drawn at all, though, is a tribute to Knox's skill in depicting his city, its police, and its people.

In co-operation with their associates within and outside the ranks of the official enforcers of justice, Colin Thane and Phil Moss have spent many long and hard years attempting the impossible task of keeping down Glasgow's crime rate. They have tackled crimes as diverse as whisky theft [7], the intimidation of witnesses [9], the blackmailing into crime of debtors [10], blackmail associated with witchcraft [12], embezzling, and, of course, the murder of perfectly innocent citizens or corrupt ones, of policemen or neds. They have guarded visiting dignitaries [6] and pursued escaped criminals [3] in

adventures that took them far from Glasgow. They have investigated a crime in Perthshire that seemed to involve a policeman and very definitely involved a Scottish Nationalist group [**11**], while a murder on an isolated island involved not only a visit to the Hebrides but also, for Thane, a journey to Switzerland [**5**]. All in all, Thane's life in the Glasgow Police is a demanding one, his very survival again and again depending on strength, split-second timing, and that originality of thought which alternately impresses and disturbs his colleagues and superiors so much.

Around 1974, there came the incorporation of the City of Glasgow Police into "a brand-new, monster-sized baby called Strathclyde Police" [**15**, p. 10].

> Scottish local government had gone through its first total reorganization in centuries. All the old county and city hall structures had been wiped away and in their place Scotland had been chopped into a handful of vast new regional authorities. The same thing had happened to the old police structure, a series of shotgun weddings and integrations.
>
> In theory Glasgow had been integrated into the vast Strathclyde region—a major slice of Scotland which took in half the nation's population, five previous police forces, and every kind of trouble from Saturday night back-street razor fights to cattle rustling. Out in the old counties, they put it differently, sometimes bitterly, that labels didn't matter and the city ruled. [**15**, p. 12]

For a while, this serves only to add to Thane's problems the additional one of dealing with resentful country policemen who fear that they can now attain promotion only by accepting transfers to less congenial police divisions [**15**, p. 26]. Basically, however, he continues to be concerned with crime in Millside.

Now he has left it behind, for he has been promoted Detective Superintendent at 42 and appointed to the headquarters staff of the Scottish Crime Squad, with a responsibility for investigating major crime throughout Scotland [**16**, pp. 2, 7]. His new office is situated in the S.C.S. headquarters. Since it is only five minutes' drive out from the city center, over the Kingston Bridge and along the M8 motorway toward Greenock [**16**, p. 30], he and Mary have not needed to move house. Thane's new office has the wall-to-wall carpeting prescribed for superintendents, but it is still small and has a view only of a car park [**16**, p. 36].

He rates third-in-command of the Crime Squad. His new bosses are Commander Hart and Deputy Commander Maxwell. Jack Hart is in his late forties, tall, thin, and dark-haired, "with high cheekbones and a lined, almost sad-eyed face"; he wears metal-framed spectacles for reading and came to his appointment after serving long with the Ayrshire police [**16**, pp. 32–33]. Though he can be sardonic, he is gentler in his relationships with his officers than is Buddha Ilford. Tom Maxwell, also a Detective Superintendent, is gray-haired and looks "mild enough to be someone's benevolent bank manager." He worked with Thane three years before the new appointment,

> when an armed robbery team wanted in Glasgow had been flushed out of its farmhouse hide-out. Maxwell had been a country cop, a police marksman, and that was the day he'd acquired his limp—falling off a roof while chasing one of the gang who had just come near to killing another cop with an axe. [**16**, p. 6]

Hart's secretary, Maggie Fyffe, is another force to be reckoned with, "a middle-aged, slightly plump brunette" [**17**, p. 6]. As Maxwell tells Thane:

> "Her husband was a cop who got shot in the guts trying to stop a bank hold-up, then took three years to die. So—well, she fixes things."

Phil Moss has been left behind in Glasgow, with the unenviable task now of serving as liaison man to Buddha Ilford [**16**, p. 181]—a task likely to generate another ulcer, one feels. Thane's new assistants are all much younger than Phil. His principal assistant is Sergeant Francey Dunbar, "slim, just over medium height, and in his twenties, with a mop of jet black hair, a strong nose, and a wide, humorous mouth framed by a long, thin straggle of moustache" [**16**, p. 37]. His style of dress is very different from Phil's:

> "[Thane's] new sergeant wore an old Donegal tweed safari jacket with a grey rolled-neck shirt, tan whipcord slacks and scuffed leather boots. A heavy silver identity bracelet,

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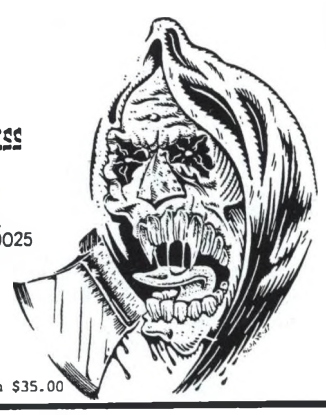

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the name-tab blank, hung loose on his right wrist. It was an outfit which, like its owner, looked both casual and practical." [**16**, p. 37]

He comes from a village near Edinburgh, though now he has a bachelor pad in Glasgow. He handles any car "with an easy understanding that seemed to communicate, made it match his mood," owns a 750cc Honda motorcycle on which he takes part in races sometimes, and can "always find a good-looking girl willing to keep him fed" [**17**, pp. 75–76]. Dunbar's principal liability as a policeman is that he is "never happy when it comes to blood" [**17**, p. 39].

Other associates are Detective Constables Joe Felix and Sandra Craig. Felix, balding and stockily built, works with the Squad's surveillance and technical section [**16**, p. 109] and feels naked without his "electronic hardware" [**16**, p. 139]. Sandra Craig is introduced as a tall, slim redhead in blue denim slacks and a thick wool sweater; she contrives to retain her figure despite being perpetually hungry and eating largely whenever opportunity arises [**16**, p. 109]. Though Sandra can be difficult and resentful when Thane tries to protect her from the more dangerous jobs [**16**, p. 171], he finds that a woman associate furnishes special assets in detective work [e.g. **16**, p. 138].

The crimes Thane encounters in his new duties may be exciting enough, but his new associates are too much the standard figures of present-day crime fiction to carry the interest of the old. Maybe the stories set in this new dimension of investigation will seem to have a better flavor when we are accustomed to their taste. Certainly, we plan to keep reading Bill Knox's future novels.

For the moment, however, we are missing the special atmosphere of the Glasgow streets that Bill Knox evoked so well. We are wishing that Colin Thane were back at the sleazy Millside police station, with Phil Moss absorbing medicaments and making astringent observations and with "Buddha" Ilford, like a rumbling volcano, an ever-imminent menace.

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B. By Other Authors

[20] Bedell, Jeanne F., "Knox, Bill," in John M. Reilly, Ed., *Twentieth Century Crime and Mystery Writers* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1980), pp. 908–12. □

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Collecting Mystery Fiction

Donald E. Westlake

BY OTTO PENZLER

What is the ultimate achievement for an author, generally, and a mystery writer, specifically? Is it to have created a character so real, so believable, so beloved, that he lives beyond the creator's years, as happened with Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle?

Or is it to have written a book so transcendently different and original that it influences a future generation, as happened with the novels of Dashiell Hammett and, to a lesser extent, James M. Cain?

Or is it to have found a voice that is so unique that the user of that voice will be forever associated with it, and identified with it, as occurred with Raymond Chandler and, in a less attractive fashion, S. S. Van Dine?

Or is it to produce a body of work that is comprised almost exclusively of variations on a theme, fine-tuned and polished, so that a level of excellence is achieved within the confines of its own aspirations, as is true with Dick Francis and Ross Macdonald? It is impossible, for example, to think of a mystery set in the world of horse racing and not to think of Francis, as one must think of Macdonald when viewing mysteries resolved in the course of parent-child relationships.

Or is it to attempt a kind of professional versatility that awes the author's colleagues, as in the case of Stanley Ellin? He could horrify readers in one story, writing grim and macabre tales of cannibalism, racism, and deviant sexuality, then make them laugh out loud with comic scenes, then melt them with gentle, romantic moments, and continue to change tone from book to book, or chapter to chapter, and even from page to page.

In our time, and perhaps in all the time that mystery fiction has been known to literature, only one figure has managed to carve out positions at the front rank in widely disparate areas. Only one author has demonstrated the prodigious talent of an innovator in one area, while simultaneously becoming the premier creator of work at the opposite end of the mystery fiction spectrum. (Not to mention a body of work in the rainbow between those twin pots of gold that would have been a source of pride to most any other writer.) That author, of course, is Donald E. Westlake, also known as Richard Stark and various other names.

It is not fruitful, nor is it desirable, to try to think of the comic caper novel without first thinking of Westlake. If anyone writes one these days, he must face the inevitable comparison with Westlake—usually falling short. The great compliment that a critic or reader can pay to a humorous mystery is to say that it's almost as good as a Westlake, or as good as a Westlake, or better than a Westlake, or that it might have been written by Westlake, depending upon the degree of enthusiasm or hype in the voice of the speaker. He is, simply, the standard. He almost invented it, and it's his, just as Babe Ruth will always own the home run. When the next great slugger comes along, he won't be compared with Hank Aaron, or Jimmie Foxx, or Harmon Killebrew. It will be the Babe that comes to mind. And, for the humorous mystery, it will be Donald E. Westlake.

Is there a more difficult kind of fiction to create than humor? History suggests that the answer can only be: No. While it is possible (indeed, often preferable) to read adventure fiction, or romantic novels, of the nineteenth century, the same notion would fail one badly if he has a mind to read humor. Mark Twain remains funny. John Kendrick Bangs does not. Twain stands in splendid solitude.

Even among writers working today, dialogue or situations that you find hilarious may bore your best friend, and vice versa. It is comparatively easy to evoke terror (an escaped psychopath in the neighborhood as a solitary woman slowly opens the door of an unusually quiet house) or sentiment (a child hugs a puppy), but finding the common chord for humor is just harder (a pie in the face simply isn't funny all the time).

But a master burglar whose bad luck causes his brilliant schemes to fail—all the time—is funny. Dortmunder, Kelp, Murch, are funny names, without the excess that would push them over the edge to silliness.

Humor is, more often than not, unkind. We laugh at the discomfort of others. Part of it is the unexpectedness of it (seeing someone sit down and miss the chair is a surprise that can cause the initial reaction of laughter, until the split second later when concern enters the picture). Part of it is relief, a release of instant tension (thank God it wasn't *me* who tripped while carrying the cream cake).

Searching for the meaning of humor—*why* is something funny?—is like searching for the reason someone falls in love. Or defining art. You know it when you're confronted with it, but dissecting it doesn't help explain it.

Still, the temptation is great and, in this instance, irresistible. It seems to me that the broad appeal of Westlake's humor has to do with humanity. An underlying affection for his people, even the bad guys, prevents the humor from going that extra step into cruelty. It is safe to laugh at his characters because you know, somehow, it's all going to be all right in the end. If Westlake's character misses the chair, he won't hit his head against the sharp edge and die. If a wedding degenerates into a slapstick mess, there will be another one, or it wasn't meant to be a happy marriage anyway. He understands our fears and pushes us to the edge of the precipice so that we can look down and see them, and know they are not quite as bad as we thought they were.

When we think of a comic writer, then, who dissects society in a way that is consistently funnier than Nabokov or DeVries or Thomas Berger, it is sometimes difficult to remember that Westlake started his career as the author of tough, dark, hardboiled fiction.

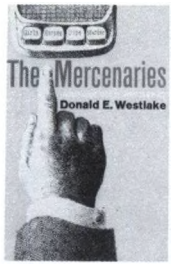
His first five novels were grim and stark, and he continued writing that kind of book under the singularly apt pseudonym of Richard Stark. The cult following of the Parker novels (and, to a lesser extent, the Grofeld novels) under the Stark name reached enormous dimensions in the 1960s and persist to this day, culminating in a flagrantly effusive feature in the usually pretentious *New York Review of Books*. His reputation as the quintessential *noir* writer of the 1960s was secure.

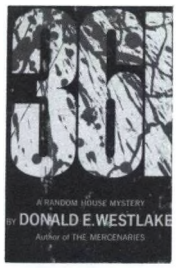
Born in Brooklyn in 1933, Westlake grew up in Albany, New York and served in the Air Force. He had a brief acting career and worked for a literary agency, evaluating manuscripts, and writing freelance on the side. His first book, *The Mercenaries*, was published in 1960, beginning a highly prolific and successful career.

In addition to the crime and mystery fiction for which he is best known, Westlake has also written some science fiction (including *Anarchaos* under the pseudonym Curt Clarke, which is a crime and suspense thriller set in the future), "straight" novels (most notably *A Likely Story* and the Arthur Hailey parody, *Comfort Station*, as J. Morgan Cunningham), a CIA thriller, *Ex Officio*, under the pseudonym Timothy J. Culver, and the critically acclaimed series about a tortured former policeman, Mitch Tobin, as by Tucker Coe. There have also been numerous screenplays, teleplays, articles, short stories, and other works.

Inexplicably, Westlake has never quite attained the bestsellerdom enjoyed by contemporaries who lack his brilliance. While admired by his colleagues and loved by his readers, his successes have never been with a mass audience.

For the collector, a Donald E. Westlake collection presents an interesting challenge. Some of the books (primarily the Richard Starks) were paperback originals and so are elusive in genuinely fine, collector's copies. The early books published by Random House were cheaply made and did not hold up well, particularly the shoddily produced dust jackets, which are very scarce in sharp, crisp condition. On the other hand, many of the excellent middle and later books are not difficult to find at modest prices, so it is possible to put together a first-rate Westlake collection in a reasonable period of time at a reasonable price. With the ability to add even the difficult books at a fairly modest price, the collection is extensive enough to provide a challenge while affordable enough to be





satisfying.

Because of the extent of the Westlake opera, this column will feature only his mystery and crime fiction written under the Westlake name. The following column will be devoted to the books produced under the Richard Stark pseudonym. The third and last column will provide the appropriate information on the books published under other pseudonyms, as well as the handful of non-mysteries written under the author's real name.

The Mercenaries

First Edition: New York, Random House, (1960). Grey boards, front and rear covers printed in black with numerous Random House logotypes; black paper-covered spine printed in red and gold. Issued in a mainly orange dust wrapper, printed in red and black with white dropping out.

Note: The author's first book, published at the age of 27, after several short stories had appeared in print.

The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

Printed on thick, very cheap, pulpwood paper; even the best, freshest copies have yellowed pages.

Published in paperback by Dell in 1962 as *The Smashers.*

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$30.00	$15.00
Fine	60.00	20.00
Very fine	75.00	25.00

Killing Time

First Edition: New York, Random House, (1961). Grey boards, front and rear covers printed in black with numerous Random House logotypes; black paper-covered spine printed in yellow and silver. Issued in a mainly black dust wrapper, printed with red and green with white dropping out.

Note: The cheaply produced dust jacket is notorious for being rubbed; it is practically impossible to find one in crisp, bright condition.

The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

Published in paperback by Dell in 1964 as *The Operator.*

Publication date was March 23, 1961.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$20.00	$10.00
Fine	40.00	15.00
Very fine	50.00	20.00

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First Edition: New York, Random House, (1962). Yellow boards, rear covers blank, dark grey paper-covered spine printed in red, yellow, and silver. Issued in a mainly black dust wrapper, printed with red and yellow with white dropping out.

Note: Perhaps the scarcest of the Westlake books to find in collector's condition. The dust wrapper is virtually always rubbed.

The title refers to the entry in a thesaurus for "murder."

The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$25.00	$15.00
Fine	60.00	20.00
Very fine	75.00	25.00

Killy

First Edition: New York, Random House, (1963). Grey boards, front and rear covers printed in black with numerous Random House logotypes; black paper-covered spine printed in red and gold. Issued in a mainly blue dust wrapper, printed with red and black with white dropping out.

Note: The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$20.00	$10.00
Fine	40.00	15.00
Very fine	50.00	20.00

Pity Him Afterwards

First Edition: New York, Random House, (1964). Blue boards, printed with thick black lines on front and rear covers; textured blue paper-covered spine printed with gold; gold Random House logotype at lower corner of front cover. Issued in a mainly red dust wrapper, printed with black and yellow with white dropping out.

Note: Perhaps the least-known of the books published under Westlake's own name, and the last of his dark novels under that name.

The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$25.00	$15.00
Fine	60.00	20.00
Very fine	75.00	25.00

The Fugitive Pigeon

First Edition: New York, Random House, (1965). Blue boards, printed with thick black lines on front and rear covers; textured blue paper-covered spine printed with red. Issued in a mainly pink dust wrapper printed with yellow and black with white dropping out.

Note: Westlake's first comic novel.

The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

Estimated retail value	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$20.00	$10.00
Fine	35.00	12.50
Very fine	45.00	15.00

The Busy Body

First Edition: New York, Random House, (1966). Blue boards, printed with thick black lines on front and rear covers; textured blue paper-covered spine printed with gold. Issued in a mainly white dust wrapper, printed with black, red, and gold.

Note: The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

The Busy Body was filmed by Paramount in 1967, starring Sid Caesar, Robert Ryan, and Anne Baxter.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$15.00	$10.00
Fine	30.00	12.50
Very fine	40.00	15.00

The Spy in the Ointment

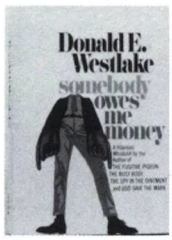
First Edition: New York, Random House, (1966). Blue boards, printed with thick black lines on front and rear covers; textured blue paper-covered spine printed with gold. Issued in a mainly white dust wrapper, printed with black, blue, and green.

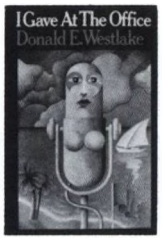
Note: The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

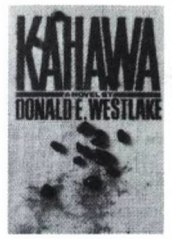
Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$15.00	$10.00
Fine	25.00	12.50
Very fine	30.00	15.00

God Save the Mark

First Edition: New York, Random House, (1967). Grey cloth, front cover stamped in orange; spine stamped in purple; rear cover blank. Issued in a mainly white dust wrapper,







printed with orange, purple, and black.

Note: The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

God Save the Mark won an Edgar Allan Poe Award from the Mystery Writers of America for Best Novel.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$15.00	$10.00
Fine	25.00	12.50
Very fine	30.00	15.00

The Curious Facts Preceding My Execution and Other Fictions

First Edition: New York, Random House, (1968). Blue boards, printed with thick black lines on front and rear covers; textured blue paper-covered spine printed with gold. Issued in a mainly blue dust wrapper, printed with black, green, and yellow, with white dropping out.

Note: The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

A short story collection.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$15.00	$10.00
Fine	25.00	12.50
Very fine	30.00	15.00

Who Stole Sassi Manoon?

First Edition: New York, Random House, (1969). Orange boards, front cover stamped with red question marks, rear cover blank; black cloth spine, stamped with gold. Issued in a mainly white dust wrapper, printed with black, orange, and purple.

Note: There is no indication of printing on the copyright page.

Published March 12, 1969.

Perhaps the least successful of the author's comic capers, in terms of critical reaction.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$15.00	$10.00
Fine	25.00	12.50
Very fine	30.00	15.00

Somebody Owes Me Money

First Edition: New York, Random House, (1969). Brown boards, printed with black on front and rear covers, stamped in silver on spine. Issued in a mainly white dust wrapper, printed with red, green, and black.

Note: The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

The last Westlake to be published by Random House.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$15.00	$10.00
Fine	30.00	12.50
Very fine	40.00	15.00

The Hot Rock

First Edition: New York, Simon and Schuster, (1970). Grey boards, front and rear covers blank; grey cloth spine, printed with green and stamped with gold. Issued in a mainly white dust wrapper, printed with black and green.

Note: The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

Published May 15, 1970.

The Hot Rock was made into a successful film by Twentieth Century-Fox, the screenplay written by William Goldman, starring Robert Redford, George Segal, and others.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$17.50	$12.50
Fine	35.00	15.00
Very fine	45.00	17.50

I Gave at the Office

First Edition: New York, Simon and Schuster, (1971). Purple cloth, front and rear covers blank, spine stamped with white. Issued in a mainly black dust wrapper with full-color illustration.

Note: The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$17.50	$12.50
Fine	35.00	15.00
Very fine	45.00	17.50

Bank Shot

First Edition: New York, Simon and Schuster, (1972). Green cloth, front and rear covers blank, spine printed with yellow. Issued in a mainly white dust wrapper, printed with green and black.

Note: The words "First Printing" appear on the copyright page.

Published April 3, 1972.

Although written as a sequel to *The Hot Rock*, it was not filmed as a sequel when it was produced by United Artists and released in 1974; it starred George C. Scott.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$15.00	$10.00
Fine	25.00	12.50
Very fine	30.00	15.00

Cops and Robbers

First Edition: New York, M. Evans, (1972). Grey boards, front and rear covers blank; blue cloth spine stamped in gold. Issued in a mainly blue dust wrapper, printed in black and yellow, with white dropping out.

Note: The copyright page bears a sequence of numbers from 0 (representing 10) down to 1. On the first printing, the number 1, and all subsequent numbers, are present. As the book went back to press for additional printings, the next lowest number was removed. Thus, on the second printing, the sequence of numbers would decline from 0 to 2; on the third printing, from 0 to 3, and so on. A similar practice was followed by M. Evans on all books written by Westlake.

Westlake wrote an original screenplay for a movie produced as *Cops and Robbers*, then wrote the novel based on that screenplay. The novel was published on October 18, 1972; the movie was not released until 1973. It starred Cliff Gorman and Joe Bologna.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$5.00
Fine	17.50	6.50
Very fine	20.00	7.50

Gangway! (with Brian Garfield)

First Edition: New York, M. Evans, (1973). Yellow boards, front and rear covers blank; purple cloth spine stamped with copper. Issued in a mainly white dust wrapper with a full-color illustration.

Note: The sequence of numbers on the copyright page declines from 9 to 1.

Westlake's only collaborative novel.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$5.00
Fine	17.50	7.50
Very fine	20.00	8.50

Help I Am Being Held Prisoner

First Edition: New York, M. Evans, (1974).

Brown boards, front and rear covers blank; rust-colored cloth spine printed with brown and yellow. Issued in a mainly blue dust wrapper, printed with yellow and black, with white dropping out.

Note: The sequence of numbers on the copyright pages declines from 9 to 1.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$5.00
Fine	15.00	6.50
Very fine	17.50	7.50

Jimmy the Kid

First Edition: New York, M. Evans, (1974). Brown boards, front and rear covers blank; blue cloth spine stamped with silver. Issued in a mainly yellow dust wrapper, printed with red, black, and purple.

Note: The sequence of numbers on the copyright page declines from 9 to 1.

Jimmy the Kid was filmed in 1982, the production of which the author is blameless.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$5.00
Fine	15.00	6.50
Very fine	17.50	7.50

Two Much!

First Edition: New York, M. Evans, (1975). Grey boards, front cover stamped with small silver vignette; rear cover blank; purple cloth spine stamped with silver and red. Issued in a mainly purple dust wrapper, printed yellow, blue, black, and flesh-color.

Note: The sequence of numbers on the copyright page declines from 9 to 1.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$5.00
Fine	15.00	6.50
Very fine	17.50	7.50

Brothers Keepers

First Edition: New York, M. Evans, (1975). Beige boards, front cover blind stamped; rear cover blank; grape-colored cloth spine, stamped with gold. Issued in a largely blue dust wrapper, printed with beige, black, grey, and green.

Note: The sequence of numbers on the copyright page declines from 9 to 1.

Publication date was August 28, 1975.

A promotional item produced with this novel is a cardboard fan with a wooden handle, on which is produced a long definition of a "Donald E. Westlake Fan"; it is one of the ironies of collecting that this novelty, intended as a giveaway, is now valued at about $25.00 – more than even a very fine copy of the first edition of the book.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$5.00
Fine	15.00	6.50
Very fine	17.50	7.50

Dancing Aztecs

First Edition: New York, M. Evans, (1976). Pale grey cloth, front cover stamped with a small copper vignette; rear cover blank; spine stamped with copper and green. Issued in a mainly green dust wrapper, printed with full-color illustrations.

Note: The sequence of numbers on the copyright page declines from 9 to 1.

A substantially cut-down version was published in England as *A New York Dance* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1979).

The dust wrappers for *Dancing Aztecs*, on first and subsequent printings, were too small, so all copies look as if the dust wrapper has been trimmed.

Publication date was October 15, 1976.

Not at all pertinent but of subjective interest only, this novel may be the funniest of all Westlake's books, so, by logical extension, one of the funniest ever written by anyone.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$5.00
Fine	15.00	7.50
Very fine	17.50	8.50

Enough

First Edition: New York: M. Evans, (1977). Blue cloth, front and rear covers blank; spine stamped with silver and printed with black. Issued in a mainly white dust wrapper, printed with blue, black, grey, and flesh-color.

Note: The sequence of numbers on the copyright page declines from 9 to 1.

Publication date was March 14, 1977.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$5.00
Fine	15.00	6.50
Very fine	17.50	7.50

Nobody's Perfect

First Edition: New York, M. Evans, (1977). Tan-gold boards, front and rear covers blank; black cloth spine printed with white and red. Issued in a mainly white dust wrapper, printed with grey, red, and gold.

Note: The sequence of numbers on the copyright page declines from 9 to 1.

Publication date was September 30, 1977.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$5.00
Fine	15.00	6.50
Very fine	17.50	7.50

Castle in the Air

First Edition: New York: M. Evans, (1980). Pale blue boards, front and rear covers blank; dark blue cloth spine stamped with silver. Issued in a mainly white dust wrapper, printed with blue and tan.

Note: The sequence of numbers on the copyright page declines from 9 to 1.

Publication date was April 25, 1980.

This is the last book Westlake wrote for M. Evans, an event lamented by few, especially the author, who was unhappy at this publishing house. It had been nearly three years since his previous book, and the extra time did not improve the literary quality of the work.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$5.00
Fine	15.00	6.50
Very fine	17.50	7.50

Kahawa

First Edition: New York, Viking, (1982). Brown boards, front and rear covers blank; beige cloth spine stamped with copper. Issued in a pictorial dust wrapper printed to resemble burlap, with brown lettering and brown and red artwork.

Note: The first printing has no such indication on the copyright page.

The author's most ambitious novel, and the one with the greatest amount of praise heaped upon it, *Kahawa* had an unaccountably small print run and is, consequently, already an uncommon book in fine, fresh, collector's condition.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$12.50	$ 7.50
Fine	20.00	10.00
Very fine	25.00	12.50

Why Me

First Edition: New York, Viking, (1983). Black boards, front and rear covers blank; white linen spine stamped with gold. Issued in a mainly grey dust wrapper, printed with black, red, and gold, with white dropping out.

Note: The first printing has no such indication on the copyright page; subsequent printings are so indicated.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$5.00
Fine	15.00	6.50
Very fine	17.50	7.50

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Levine

First Edition: New York, The Mysterious Press, (1984). Black cloth, front and rear covers blank; spine stamped with silver. Issued in a mainly black dust wrapper, printed with green and grey, with white dropping out.

Note: The words "First Edition" appear on the copyright page.

Levine is a short-story collection, the final story being written specifically for this volume; it was nominated for an Edgar Allan Poe Award from the Mystery Writers of America.

In addition to the standard trade edition, *Levine* was issued in a special collector's edition, limited to 250 copies, numbered and signed by the author, in a slipcase.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$5.00
Fine	12.50	6.50
Very fine	15.00	7.50

The special edition was published at $45.00 and should still be available at that price. No copy in less than very fine condition should be acceptable.

High Adventure

First Edition: New York, The Mysterious Press, (1985). Green boards, front and rear covers blank; natural linen spine stamped with gold. Issued in a full-color pictorial dust wrapper.

Note: The words "First Edition" appear on the copyright page.

In addition to the standard trade edition, *High Adventure* was issued in a special collector's edition, limited to 250 copies, numbered and signed by the author, in a slipcase. There were also 26 lettered copies, for presentation and not offered for sale.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$5.00
Fine	12.50	6.50
Very fine	15.00	7.50

The special edition was published at $45.00 and should still be available at that price. No copy in less than very fine condition should be acceptable. A lettered copy would bring about $100.00.

Good Behavior

First Edition: New York: The Mysterious Press, (1986). Blue boards, front and rear cover blank; dark blue cloth spine stamped in gold. Issued in a mainly blue dust wrapper, printed with yellow, red, and orange, with white dropping out.

Note: The words "First Printing May 1986" appear on the copyright page of all printings. A sequence of numbers declines from 10 to 1 on the first printing. For the second printing, the sequence declines from 10 to 2, and so on.

The first trade edition was published in May of 1986, but there had previously been a special edition produced exclusively for the Neiman-Marcus stores in October 1985. This edition, specially bound with the Neiman-Marcus logotype on the front cover and title page, was produced with black cloth, stamped in copper, with a black cloth slipcase. It was limited to 1,000 copies, numbered and signed by the author, and was available only through the Neiman-Marcus catalogue and in those stores. A lettered edition of 26 copies was also produced for presentation and not for sale.

Estimated retail value:	*with d/w*	*without d/w*
Good	$10.00	$ 5.00
Fine	12.50	8.50
Very fine	15.00	10.00

The special Neiman-Marcus edition was offered at approximately $35.00 and should still be available at or near that price. No copy in less than very fine condition should be acceptable. A lettered copy would bring about $100.00.

Proof copies were produced for most Westlake novels (if not all, though I have seen none for the earliest works) and generally would command a price approximately double that of the first edition in comparable condition. Since Westlake is a fairly accessible author who will do book signings and runs two mystery weekends annually at Mohonk Mountain House (New Paltz, N.Y.), autographed copies of his works do not yet have an appreciably higher value than unsigned copies of his books. □

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Novel Verdicts

BY JON L. BREEN

Explanation of symbols:

A All or more than three-quarters of the book devoted to courtroom action
½ One-half or more of the book devoted to courtroom action
¼ One-quarter or more devoted to courtroom action
B Relatively brief courtroom action; less than a quarter of the book

MARK, Alane. **An Ethical Man.** Chicago: Academy Chicago, 1987. **(B)**

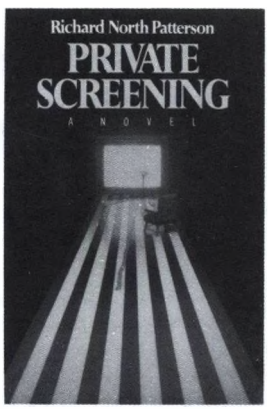
California lawyer Jim Randall defends builder Joseph Kolvek, accused of the murder of his wife Sharon. Randall looks like another attempt at the much-needed new Perry Mason. Unlike Perry, he has a wife (albeit an inconspicuous one) as well as an office Della Street figure, and he actually has other cases to deal with besides the main one. He is briefly seen in court in two other matters aside from the preliminary hearing on Kolvek. The book is advanced as a law-office procedural – official documents are reproduced between chapters, and most of the courtroom action is in transcript form, which somewhat detracts from its dramatic impact. The author is so interested in educating the reader to the criminal justice process that the characters often explain to each other matters that they clearly already understand. A readable, low-key first novel. Although the ending is a bit of a letdown, a second Randall case will be most welcome.

MAVITY, Nancy Barr. **The State Versus Elna Jepson.** Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1937. **(B)**

Although Mavity was known as a mystery writer, this one is decidedly a non-mystery. The reader knows that the "murder" of which heroine Elna is accused, the death of her lawyer-lover's wife, was really an accident, made to look like murder by the effort to cover up the lawyer's presence at the scene of his wife's death. The book offers interesting scenes in the women's jail and a journalistic insider's view of how crime reporters go about their jobs. In fact, this is more a newspaper than a courtroom story, though ultimately a misfire either way. It is clear that the author understands courtroom procedure, but her trial scenes are disappointingly brief and melodramatic. And Elna's odd combination of honor, loyalty, stoicism, and egocentrism is ultimately not to be believed. Still, some scenes are effective enough to suggest that Mavity's mystery novels might be worth investigating. (The last line of the novel recalls a bestseller of the same period: "Tomorrow would be another day.")

PATTERSON, Richard North. **Private Screening.** New York: Villard, 1985. **(B)**

In the first half of this long, intricately constructed thriller, San Francisco attorney Tony Lord twice sees courtroom action. In a brief scene, he appears for a fired homosexual journalist in an employment discrimination suit and does a brilliant job of cross examining powerful publisher Colby Parnell. In a more extended sequence, he defends Vietnam vet Harry Carson on a charge of assassinating a charismatic Presidential candidate, Senator James Kilcannon, at a fund-raising concert by Kilcannon's mistress, singer Stacy Tarrant. Like most of the other



events of the novel, the Carson trial becomes a media event, and Lord's use of Vietnam stress syndrome in support of an insanity plea is viewed on TV by the whole nation. Patterson, a former trial lawyer, does courtroom scenes expertly and is nearly as impressive in the second half of the book, wherein a mysterious, media-manipulating terrorist called Phoenix holds Parnell's wife and Stacy Tarrant's personal manager hostage and tabs Lord as intermediary. The surprise ending is one that many a reader will undoubtedly see coming. (That means I didn't but thought I should have.)

REACH, James (1909?-1970). **Late Last Night.** New York: Morrow, 1949. London: Heinemann, 1950. (¼)

Well-known New York gangland figure Sam DeVito is charged with the Flatbush shooting murder of John Gosselin, though even the prosecutor suspects that he is not guilty. Covering the trial for a press syndicate is mystery writer Gregory Stockton, whom some (police and family) think may be the real killer. Reach, a one-time president of MWA, was best known as a playwright, a calling suggested by his knack for dialogue, scene-setting, and plot carpentry. The courtroom action, including the full course of the trial and deliberations by the surprisingly young jury, is effectively done, and the story builds to a melodramatic and suspenseful climax.

WEST, Pamela Elizabeth, pseudonym of Pamela West Katkin and S. Leonard Rubinstein. **Madeleine.** New York: St. Martin's, 1983. (¼)

The 1857 trial of Madeleine Smith for the arsenic poisoning of her lover Pierre Emile L'Angelier is effectively fictionalized here. Like many of the classic Victorian murder cases, this one dramatically illustrates the plight of nineteenth-century women. Scenes from the trial (conducted in Edinburgh for an alleged crime that occurred in Glasgow) alternate with flashbacks to Madeleine's life and the events leading up to L'Angelier's death. Was she guilty? The authors suggest an answer in the closing pages. A note on exactly what is from the record and what is fictional extrapolation would have been very welcome. □

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PART TWO

A CONTINUING SUPPLEMENT TO *DETECTIVE AND MYSTERY FICTION*

By Walter Albert

Part One of Walter Albert's bibliography appeared in TAD 20:3. Part One covered critical/general reference books and articles for 1984–85.

Abbreviations

AES	*Abstracts of English Studies*
AHMM	*Alfred Hitchcock's Mystery Magazine*
CADS	See A41
DAI	*Dissertation Abstracts International*
DNR	*Dime Novel Roundup*
DQ	*Dickens Quarterly*
EQMM	*Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*
GP	*Golden Perils*
ILM	*I Love a Mystery* (See A40, item 4)
Int	Interviews
JB	Jacques Baudou
JLA	John L. Apostolou
JPC	*Journal of Popular Culture*
KLM	Kathleen L. Maio
MASR	*Mystery & Adventure Series Review*
NYTBR	*New York Times Book Review*
PF	*Paperback Forum*
PMLA 84	*PMLA International Bibliography for 1984*
PW	*Publishers Weekly*
RCSA	*Robert C. S. Adey*
REB	Robert E. Briney
Ref	References
Reilly 2	See A93
RS	Robert Sampson
RSJ	*Rex Stout Journal*
SSB	*The Savage Society of Bronze*
TAD	*The Armchair Detective*
TCBG	*The Comic Buyer's Guide*
TFF	*The Thorndyke File*
TLS	*Times* (London) *Literary Supplement*
TMF	*The Mystery Fancier*
TPC	*The Pulp Collector*
TPP	*The Poisoned Pen*
WLB	*Wilson Library Bulletin*
YL	*Yellowback Library*

II. Dime Novels, Juvenile Series, Pulps

A. General Reference

See also D132, D175, D186, D193, D260

B1. Albert, Walter. "Les Pulps américains: une littérature souterraine" [The American pulps: an underground literature]. In A99, pp. 13–19. A general introduction to pulp literature, with an annotated bibliography of secondary sources that includes material on the dime novel.

B2. Altshuler, Harry. "Souvenirs d'un lecteur de pulps" [Memories of a pulp reader]. In A99, pp. 66–68. Translated into French by J.-J. Schléret. Some notes on pulp personalities by an agent for a number of writers for the pulps.

B3. Ballard, Todhunter. "Writing for the Pulps." In *Hollywood Troubleshooter* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1985), pp. 8–18. First publication of an essay originally written in the early 1970s. An anecdotal essay on writing for *Black Mask* and on the other writers Ballard knew. These include Dashiell Hammett, Carroll John Daly, and Erle Stanley Gardner.

B4. Berch, Victor. "The Tepperman Quest – Phase II." *Echoes* 17 (Feb 85) 32–36. One of Tepperman's pen-names was Curtis Steele, house name for the author of the "Operator 5" series. Berch establishes Tepperman's authorship of scripts for the *Inner Sanctum* radio program and includes a checklist of the programs with date of broadcast, title of script, star, and copyright deposit date.

B5. Billman, Carol. *Secret of the Syndicate: Nancy Drew, The Hardy Boys and the Million Dollar Mystery Factory.* NY: Frederick Ungar, 1985. 250pp. $13.95hb/$8.95pb. As reported in YL 28 (July/Aug 85) 13. Not seen.

B6. Bleiler, E. F. "The Hidden Message; or, Ned Stratemeyer's Secret Cipher Solver." DNR 54 (1985) 65. A message in Emerson Bell's "The Electric Air and Water Wizard" contains the coded name "ESTRATEMEYER."

B7. Bourke, Sean. "The European Connection." YL 25 (Jan/Feb 85) 15–18. First of a series of articles on European editions of American series books. See also YL 26 (March/April 85) 8–9; YL 28 (July/Aug 85) 10–11; YL 29 (Sept/Oct 85) 16–17; YL 30 (Nov/Dec 85) 9.

B8. Cox, J. Randolph. *Magnet Detective Library.* DNR Supplement No. 51 (Dec 85). 48pp. Wraps. A chronological listing of issues of the *Magnet* and *New Magnet Library,* published by Street and Smith,

with an author index. Although Nick Carter stories form the largest block of series publications, this comprises only 218 out of 483 numbers of the magazine. In his introduction, Cox traces the debt of the dime novel detective to writers such as Gaboriau and Fortuné du Boisgobey and surveys the contents of the magazine. This Street and Smith publication is a rich source of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century detective fiction, and Cox's bibliography is an exemplary record of it.

B9. _____. "The Past, Present, and Future of Dime Novel Scholarship." DNR 54 (1985) 76-83. A narrative commentary on secondary sources for the dime novel, some observations on research projects that should be undertaken, and a selective bibliography of dime novel secondary sources.

B10. Dizer, John T., Jr. "Edward Stratemeyer, Tom Swift and the Syndicate." DNR 53 (1985) 2-11. Text of a lecture delivered to the Friends of the Colgate University Library on April 29, 1984. For a rather general audience but informative and with some comments on juvenile mystery series.

B11. Godfrey, Lydia S. "Brotherly Love—The Story of the Publishing Rivalry of George and Norman Munro." DNR 54 (1985) 59-65. On the competition between two major nineteenth-century dime novel publishers who were also brothers. See especially for information on the Old Sleuth and Old Cap Collier.

B12. _____. "Plus, Perseverance and Pressure: A Study of Dime Novel Authors and Their Craft." DNR 54 (1985) 18-23. On the writing methods of authors such as William Wallace Cook, St. George Rathborne, and Frederick Van Rensselaer Day.

B13. *Golden Perils.* Ed./Pub. Howard Hopkins, 5 Milliken Mills Road, Scarboro, ME 04074. Magazine on the pulps, published bi-monthly. 2 issues published in 1985 (Vol. 1, Nos. 1 and 2). First issue not seen, but appropriate material in 1:2 will be included in this bibliography.

B14. Goulart, Ron. "The Pulpwood Private Eyes." TCBG, 28 Sept 84, pp. 20, 22, 26. Illus. *Black Mask,* Race Williams, the Continental Op, Sam Spade, and others. A nostalgic survey of pulp magazine detectives.

B15. Hoppenstand, Gary; Garyn G. Roberts; and Ray B. Brown. "Monstrous Crimes of Deformity: The Defective Detective Lives On." In *More Tales of the Defective Detective in the Pulps* (Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1985), pp. 1-8. The defects of the detectives in this collection of stories from *Dime Mystery Magazine* are physical (hemophilia, bodily deformities). The authors, in their introduction, link the physically defective detective to the hero as someone "different" from other people. A debatable connection and one that is not made any stronger by the rambling structure of the essay.

B16. Isobel, Allan J. "MacKinlay Kantor—The Pulp Years." *Echoes* 18 (April 85) 15-17. Isobel gleans comments on Kantor's writing for the pulps from a 1944 collection of his short stories. According to this information, Kantor was a regular contributor to *Detective Fiction Weekly.*

B17. *Kerlan Collection Manuscripts and Illustrations for Children's Books.* Not seen. Gil O'Gara reports in YL 29 (Sept/Oct 85) 2 on this checklist of nearly 5,000 titles in the University of Minnesota's Kerlan Collection. Indexed by author, title, illustrator, editor, translator, or subject. O'Gara assumes that this is "basically a 432-page 'card catalog'" of the library's holdings.

B18. King, Fred L. "Gilbert Patten's Thirteens." DNR 56 (1985) 96-97. A note on the importance of the number thirteen for Gilbert Patten, who used the pen name Burt L. Standish.

B19. Lapin, Geoffrey S. "Stratemeyer Syndicate Acquired by Simon & Schuster." YL 24 (Nov/Dec 84) 15. News report with information on continued publication of series titles.

B20. McGrath, Anne. "Eye on Publishing: Stratemeyer Finds New Home at Simon & Schuster." WLB 59 (1984/85) 268-69. News item apparently based on interview with Ron Buehl, vice-president and publisher of S&S's junior division. Plans for Nancy Drew, Hardy Boys, and other series described.

B21. Murray, Will. "Pandering to Perversion in the Pulps." In *Shudder Stories,* No. 1 (June 84), pp. 46-51. A jaundiced and humorous look at the "weird menace" or "shudder" pulps, with extensive quotations from comments by artist Glaves Gladney and writers Wyatt Blassingame, Bruno Fischer, Erle Stanley Gardner, and others. (REB)

B22. *Nemesis Incorporated.* Ed./Pub. Frank Lewandowski, 2438 S. Highland Ave., Berwyn, IL 60402. Quarterly/$3 per issue. Covers all aspects of pulp history and collecting; written by and for enthusiasts. Crime/mystery pulps receive their fair share of attention. (REB)

B23. Parnell, Frank H., compiler (with the assistance of Mike Ashley). *Monthly Terrors: An Index to the Weird Fantasy Magazines Published in the United States and Great Britain.* Foreword by Peter Haining. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985. xxvii + 602pp. Author, artist, and editor indexes and appendices as follows: Series and Connected Stories, Honorable Mentions, Chronological Listing of Magazines, and Geographical Listing of Magazines. The introduction includes a historical survey for the years 1919-83. The magazines are listed alphabetically, with title/author listings by issue and cover artist given where identified. Review: *Choice,* Sept 85, p. 84.

B24. Parten, James E. "Perils of the Pulps, An Exploratory Note." *Echoes* 15 (Oct. 84) 21-23. Some preliminary observations on a common pulp plot device, the "deathtrap" situation, which Parten explains is a catch-all phrase for perilous, melodramatic situations which threaten the hero's life.

B25. *The Pulp Collector.* Ed./Pub. John P. Gunnison, 8417 Carrollton Parkway, New Carrollton, MD 20784. $3/issue. Like *Nemesis Incorporated,* a magazine for pulp fans by an enthusiastic pulp collector. Mystery-related subjects are frequently included.

B26. Rogers, Denis R. "Literary Life of Edward S. Ellis." DNR 54 (1985) 74-76. A literary biography of Ellis, with the observation that he "became extremely interested in detective stories and wrote a large number."

B27. "Talks with the Authors." YL 25 (Jan/Feb 85) 3-7. Transcript of interviews with Hal Goodwin (a.k.a. John Blaine of the Rick Brant series) and Sam and Beryl Epstein (a.k.a. Bruce Campbell of the Ken Holt series). Taped on June 23, 1984 on the La Crosse campus of the University of Wisconsin.

B28. Tipton, Gene. "Allan Vaughan Elston." *Echoes* 18 (April 85) 26-28. A discussion of Elston's record of publishing for the pulps, including *Detective Fiction Weekly* and *Dime Detective.*

B29. Tonik, Albert. "August Lenniger's Ledgers." *Echoes* 15 (Oct 84) 7-11. August Lenniger was an agent who represented many writers for the pulps. Tonik has transcribed entries from the ledgers for 1935-38, 1940-43, 1945-55. Entries for pulp mystery stories are for the years 1935-38 only; the later entries are for Western stories.

B30. _____. "Census of the Pulp Magazines." *Echoes* 21 (Oct 85) 7-9, 13. Circulation figures for pulp magazines for the years 1935, 1940, 1945. Figures are not always broken down by title and may be listed by publishing "group" (i.e., Dell Fiction Group, Street and Smith, etc.). Figures were taken from the N. W. Ayer & Son Directory of Newspapers and Periodicals.

B31. _____. "John Nanovic: Editor." TPC 1:2 (Fall 85) 40-54. Illus. with photographs. Transcription of a talk given at Pulpcon 11 (July 1982) by the man who was editor of *The Shadow, Doc Savage,* and other Street & Smith pulps 1930-43. Covers the origin of *The Shadow,* with comments on other Street & Smith magazines. The question-and-answer session at the end brings out a fascinating and wide-ranging assortment of facts and anecdotes. (REB)

B32. Tymn, Marshall B.; and Mike Ashley, eds. *Science Fiction, Fantasy, and Weird Fiction Magazines.* Introduction by Thomas B. Clareson. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1985. xxx + 970pp. With an Index of Major Cover Artists, a magazine publishing chronology, a bibliography of secondary sources, and an index of names and magazines. An encyclopedia-format survey of English and foreign-language pulp magazines, covering roughly the dates 1882 to the early 1980s. Each entry has a descriptive essay, information sources (including location source of magazines), and a publication history. There are some exclusions: while some "general" magazines are included (for their historical or associational importance), *Blue Book,* which would seem to fit this category, is not; hero pulp series are excluded if a "natural explanation is offered for bizarre events,"

while weird fiction titles, in which a natural explanation often exists for the eccentric events, are included because their exclusion might arouse "confusion." This text complements Cook's *Mystery, Detective and Espionage Magazines* (Greenwood, 1983).

B33. Vaughan, David K. "American Social Values in Juvenile Series Fiction." YL 25 (Jan/Feb 85) 12-13. Observations on the implicit social values in juvenile fiction and their effect on characterization, plot, and setting.

B33A. Winstanley, F. H. "The Pulps." In A18 #5, July 84, pp. 43-55. Survey article; mentions both detective and "weird menace" pulps. (REB)

B34. Woodworth, Fred. "Random Shots." MASR 15 (Fall 84) 2-11. A report on the 1984 series fiction conference at La Crosse, Wisconsin, with reports on comments by Hal Goodwin ("John Blaine"), Samuel Epstein ("Bruce Campbell"), and Margaret Sutton.

B. Magazines and Single-Character Series

"The Avenger"

C1. Carr, Nick. "The Avenger in Retrospect." GP 1:2 (Nov 85) 15-17. Illus. A brief survey of critical articles on The Avenger and comments on characters. Carr also recommends his favorite Avenger novels.

C2. Hopkins, Howard. "The Tepperman Avenger." GP 1:2 (Nov 85) 25-26. On the Avenger novels authored by Emile C. Tepperman.

"Beverly Gray"

C3. Abreu, John E. "Beverly Gray: Juvenile Soap." YL 21 (May/June 84) 3-8, 20; YL 22 (July/Aug 84) 5-10. The Beverly Gray series is discussed as a fictional counterpart to the radio soaps of the '30s and as suspense stories with mystery and detection elements.

"'Big Nose' Serrano"

C4. Murray, Will. "The Immortal 'Big Nose' Serrano." TPC 1:1 (Spring 85) 17-19. On the pulp career of gang lord Serrano, whose exploits were published in *Gangster Stories, Greater Gangster Stories,* and *The Gang Magazine* during the 1930s. Series written by Anatole France Feldman.

Black Mask

See A86, B3, B9, B14, C40, D35, D128, D193.

"Captain Satan"

C5. Carr, Wooda N. ("Nick"). "The Devil You Say!" *Nemesis Incorporated,* No. 20, Aug 85, pp. 8-27. Illus. Survey of the Captain Satan pulp novels (1938), with checklist. Illustrated with reproductions of covers and interior illustrations. (REB)

"Connie Blair"

C6. Holbrook, Don. "Connie Blair: The Girl Ken Holt." MASR 14 (Summer 84) 20-28. Illus. Mystery/adventure series with a young heroine, written by "Betsy Allen" (Elizabeth Allen Cavanna) and published by Grosset & Dunlap 1948-58. A paperback edition was issued by Tempo Books during the 1960s. Biographical information on the author is included, and Holbrook contrasts the series with other girls' series books.

"Doc Savage"

See also C40, D199.

C7. Bonner, Paul H., Jr. "Profile." SSB 1:7 (Summer 85) 13-14. Not a profile of Bonner but a first-person account by him of how Condé Nast licensed Bantam Books to publish the Doc Savage novels. (RS)

C8. Lai, Rick. "The Brothers Zaroff." *Echoes* 21 (Oct 85) 41-44. Lai suggests that General Zaroff of Richard O'Connell's short story "The Most Dangerous Game" (1925) may offer a clue to the ancestry of Count Ramadoff, villain appearing in the Doc Savage novel *The Fantastic Island* (1935).

C9. _____. "The Fate of the Golden Man." GP 1:2 (Nov 85) 10-14. Illus. On the Doc Savage Nazi Germany adventures.

"Dr. Zeng"

C10. Carr, Nick. "The Amazing Dr. Zeng." *Echoes* 18 (April 85) 36-40. A profile based on three of the Dr. Zeng detective novels published in *Popular Detective.*

"Don Diavolo"

C11. Carr, Nick. "Presenting the Prestidigitator Don Diavolo." TPC 1:1 (Spring 85) 20-28. Pulp series by "Stewart Towne" (Clayton Rawson) profiled. With a series checklist.

Double Detective

C12. Berch, Victor. [*Double Detective:* A Checklist.] *Echoes* 11 (Jan 84) 7. A listing of issues by volume, number, month, and year.

5 Detective Novels

C13. Sampson, Robert. "The Second Time Around." TPC 1:1 (Spring 85) 5-11. Illus. A profile of a pulp reprint magazine, published by Standard Magazines 1950-53.

"G-8"

C14. Murray, Will. "G-8's Weird War." CBG, 25 May 84, pp. 50, 52. Illus. A history of the pulp magazine air ace series. Reference to Fu Manchu "clone," Dr. Chu Ling. List of G-8 novels in paperback.

G-Men Detective

C15. Carr, Nick. "A Portrait of Dan Fowler & G-Man." *Echoes* 15 (Dec 84) 6-25. A profile of the main characters and story elements of the Dan Fowler G-Man series.

"The Green Lama"

C16. Carr, Nick. "Om! Ma-Ni Pad-Me-Hum!" *Echoes* 19 (June 85) 20-30; [Part 2] *Echoes* 20 (Aug 85) 11-23. Illustrated with pulp cover and interior drawings. Photo of Ken Crossen (as "Richard Foster," author of the Green Lama series). Character profiles of the Green Lama and his chief associates. Some biographical material on Crossen and information on the writing and publication of the series. With a checklist of the stories.

"Guy and Ghost"

C17. Sampson, Robert. "Guy's Ghost." *Echoes* 22 (Dec 85) 34-38. Profile of psychic detective series by Lester Griswold, featuring Guy and an authentic ghost detective, M. Guillaume, former French prefect of police. Five cases are listed in the checklist and appeared in *The Popular Magazine* in 1909.

"Hal Keen"

C18. Erickson, Cliff. "The Hal Keen Series." MASR 16 (Summer 85) 24-27. Illustrated with jacket art. Series written by Percy Keese Fitzhugh (as "Hugh Lloyd") and published by Grosset & Dunlap 1931-34. Comments on the series as mysteries and on format variants.

"The Hardy Boys"

See also B5, B20.

C19. Erickson, Cliff. "The Complete Collector's Hardy Boys Formats." MASR 14 (Summer 84) [11]-[14]. Illus. Descriptions of the changing formats of the Hardy Boys series.

C20. Summar, Donald J. "Leslie MacFarlane's *Secret Warning;* or, The Hardy Boys All At Sea." YL 30 (Nov/Dec 85) 3-6. A detailed summary of *The Secret Warning,* which Summar characterizes as "one of the most poorly written books in the series." Part 1 of a two-part article. This part covers pp. 1-100 ("The Paper Chase").

"Jerry Todd," "Poppy Ott," et al.

C21. Lee, Eugene. "Leo Edwards. . .as remembered by his son." YL 21 (May/June 84) 9-10. Edwards's son talks about the sources for his father's plots. In an appended piece, "Eugene Lee: A Man on the Go," p. 11, Willis J. Potthoff talks about Eugene Lee's current activities. With a photograph of a Florida antebellum home restored by Lee.

C22. [Leo Edwards]. YL 29 (Sept/Oct 85) 3-10. Contents: Thomas Graham Lee, "Scenes with Leo Edwards," p. 3 [two family photographs of Leo Edwards, with commentary by his grandson]; Willis J. Potthoff, "A Once Popular Expression: 'Illustrated by Bert Salg'," pp. 4-8 [on the illustrator for many of the Edwards books; contains rare examples of Salg's work and two letters from Leo Edwards to Salg]; Bob Chenu, "The Leo Edwards Saga: The Poppy Ott Series," pp. 9-10 [a checklist with commentary].

C23. "A Salute to Leo Edwards: The Centennial of His Birth 1884-1984." YL 23 (Sept/Oct 84) 3-7. Contents: Eugene Lee, "Something About Birthdays," p. 2 [Edwards's son reminisces about a 1927 birthday party for Leo Edwards]; Keith Cochran, "Leo Edwards: An Attempted Analysis," pp. 4-5 [informal comments on Edwards and his series books]; Bob Chenu, "G&D's Format Variations in Leo Edwards Books," pp. 6-7; Willis Potthoff, "The 'First' Cruise of the Sally Ann," pp. 19-22, footnote in letter (Potthoff), p. 17 [on an early Edwards story and related matters].

"Jerry Wade, the Candid Camera Kid"

C24. Murray, Will. "The Strange Case of Johnny Wells." *Echoes* 20 (Aug 85) 24-26. Murray speculates that the Jerry Wade series may have continued in *Thrilling Detective* as the "Johnny Wells" series.

"Johnny Saxon"

C25. Murray, Will. "Johnny Saxon, Pulpster for Hire." *Echoes* 21 (Oct 85) 19-22. Series background; includes a list of Saxon novels.

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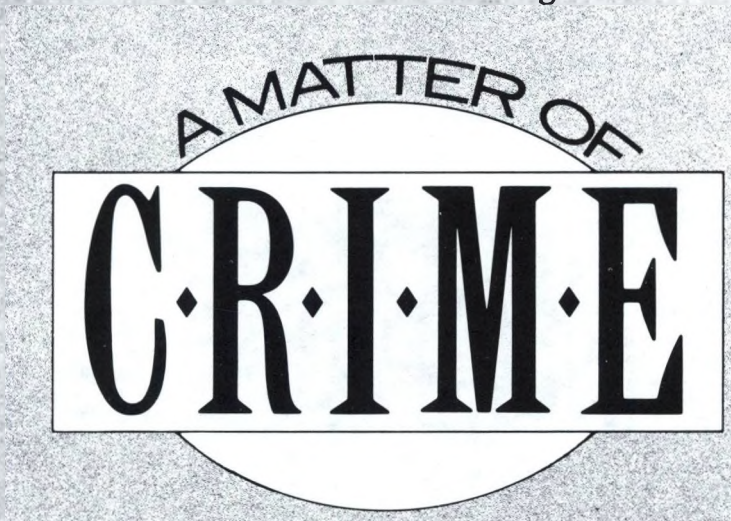

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Int: YL 25 (Jan/Feb 85) 7-10
[Photo of Margaret Sutton].

"Ken Holt"
See B27, B34.

"The Lone Ranger"

C26. Murray, Will. "The Lone Ranger Rides the Pages of the Pulps." CBG, 11 May 84, pp. 20-22. Illus. Includes checklist of Pinnacle Books reprints of pulp series. Murray relates the history of the Lone Ranger character, who "righted wrongs, solved mysteries, and brought criminals to justice." Murray compares the radio, pulp, and hardcover versions.

"Madge Sterling"

C27. Lapin, Geoffrey S. "Carolyn Keene, pseud.: Madge Sterling, Penny Nichols, and Connie Carl and The Mystery of Ann Wirt." YL 29 (Sept/Oct 85) 14-15. Illus. Mildred Wirt ("Carolyn Keene") also wrote these mystery series, "Madge Sterling" as by Ann Wirt and "Penny Nichols" as by Joan Clark.

Magic Carpet Magazine
See C52.

"The Moon Man"

C27A. Davis, Frederick G. *The Night Nemesis: The Complete Adventures of the Moon Man.* Vol. I. Ed. Garyn G. Roberts and Gary Hoppenstand. Bowling Green, OH: Purple Prose Press, 400 Napoleon Road #402, 1985. 470pp. Illus. $30. Not seen but cited and reviewed by Gil O'Gara in YL 28 (July/Aug 85) 18. The reviewer notes that there are a "handful of essays relating to this character written by well-known authorities."

"Motor Boys"

C28. Chenu, Bob. "A Look at the Motor Boys Series." YL 20 (March/April 84) 3-4. A checklist of the series with description of bindings.

C29. Lauterbach, Ed. "In the Tracks of the Great Detective." YL 20 (March/April 84) 4-5. A look at mystery and detection elements in *The Motor Boys on the Wing* as an example of their importance in the series. Lauterbach compares the deduction from "mysterious bicycle tracks" to Sherlock Holmes's deductions from "footprints, hoofprints, and other tracks."

"Nancy Drew"
See also B5, B20.

C30. Farah, David. "Basic Nancy Drew." Nos. XIV to XXIV of this long-running column of bibliographic data on the Nancy Drew series were published in *Yellowback Library* in 1984 and 1985. All of the 1985 columns (Nos. XX-XXIV) relate Farah's experiences at the 1984 juvenile series convention at La Crosse, Wisconsin. No installments of the column were published in the first three issues of 1986.

C31. _____. *Farah's Guide to the Nancy Drew Mystery Series.* Privately printed. Grand Blanc, MI, 1985. 224pp. Spiral bound. A bibliographic description in chronological order of over "2,100 individual printings of Nancy Drews #1 through #41 produced between 1930 and 1965." The *Guide* also has a number of special sections relating to such topics as bindings, dust jackets, print runs, and Cameo editions. Not seen but should be an essential item for the collector of juvenile series and for research.

"Nick Carter"
See also B8.

C32. Cox, J. Randolph. "The Dime Novel Detective and His Elusive Trail: Twenty Years of Dime Novel Research." DNR 54 (1985) 90-94. Cox describes how he has tried to "set the record straight" on the Nick Carter phenomenon. A model essay on scholarly methodology which demonstrates the exacting standards which Cox has set for himself and for the field. This essay can be read with profit by any scholar working on popular literature and should be a basic text in modern research literature.

C33. _____. "Nick Carter, Fact or Fiction: The Historical Context of the American

Dime Novel." DNR 54 (1985) 34-38, 51-55. On the "uses of reality" in the detective dime novel, with particular attention to the Nick Carter series.

"Old Cap Collier"
See B11.

"Old Sleuth"
See B11.

"Operator 5"
See B4.

Oriental Stories
See C52.

"Penny Nichols"
See C27.

"The Phantom Detective"

C34. Murray, Will. "Who Wrote the Phantom Detective?" *Echoes* 17 (Feb 85) 23-25. Murray clarifies some of the missing "pieces" in the multiple, pseudonymous authorship of the pulp series.

"The Purple Scar"

C35. Murray, Will. "Mask of the Scar." *Echoes* 13 (June 84) 14-15. Note on *Murder in Gold,* a Purple Scar novel that appeared in *Exciting Detective,* March 1942.

"Rick Brant"
See B27, B34.

Scientific Detective Monthly

C36. Lowndes, Robert A. W. "The Unique Mystery Magazine: Hugo Gernsback's *Scientific Detective Monthly.*" Part VIII (TAD 17:103-8); Part IX (TAD 17:194-200); Part X (TAD 18:100-9). The final issues of 1930 (Aug, Sept, Oct) are profiled.

"Secret Agent X"

C37. Johnson, Tom. "City of Madness." *Echoes* 11 (Jan 84) 8-13. On the Secret Agent X series novel *City of Madness,* which Johnson considers to be the best story in the series. In an "Afterword," Johnson lists amounts paid the author for a number of the stories.

"Sexton Blake"
See A18 [#16, June 85, pp. 38-45].

"The Shadow"
See also B31.

C38. Johnson, Tom. "Code Name: Mariam." *Nemesis Incorporated,* No. 18, Sept 84, pp. 22-26. Illus. Character sketch of a character from one of the Belmont paperback Shadow novels written by Dennis Lynds. (REB)

C39. Lai, Rick. "Dr. Rodil Mocquino." *Echoes* 17 (Feb 85) 12-14. A discussion of the series appearances of villain Mocquino.

C40. _____. "The Shadow and the KKK." *Echoes* 17 (Feb 85) 4-5. Note on the role of the KKK in the Shadow novel *The White Column.* Some references to other KKK appearances in a special *Black Mask* issue (1923) and in a Doc Savage story (1933).

C41. _____. "The Woman Who Hated the Shadow." *Nemesis Incorporated,* No. 19, April 85, pp. 8-19. Illus. "Irregular"-style article connecting a character in the Bulldog Drummond novels with a similar character in the Shadow pulp novels. Contains an extended survey of the Drummond books, with plot summaries. (REB)

C42. Murray, Will. "The Man with the Shadow's Face." CBG, 13 July 84, pp. 20, 22-23. Illus. Biography of the actor/model who posed for illustrations for the Shadow and Spider pulps. Information on pulp artists.

"The Skipper"

C43. Hullar, Link; and Will Murray. "The Fighting Fury." TPC 1:1 (Spring 85) 29-39. Illus. Summary of career of the Skipper, Captain John Fury, whose character is modeled on Doc Savage but "without the high moral tone" of the parent series. Written by Laurence Donovan under the pseudonym Wallace Brooker.

Spicy Mystery Stories

C44. Miller, Steve. [An Index to *Spicy Mystery Stories*]. *Echoes* 11 (Jan 84) 5-6. A listing, by issue, of the cover story novel, where known.

"The Spider"

C45. Carr, Nick. "Spider Notes." *Echoes* 18 (April 85) 47-48. Notes on the pulp series.

Strange Stories

C46. Jones, Bob. "Uncanny But Not Canny." *Echoes* 19 (June 85) 17-19. A narrative description of the contents and artwork of *Strange Stories*, a Popular Publications pulp.

Thrilling Detective

C47. Tipton, Gene. "Remembrances of *Thrilling Detective*." *Echoes* 11 (Jan 84) 14-17. Illus. A profile of the contents, with commentary on writers and fiction.

"Tod Moran"

C48. Schorr, Jack. "The Creator of Tod Moran: Howard Pease, 1894-1974." DNR 54 (April 85) 27-28. A short profile of Pease and of the Tod Moran mystery series, with a checklist of titles.

"Tom Quest"

C49. Crandall, Rick. "Tom Quest Varieties." YL 24 (Nov/Dec 84) 12-13. A checklist of series titles with discussion of editions and variants.

C50. Woodworth, Fred. "The Tom Quest Series." MASR 1 (Summer 80) 21-28; reprinted in MASR 15 (Fall 84) 21-28. A mystery/adventure series written by Fran Striker. A description of the series narratives.

Undercover Detective

C51. Berch, Victor A.; and Leonard A. Robbins. "An Index to *Undercover Detective*." *Echoes* 19 (June 85) 6-7. A title and author index to the three issues of *Undercover Detective* known to Berch and Robbins.

Weird Tales

C52. Jaffrey, Sheldon; and Fred Cook, compilers. *The Collector's Index to Weird Tales*. Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1985. 162pp. Illus. The index by issue to *Weird Tales* duplicates the index in Parnell (see II-A) and would appear to be, then, of interest only to specialists who are not interested in the other indexes provided by Parnell. Jaffrey and Cook, however, also furnish indexes to *Oriental Stories* and to *Magic Carpet Magazine* (both omitted by Parnell) so that this volume becomes a useful supplement to Parnell.

III. Authors

ADAMS, CLEVE F.
See A47, A78.

AIKEN, JOAN
See A111.

AIRD, CATHERINE
Int: *Clues* 5:1 (Spring/Summer 84) 73-90.

ALBERT, MARVIN H.
Ref: Reilly 2.

ALDANOV, MARK

D1. DeMarr, Mary Jean. "An Earlier Spy Who Came In from the Cold: Mark Aldanov's *Nightmare and Dream*." *Clues* 6:1 (Spring/Summer 85) 97-106. Article on a novel published in 1954-55 in Russian, in serial form, and in an English translation in 1957. Aldanov is a Russian emigré historian who used the novel of espionage as a vehicle for commenting on the contemporary world situation. DeMarr sees the novel as particularly interesting to students of the spy novel for its portrait of the professional spy in the period of the Cold War.

ALEXANDER, DAVID
Ref: Reilly 2.

ALLAIN, MARCEL; AND SOUVESTRE, PIERRE
See A115.

ALLEN, BETSY
See C6.

ALLEN, GRANT
Ref: Reilly 2.

ALLINGHAM, MARGERY
See A6.

AMBLER, ERIC
See also A62, A129.

D2. Ambler, Eric. *Here Lies: An Autobiography*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985. 234pp. Written in a chatty style, *Here Lies* takes Ambler's life up to the end of World War II: his childhood, education, work in an advertising agency, the writing of his first couple of books, service as a motorcycle instructor in the Army, then finally his hooking on with a film production outfit to make films for the war effort. Review: TLS, 2 Aug 85, pp. 839-40. (Frank Denton)

AMES, DELANO
Ref: Reilly 2.

"ANONYMOUS"

D3. Greene, Doug[las E.]. "Giving Flesh to a Ghost, or The Lady Detective." TPP 6:2 (Winter 84/85) 9-11. Bibliographic commentary on *Revelations of a Lady Detective* (London) and its date(s) of publication.

ANTHONY, EVELYN
See A33.

ARD, WILLIAM
Ref: Reilly 2.

ARNAUD, G.-J.
See A25.

ASIMOV, ISAAC
See A89.

ATWOOD, MARGARET
See A62.

AVALLONE, MICHAEL
See also A89.

D4. "Detective Fiction: Advanced Seminar on the Works of Michael Avallone." *The Not So Private Eye* 11:1/2 (1984) [8]-[11]. A commentary on the style of Avallone's *The Case of the Violent Virgin* (Ace, 1957), couched in the form of a university final examination. A very funny analysis of certain stylistic peculiarities of Avallone. This kind of serious criticism masquerading as humor is infrequent in American critical studies but will be especially appreciated by students of the French school of game as criticism, Oulipopo.

D5. Lachman, Marvin. "High Noon: Michael Avallone and the Presidency." TPP 6:3 (Fall 85) 11-12. Novels of Avallone in which the plot crisis involves the President of the United States. Ed Noon's patriotism leads him into situations in which he "reenacts, on a global scale, the role of Gary Cooper as the beleaguered sheriff in 'High Noon'."

AVELINE, CLAUDE

D6. Jacobs, Gabriel. "A Pseudo *Roman Policier* of the Early Thirties: *La Double Mort de Frederic Belot*." *Forum for Modern Language Studies* (Scotland) 20:2 (1984) 143-53. First published in 1932, Aveline's *Double Mort* was poorly received critically at the time but may now be seen as an experimental detective story prefiguring certain innovations of the later *nouveau roman*. This was the first *roman policier* published by Grasset, and in his introduction Aveline attempted to give some critical respectability to the genre.

BABSON, MARIAN
See A38.

BACKUS, JEAN L.
Ref: *Writer* 97:9 (Sept 84) 1-19

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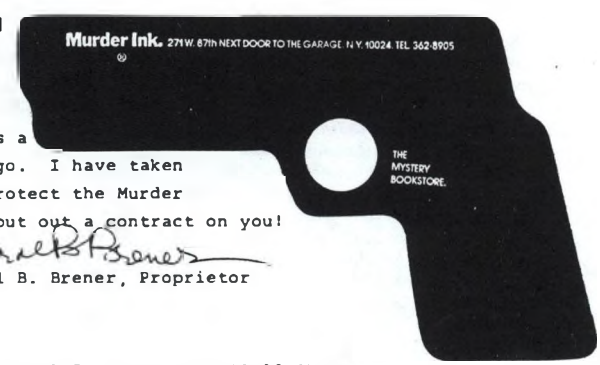

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[motivating characters].

BAGLEY, DESMOND
See A111.

BAILEY, H. C.
See also A9.

D7. Sarjeant, William A. S. "'The Devil Is with Power': Joshua Clunk and the Fight for Right." TAD 17:3 (1984) 270–79. Illus. H. C. Bailey's Joshua Clunk as an anti-hero in the Melville Davisson Post Randolph Mason tradition. The article, in spite of this theoretical grounding, is basically a series of portraits of Clunk and his associates. With a checklist of the cases.

BALL, JOHN
Int: *Clues* 6:2 (Fall/Winter 85) 146–50.
See also A97.

BALLARD, W. T.

D8. Traylor, James L. "Tod Ballard: An Appreciation." In *Hollywood Troubleshooter: W. T. Ballard's Bill Lenox Stories* (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1985), pp. 1–6. Photos. A biography of Ballard, with discussion of his several private eye series. In addition to this critical introduction, a previously unpublished article by Ballard on writing for the pulps, and five Bill Lenox pulp stories, this well-edited collection also includes a comprehensive bibliography of Ballard's work (pp. 133–56), with a portfolio of reproductions of covers for paperback editions of several of his novels.

D9. _____. "W. T. Ballard: Detective and Pulp Master." *Vintage Collectibles*, No. 11, Feb 85, pp. 1, 3, 5. Informative account of W. T. Ballard's life and professional work. Origins of his Bill Lenox (Hollywood detective) character are given. Seven of Ballard's novels are briefly addressed, and a comprehensive checklist of his magazine, paperback, and hardcover fiction is given. A valuable article containing much biographical detail. (RS)

BALLINGER, BILL S.
See A103.

BANKIER, WILLIAM
Ref: Reilly 2

BARDIN, JOHN FRANKLIN
See A27.

BARNARD, ROBERT
Int: TAD 17:3 (1984) 290–94.

D10. White, William. "Robert Barnard: A First Bibliography and a Note." TAD 17:3 (1984) 295–99. A bibliography of primary and secondary sources, with a biographical preface.

BARR, ROBERT
Ref: Reilly 2.

BARRY, JOE
See A11.

BEAUMONT, CHARLES

D11. Nolan, William F. "Charles Beaumont: A Bibliographical Note and a Checklist." TAD 18:1 (1984) 41–46. A short biography prefaces this complete checklist of Beaumont's work. The crime-suspense stories are asterisked in the bibliography.

BECKFORD, WILLIAM
See A116.

BEHM, MARC
See A54.

BELLEM, ROBERT LESLIE
See A47.

BENSON, O. G.

D12. Lyles, William. "*Cain's Woman.*" *Paperback Forum*, No. 1, 1983/1984, pp. 38–42. Benson's original private eye novel, *Cain's Woman*, was published by Dell in 1960. The article contains the texts of two letters from Benson in which he talks about the editorial changes which, he thinks, damaged the novel; the never-published sequel; and the three writers whom he most admires, John D. MacDonald, Charles Williams, and Raymond Chandler. It was MacDonald who referred Benson to editor Knox Burger at Dell.

BERGMAN, ANDREW
See A12.

BINGHAM, JOHN
See A111.

BLAKE, NICHOLAS
See A9, A18 [#20, Oct 85, pp. 12–18].

BLASSINGAME, WYATT
See B21.

BLOCH, ROBERT

D13. Compère, Daniel. "Alice au pays des maléfices" [Alice in the land of evil spells]. Block often uses examples from his own mystery fiction.

In A99, pp. 99–104. On Bloch and Fredric Brown and several of their common narrative obsessions: paradox, the role of the past, madness, shifts in point of view, dreams, detective fiction as a game of chess. A disjointed but provocative essay.

D14. Guérif, François. "Robert Bloch: du noir gothique au polar" [From the Gothic *série noire* to detective fiction]. In A99, pp. 105–8. A study of several of Bloch's novels as examples of classic hardboiled fiction.

BLOCK, LAWRENCE
See also A47.

D15. Block, Lawrence. "Fiction." *Writer's Digest*. Monthly column on writing fiction.

BOILEAU-NARCEJAC
Ref: Reilly 2.

D16. Beniamino, M.; and D. R. Roche. "Le Roman policier psychologique ou l'enquêteur, victime morale de son enquête: Boileau-Narcejac" [The psychological detective novel or the investigator, moral victim of his investigation]. *Enigmatika*, No. 26 (Jan 85), pp. 32–40. In the problem novel, an order is upset by someone, but the investigator is not implicated and the original order is eventually restored. In the psychological suspense novel, the disorder intensifies in the course of the work, implicating the investigator. Order may finally be restored, but the investigator has been affected and changed by the investigation, and there is no return to an original state. Using this formulation, the authors test their hypothesis in the novels of Boileau-Narcejac.

BORGES, JORGE LUIS

D17. Bedell, Jeanne F. "Borges' Study in Scarlet: 'Death and the Compass' as Detective Fiction and Literary Criticism." *Clues* 6:2 (Fall/Winter) 109–22. A discussion of Borges's story "Death and the Compass," in which the criminal is the artist and the detective the critic, misinterpreting the artfully deceptive fictions of the criminal. Bedell sees this story as both a tribute to formulaic detective fiction and a revelation of its limitations. There is some comparison of Borges's story to Doyle's *A Study in Scarlet*.

BOUCHER, ANTHONY

White, Phyllis; and Lawrence White. *Boucher: A Family Portrait*. Berkeley, CA: Berkeley Historical Society, 1985. Photographs. 20pp. Wraps. Boucher recalled by his wife and son.

BRACKETT, LEIGH
Ref: Reilly 2.

BRADDON, MARY ELIZABETH
See A92, A121, A124, A126.

BRAHMS, CARYL

D18. Kisselgoff, Anna. "A British Whodunit Spoofs the Post-Diaghilev Era." *New York Times Arts and Leisure*, 17 Feb 85, pp. H-21, H-28. A review-essay on *A Bullet in the Ballet* by the *New York Times* dance critic.

D19. Sherrin, Ned. "Preface." In *A Bullet in the Ballet* (New York: International Polygonics, Ltd., 1984), pp. [1]–[8]. Sherrin quotes from Brahms's unpublished papers in this informative survey of her life and works.

BRAND, CHRISTIANNA
Ref: A30 [*Green for Danger*, w/intro by Marian Babson].

BRANDNER, GARY
See A89.

BREEN, JON L.
Ref: Reilly 2.

BRETT, MICHAEL
Ref: Reilly 2.

BRETT, SIMON
Ref: Cannon, AHMM (July 84) 148–50

[photo].
Int: *Los Angeles Times,* 1 June 85, Part V, pp. 1, 7 [photo]. (JLA)

D20. Kelley, George. "The Stages of Death: Simon Brett's Charles Paris Mysteries." TPP 6:2 (Winter 84/85) 15-16. A brief survey of Brett's fiction.

BROOKER, WALLACE
(PSEUD. OF LAURENCE DONOVAN)
See C43.

BROWN, FREDRIC
See also D13.

D21. Bourgoin, Stéphane. "Les Grands des pulps: Fredric Brown" [The great pulp writers: Fredric Brown]. *Polar* 1 (New Series, Jan-March 84) 83-85. Illus. Of particular interest for what Bourgoin claims is the first printing ever "in the world" of the original ending for *The Screaming Mimi.* Bourgoin discovered the manuscript when he visited Elizabeth Brown in Arizona and obtained permission to publish the original ending in a collection of Brown's short fiction, *Excusez mon ricanement de goule* (Editions Clancier-Guénaud). Bourgoin also mentions an uncompleted novel-length version of the short story "The Case of the Dancing Sandwiches," which was to be published in French in 1985. The unpublished version of the ending to *The Screaming Mimi,* translated into French, follows on p. 84 and the short story "Boner" on p. 85.

D22. Dennis McMillan Publications (various places of publication) is issuing a series of limited edition collections of Brown's pulp fiction. Six volumes have been published in 1984-85, as follows: *Homicide Sanitarium* (introduction by Bill Pronzini); *Before She Kills* (introduction by William F. Nolan); *Madman's Holiday* (introduction by Newton Baird); *The Case of the Dancing Sandwiches* (introduction by Lawrence Block); *The Freak Show Mysteries* (introduction by Richard A. Lupoff); *Thirty Corpses Every Thursday* (introduction by William Campbell Gault). These editions were all published in printings ranging from 300 to 375 copies and are numbered and signed by the authors of the introductions. *Homicide Sanitarium* (Dennis McMillan Publications, 1985) has also been published in a trade edition at $5.95. The introductions contain much information on Brown's work and career. William F. Nolan and William Campbell Gault knew Brown, and their essays include personal reminiscences. (REB)

D23. Nevins, Francis M., Jr. "A Checklist of the Fiction of Fredric Brown." In *Carnival of Crime: The Best Mystery Stories of Fredric Brown,* ed. Francis M. Nevins, Jr. and Martin H. Greenberg, pp. 291-314. Carbondale & Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985. Detailed listing of Brown's novels, giving first U.S. editions, first British edition, and first paperback edition; the contents of all the short-story collections, with the original magazine source of each story; and a listing of Brown's magazine fiction, arranged by magazine, with reprint appearances cited. (REB)

D23A. Pronzini, Bill. "Introduction: Dreamer in Paradox." In D23, pp. vii-xv. Biographical sketch and survey of Brown's mystery writing, both novels and short stories, pointing out strengths and shortcomings. (REB)

BROWNE, HOWARD
Ref: Reilly 2.
See also A47.

D24. Browne, Howard. "Foreword." In *The Paper Gun,* pp. 7-9. Belen, New Mexico: Dennis McMillan Publications, 1985. Brief background to the Paul Pine novels. (REB)

BRUCE, LEO

D25. Bargainnier, Earl F. "The Self-Conscious Sergeant Beef Novels of Leo Bruce." TAD 18:2 (Spring 85) 154-56, 158-59. Illus. These satirically comic versions of the classic British detective novel contain a pattern of references to writing up the case as a novel.

BRUTON, ERIC
Ref: Reilly 2

BUCHAN, JOHN
See A18 [#10, Dec 84, pp. 18-26].

BUCKLEY, WILLIAM F., JR.
Ref: Reilly 2.

BURGESS, GELETT

D26. Crawford, Dan. "Saul Ferrett Albino-detective: The First of the Realistic (and Funny) Private Eyes." TAD 18:4 (Fall 85) 380-81. Saul Ferrett appeared in eight stories published in *Judge* in 1920 and seems to prefigure some hardboiled conventions.

BURKE, THOMAS
Ref: A91 [TAD 18:1 (1985) 60-63].

BURLEY, W. J.
Ref: Cannon, AHMM, Mid-Dec 84, pp. 148-50 [photo].

BURNETT, W. R.

D27. Deloux, Jean-Pierre. "W. R. Burnett, D. H. Clarke: la loi des rues" [W. R. Burnett, D. H. Clarke: the law of the streets]. In A99, pp. 52-62. Deloux notes that both Burnett and Clarke published their first novels in 1929 and that both wrote fiction which is a sociological document on a place and time. The study of Clarke focuses on his novel *Louis Varetti* (1929), the setting of which is New York's Little Italy.

BURNS, REX
See A31.

BUTLER, GWENDOLINE
Int: TPP 6:2 (Winter 84/85) 3-5.

BUTLER, JOHN K.
See A47.

CAIN, JAMES M.
See also A44, A62, A74, A87, D249.

D28. Root, Robert L., Jr. "Hard-Boiled Tragedy: James M. Cain's Classical Design." *Clues* 5:2 (Fall/Winter 84) 48-57. On classical tragic determinism in Cain's novels. Root thinks to link Cain with the hardboiled detective writers (Hammett and Chandler), obscures the more valid association to be made with themes in Greek tragedy.

CAIN, PAUL
Ref: Reilly 2.
See also A78, A86.

CALLISON, BRIAN
See A33.

CALVINO, ITALO
See A119.

CAMPBELL, BRUCE
See B27, B34.

CANNING, VICTOR

D29. Mikhal'skaia, N. "Viktor Kanning i ego Roman *Prokhodnaia peshka.*" *Neman* (Minsk, USSR) 9 (Sept 84) 86-88. Not seen. Cited from entry in PMLA 84, 1:106, Item #4393.

CARR, JOHN DICKSON
See A18 [#15, May 85, pp. 23-32], A27.

CARRAUD, JYPE
See A52.

CAUDWELL, SARAH
Ref: Reilly 2.

CHAMBERS, PETER
See A111.

CHANDLER, RAYMOND
See also A18 [#9, Nov 84, pp. 16-23], A44, A47, A62, A74, A86, A87, A91 [TAD 17:1 (1984) 46-51], A99, A119, A125, D12, D28, D103, D105, D110, D241, D249.

D30. Ackerman, Harry. "Remembering Raymond Chandler." ILM 2:5 (Sept 85) 14-16. Ackerman was producer of *The Adventures of Philip Marlowe* on CBS in the late 1940s, and Ackerman comments on the series and on his meetings with Chandler.

D31. Apostolou, John L. "AKA Philip Marlowe." TAD 17:2 (Spring 84) 201-2. Apostolou points out that there is only one genuine Marlowe short story ("Marlowe Takes On the Syndicate") and provides a checklist of all "Chandler stories that fall in the mystery genre," indicating the original name of the protagonist and any changes it underwent in the major collections of short

stories. He also notes those stories which were adapted as Marlowe cases for the first series of Home Box Office films. A second series of adaptations is currently showing (1986).

D32. Barzun, Jacques. "The Aesthetics of the Criminous." *American Scholar* 53 (Spring 84) 239–41. On Chandler's views on crime fiction as expressed in "Casual Notes on the Mystery Novel" (see "Twelve Notes on the Mystery Story" in *The Notebooks of Raymond Chandler*, Eco Press, 1979, pp. 33–40).

D34. Bruccoli, Matthew J. "Addenda to Bruccoli's *Raymond Chandler:* Chandler's First American Publication." *Publications of the Bibliographical Society of America* 78 (1978) 3601. On the reprinting of Chandler's poem "The King" in an American book catalogue. Also contains other addenda and corrections to Bruccoli's Chandler bibliography (University of Pittsburgh, 1979).

D35. Demouzon, Alain. "Sur un air de paradoxe (A propos du polar noir, de Phil Marlowe et de Ray Chandler)" [On a paradoxical theme. . . concerning the hard-boiled detective novel, Philip Marlowe and Raymond Chandler]. In A99, pp. 30–38. Demouzon sets out to demolish some conventional theories—which he calls "racist"—on the birth of the hardboiled novel and the alleged superiority of the Americans who have its "rhythms" in their blood. Although Marlowe is seen as the archetypical private eye, Demouzon points out that he was conceived by Chandler as something quite different from the typical *Black Mask* private detective and that Chandler's style diverged markedly from the *Black Mask* model.

D36. Fontana, Ernest. "Chivalry and Modernity in Raymond Chandler's *The Big Sleep.*" *Western American Literature* 19 (1984–85) 179–86. On the failure of romance as genre against the background of the growth of the modern post-industrial city.

D37. Furness, Adrian. "Why So Popular? It's Elementary, My Dear Marlowe." *TV Times* (England), 20–27 April 84, pp. 3–6. Discussion of two of the most famous sleuths (Holmes and Marlowe) and more about Chandler than Doyle, to celebrate the arrival of two new televised series. (RCSA)

D38. Newlin, Keith. *Hardboiled Burlesque: Raymond Chandler's Comic Style.* Madison, IN: Brownstone Books, 1984. The Brownstone Chapbook Series, Vol. 1. 50pp. Wraps. $4.95. Notes and selected bibliography of primary and secondary sources. Newlin places Chandler's style in the context of the pulp writers whose work he knew and used, and shows how he moved toward a burlesque of the hard-boiled formulas on which he modeled his work. Newlin distinguishes three periods in Chandler's writing: that of *The Big Sleep* (a period of "transition"); the period of artistic maturity (from *Farewell, My Lovely* to *The Lady in the Lake*), marked by a "broadly comic style"; and the period of artistic decline, starting with *The Little Sister* (1949). A detailed, sympathetic look at Chandler's style.

D39. _____. "Raymond Chandler: A Critical and Biographical Bibliography." *Clues* 6:2 (Fall/Winter 85) 61–72. The items are not numbered, but there are about 164 items, none of them annotated. The bibliography is divided into three sections: "Critical, Biographical and Bibliographical Works"; "Raymond Chandler and Film"; and "Foreign-Language Publications." Most of the items are indexed and annotated in Albert (A1) and Skinner (A109), neither of which is mentioned in the prefatory remarks. Titles of foreign-language items are not translated.

D40. Parker, Robert B. "Introduction." In *Raymond Chandler's Unknown Thriller: The Screenplay of "Playback."* (NY: Mysterious Press, 1985), pp. xi–xxi. Biographical comments and comparison of novel and screenplay versions of *Playback*. (REB)

D41. Pepper, James. "Preface." In D40, pp. vii–ix. An account of how Chandler came to write what he considered his finest screenplay, why it was not produced, and how it finally came to be published. (REB)

D42. Ponder, Anne. "The Big Sleep." TAD 17:2 (Spring 84) 171–74. Illus. Ponder argues that it is wrong to consider *The Big Sleep* as a detective film because it violates most of the conventions of the genre and "is a romance in every structural sense but its setting." Ponder cites the often-used quote by Chandler in which he characterizes Marlowe as a "knight errant" but ignores the equally valid argument that the hardboiled genre is a contemporary version of the classic Western tale and, by setting up exclusive categories (romance vs. detective story), ignores the possibility of overlapping and even inclusive elements in genre fiction.

D43. Tani, Stefani. "Philip Marlowe e il sistema degli oggetti" [Philip Marlowe and the system of objects]. *Ponte* 4:6 (Nov/Dec 84) 86–110. Not seen. Cited from PMLA 84 1:228, Item 9939.

D44. Tate, J. O. "The Longest Goodbye: Raymond Chandler and the Poetry of Alcohol." TAD 18:4 (Fall 85) 392–96, 398–406. Illus. A thoughtful study of *The Long Goodbye* as one of the most personal and revealing of Chandler's works in which three male characters may be considered as a "splitting" of Chandler's personality.

D45. Thorpe, Edward. *Chandlertown.* London: Vermilion, 1983. New York: St. Martin's, 1984. Translated by Claudine Stora and originally published as *Chandlertown, Los Angeles, sur les traces de Philip Marlowe* (Paris: Hachette, 1985). Not seen but cited and reviewed by Jon L. Breen in TAD 18 (1984) 40. An essay in literary geography.

D46. Wolfe, Peter. *Something More Than Night: The Case of Raymond Chandler.* Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1985. No index. Bibliographical references in notes. 242pp. A literary portrait of Chandler, with detailed discussions of his fiction. Review: *Choice,* July/Aug 85, p. 1636.

CHARTERIS, LESLIE

See A18 [#14, April 85, pp. 4–12], A89.

CHARYN, JEROME

Int: PW, 26 April 85, pp. 84–85 [photo].

D47. Charyn, Jerome. "Blue Eyes and the Barber King." TAD 17:1 (Winter 84) 14–17. Photo. Charyn describes how, inspired by a reading of Ross Macdonald's *The Galton Case* and bogged down in the writing of a novel, he wrote the crime novel *Blue Eyes* and several sequels.

CHASE, JAMES HADLEY

Ref: Obituary. *Time,* 18 Feb 85, p. 105. (KLM)

See also A106, D53.

CHASTAIN, THOMAS

Ref: Reilly 2.

CHAVETTE, EUGENE

D48. Topin, Marius. "Un Précurseur: Eugene Chavette." TPP, No. 28, Sept 85, pp. 14–18; originally published in an essay entitled "Romanciers contemporains" [Contemporary novelists], place of publication not cited. A nineteenth-century author of crime novels, Chavette is superior—maintains Topin—to Gaboriau in his ability to construct a plot that builds inexorably toward its climax. His dénouements are logical, his tone is a subtle mixture of the serious and the ironic, and he has "perfected the construction of the novel of adventure." In an editor's note, some biographical information is given and secondary sources cited.

CHERNYONOK, MIKHAIL

D49. Smith, Martin Cruz. "Whodunit in Novosibirsk." NYTBR, 6 May 84, p. 9. Review of a translation of a novel by Soviet writer. Some comments on underground popularity of Christie and official translations of Simenon. Political/social function of the crime novel in Russia: crime is rare and, moreover, the authorities are "invariably victorious."

CHESTERTON, G. K.

See also A9, A18 [#12, Feb 85, pp. 4–14], A19, A30 [*The Innocence of Father Brown,* w/intro. by Elliot L. Gilbert, pp. ix–xiv].

D50. *The Chesterton Review.* Special Father Brown Issue, May 1984. Includes: G. K. Chesterton, "How to Write a Detective Story" (1925); Chesterton, "Dr. Hyde, Detective, and the White Pillars Murder" (short story); essays on Chesterton and Sayers, his influence on Boucher's Sister Ursula series, "Father Brown in Scandinavia," and other topics. Not seen; listed as described by R. E. Porter in EQMM, Dec 84, pp. 78–79.

D51. Hynes, Samuel. "A Detective and His God: G. K. Chesterton." *New Republic,* 6 Feb 84, pp. 39, 41–42. Essay-review of Chesterton's Father Brown stories and Alzina Dale's biography, *The Outline of Sanity* (Eerdsman, 1982). According to Hynes, Father Brown dispels the "nightmare" that the world is a maze without meaning.

D52. Reinsdorf, Walter. "The Perception of

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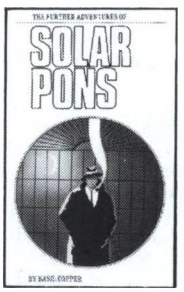

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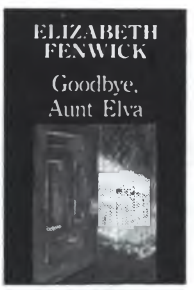

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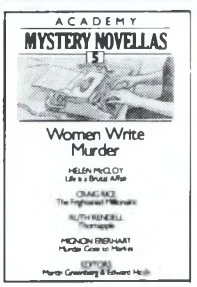

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Father Brown." *The Chesterton Review* 10:3 (Aug 84) 265-74. Not seen; cited in PMLA 84 1:106, Item 4405.

CHEYNEY, PETER

See also A3, A18 [#19, Sept 85, pp. 26-33], A100.

D53. Schweighaeuser, Jean-Paul. "Le Noir dévoyé: Cheyney et Chase" [The errant hardboiled novel: Cheyney and Chase]. In A99, pp. 63-66. A study of the French popularity of the "fake" Americans, Peter Cheyney and James Hadley Chase, in the years just after World War II.

CHILDERS, ERSKINE

See A3, A100.

CHRISTIE, AGATHA

See also A18 [#3, May 84, pp. 4-14], A30 [*The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, w/intro. by Robert Barnard, pp. ix-xv], A49, A62, A75.

D54. Ashley, Leonard R. N. "'The Sausage Machine': Names in the Detective Fiction of Dame Agatha Christie." *Literary Onomastics Studies* 11 (1984) 1-36. Not seen. Cited in PLMA 84 1:206, Item 4408.

D55. Barnard, Robert and Louise. "The Case of the Two Moving Fingers." TAD 18:3 (Summer 85) 306-8. A comparison of the American Dell and English Fontana paperback editions of Christie's *The Moving Finger* shows that the American edition contains numerous revisions of the English text. The Barnards believe that the alterations were made by Christie and that the American edition is a magazine version of the original novel.

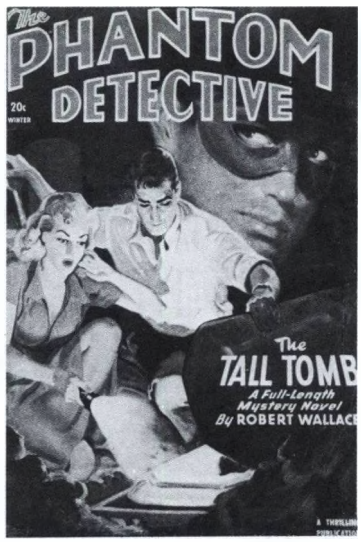
D56. Culhane, John. "The Woman with a Knack for Murder." *Reader's Digest*, Oct 85, pp. 92-97. Illus. Article on Christie's life.

D57. Hart, Anne. *The Life & Times of Miss Marple*. NY: Dodd, Mead, 1985. x + 161pp. A Marple bibliography and filmography. Selective bibliography. A portrait of the fictional sleuth.

D58. Morgan, Janet. *Agatha Christie*. London: Collins, 1984. NY: Knopf, 1985. xvii + 393pp. Index. Morgan was invited by Christie's daughter to write the biography, and she was given full access to Christie's correspondence, files, manuscripts, diaries, and family records. Morgan also interviewed numerous friends, associates, and relatives for this apparently full account of Christie's life. There are no notes or bibliography, but Morgan surveys the major book-length accounts of Christie's life in her preface. Reviews: *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 16 June 85, Books/Leisure, L-1, L-10; *Time*, 27 May 85, p. 85.

D59. Reel Jerome V., Jr. "Hold Up a Mirror." *Clues* 5:2 (Fall/Winter 84) 97-110. Reel has determined that Christie refers to more than 300 meals in her novels, plays, and short stories and that her descriptions of the food parallel changes in the society of the period in which she was writing. This leads him to conclude that Christie does "hold up a mirror to nature" in her fiction.

D60. Sanders, Dennis; and Leon Lovallo. *The Agatha Christie Companion: The Complete Guide to Agatha Christie's Life*



& Work. NY: Delacorte Press, 1984. In Part I, each of Christie's 95 books is dealt with in chronological order of publication. The authors provide biographical events surrounding the writing of each book, a brief plot synopsis, a list of the characters, bibliographic data on British and U.S. first editions, and information on adaptations (if any). The mystery books are discussed first, followed by the non-mystery titles. Part II deals with the 21 plays, 22 films, and 9 TV productions either written by Christie or adapted from her work. The final section provides a number of checklists: an alphabetical list of Christie's books, an alphabetical list of short stories (with the collections in which they appear), and checklists of the various series: Poirot, Miss Marple, Tuppence and Tommy, etc. Finally, there is a selected list of books about Christie. An enormous amount of information is presented in convenient and entertaining form. (Frank Denton/Robert E. Briney)

D61. Singer, Eliot A. "The Whodunit as Riddle: Block Elements in Agatha Christie." *Western Folklore* 43:3 (1984) 157-71. Although Christie's solutions are not "arbitrary," success in solving her mysteries depends more on deciphering the strategies behind the clues than in the clues themselves.

CLAPPERTON, RICHARD

See A11.

CLARK, DOUGLAS

Ref: Reilly 2.

CLARK, MARY HIGGINS

Int: TAD 18:3 (Summer 85) 228-32, 234-37 [photo and illus.].

CLARKE, DONALD HENDERSON

See D27.

CLASON, CLYDE B.

Ref: Reilly 2.

CLINCHAMPS, PHILIPPE DE

D62. Mermet, H. Y. "L'Oeuvre policiére de Ph. de Clinchamps / F. R. Falk / Ph. Géry" [The detective writings of...]. *Les Amis du Crime – Hors Série No. 1*, Oct 85. The first in a series of special, non-series issues of the fanzine *Les Amis du Crime*. Mermet's monograph on Ph. de Clinchamps, which he calls "An Introduction to the Man and His Work," is composed of a short biography and bibliography, résumés of the novels, comments on the writer's art, several sections on the "atmosphere," and a final section on the writer's philosophy. None of Clinchamp's detective novels is currently in print, and, according to Mermet, they are very difficult to come by. Clinchamps's intention – perhaps not unlike that of Dorothy L. Sayers – was to raise detective fiction to the level of "literature."

CLINTON-BADDELEY, V. C.

D63. Bargainnier, Earl F. "The Dr. Davie Novels of V. C. Clinton-Baddeley." TMF 8:1 (Jan/Feb 84) 8-13. Bargainnier discusses three "distinctive" qualities of the Dr. Davies series: as "late" examples of classical British mystery fiction, their humor, and their strain of misogyny.

COBURN, ANDREW

Ref: Reilly 2.

COLLINS, MAX ALLAN

Ref: Reilly 2.

D64. Estleman, Loren D. "Guest Reviewer: *True Detective*." ILM 2:4 (July 85) R5-R6. Estleman reviews Collins's *True Detective* and its sequel, *True Crime*. His review of the first is favorable, but he finds a flaw in *True Crime* in the lack of sympathy the reader may feel for the detective protagonist. Collins replies, in "Nathan Heller's Code" [ILM 2:5 (Sept 85) 7-9], that Estleman (and other critics) may be too "slavishly faithful" to "musty private-eye rituals" to appreciate what he has done with the character of Heller.

COLLINS, MICHAEL

See LYNDS, DENNIS

COLLINS, WILKIE

See also A9, A92, A30 [*The Moonstone*, w/intro by H. R. F. Keating, pp. xi-xvi], A92, A121, A124, A126.

D65. Knoepflmacher, V. C. "The Counterworld of Victorian Fiction and The Woman in White." In *The Worlds of Victorian Fiction*, ed. Jerome H. Buckley, pp. 351-69. Harvard Studies 6. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985. As much a discussion of the strain of amoral lawlessness in Dickens and other nineteenth-century novelists as it is a specific study of this topic in Collins's novel. Knoepflmacher describes an "anarchic and social counterworld" in the fiction of the period, inhabited by rebels and outcasts.

CONRAD, JOSEPH

See A129.

CONSTANTINE, K. C.

Ref: Reily 2;
Cannon, AHMM, Sept 85, pp. 150-51.

COOK, ROBIN

Int: *Séries B* [France], No. 6, Oct/Dec 1984, pp. 6-7 [photo].

See also D216.

COOK, WILLIAM WALLACE
See B12.

COSGRAVE, PATRICK
Ref: Reilly 2.

COX, ANTHONY BERKELEY
See A9.

COX, WILLIAM R.
Ref: Reilly 2.

COXE, GEORGE HARMON
See A47.

CRAIG, JONATHAN
Ref: Reilly 2.

CRISPIN, EDMUND
See A9, A30 [*The Moving Toyshop*, w/intro. by Jon L. Breen, pp. ix-xv].

CROSS, AMANDA
Ref: Cannon, AHMM, March 85, pp. 149-50 [photo].

D66. Roberts, Jeanne Addison. "Feminist Murder: Amanda Cross Reinvents Womanhood." *Clues* 6:1 (Spring/Summer 85) 2-13. Using two of Carolyn Heilbrun's theoretical works (*Toward a Recognition of Androgyny*, 1973, and *Reinventing Womanhood*, 1979), Roberts attempts to show how Cross's detective fiction is an application of the feminist principles of Heilbrun's theoretical works. She recognizes the difficulties of utilizing "revolutionary" theory in a conservative genre and examines the contradictions between the theory and the fiction. This essay is most interesting as an analysis of anti-feministic elements in the novels, and in a note Roberts says that a colleague has suggested that the murderous rage turned against women in Cross's novels reflects psychoanalytically "the author's unresolved conflict with her own mother." Much of the article is, in fact, critical of the novels as examples of feminist detection but ends, rather inappropriately, with a tribute to the ways in which Heilbrun "has advanced the collective feminist effort to reinvent womanhood." A problematical and somewhat muddled essay.

CRUMLEY, JAMES
Ref: Reilly 2.
See also A68.

CUNNINGHAM, E. V.
Ref: Cannon, AHMM, Jan 85, pp. 149-51 [photo].

DAENINCKX, DIDIER
Int: *Séries B* [France], No. 6, Oct/Dec 84, pp. 7-9. Photo. Includes a bio-bibliography.

DALY, CARROLL JOHN
See also A47, A86, A99, A119, B3, B14.

D67. Schléret, Jean-Jacques. "Carroll John Daly, le père fondateur" [Carroll John Daly, the founding father]. In A99, pp. 20-27. On Daly's importance as the creator of Terence Mack, the first modern private eye of detective fiction.

DANIELS, NORMAN A.
Ref: Reilly 2.

DARLING, JOAN
Int: EQMM, March 84, pp. 83-88; May 84, pp. 90-92.

DAVIS, MILDRED A.
Ref: Reilly 2.

DAVIS, DOROTHY SALISBURY
Int: EQMM, Jan 84, pp. 81-83; Feb 84, pp. 88-92.
See also A82, A97.

DAVIS, NORBERT
See A47.

DEAN, S. F. X.
Ref: Cannon, AHMM, June 85, pp. 150[2] [portrait].

DeANDREA, WILLIAM L.
Ref: Reilly 2.

DECREST, JACQUES
See A52.

DEIGHTON, LEN
See also A3, A100.

D68. Milward-Oliver, Edward. *Len Deighton: An Annotated Bibliography 1954-1985*. Foreword by Julian Symons. The Sammler Press, 1985. Collector's edition of 375 numbered/signed copies, with a signed, uncorrected page proof from his *Game, Set & Match* trilogy laid in. $45. Entries cover British and American first editions, books to which he has contributed, books he has introduced and edited, screenplays, essays, and articles. Includes a 4,000-word interview. Not seen. Cited as described in a distributor's advertisement.

D69. Warner, Jonathan. "Len Deighton." *Book Buyer's Choice* (England), No. 2, Nov/Dec 85, pp. 17-18. Photo. Profile of

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DEMOUZON, ALAIN
See A115.

DERLETH, AUGUST

D69A. Legrand-Ferronnière, Xavier. "August Derleth: A French Bibliography." [Part I] *August Derleth Society Newsletter* 9:1 (Dec 85) 3-5. (REB)

DE WAAL, PHILIP

D70. Sarjeant, William A. S. "A Geologist and Mystery Writer." TAD 17:1 (Winter 84) 40-41. A note on de Waal's novel *The Mystery of the Green Garnet Murder* (1932).

DEWEY, THOMAS B.
See A47.

DEXTER, COLIN
Ref: Reilly 2.

DEY, FREDERICK VAN RENSSELAER
See B12.

DICKENS, CHARLES
See also A89, A124, A126.

D70. Beer, John. "*Edwin Drood* and the Mystery of Apartness." *Dickens Studies Annual* 13 (1984) 143-91. Beer reviews many of the enigmas posed for critics and readers by *Edwin Drood* and attempts to show that Dickens was dealing in this novel with a "curious and new idea" that created "labyrinthine problems which made it hard for [him] to finish *Drood* in the way that he planned."

D71. Bleiler, Everett F. "The Names in *Drood*." In two parts. DQ 1:3 (1984) 88-93; 1:4 (1984) 137-42. Not seen. Cited and described in AES 28 (1985) 379, Items 85-2426, 85-2427.

D72. Heath, Apryl Lea Denny. "Who Was Hiram Grewgious? A Further Study of Identity in Charles Dickens' *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*." TAD 17:4 (Fall 84) 402-3. A "closer look" at Dickens's novel to verify Richard M. Baker's assertion that Dick Datchery is Hiram Grewgious.

D73. Miller, Beverley Anne. "What Happened to Edwin Drood? The Clues Are in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*." TAD 18:1 (Winter 85) 47-53. Illus. With so many parallels to *Macbeth* in Dickens's unfinished novel, Miller concludes that Drood was murdered by his "uncle, host, and guardian, John Jasper."

D74. Shatto, Susan. "Dickens's *Edwin Drood* and Southey's *Jaspar*." *Notes & Queries*, New Series, 32:3 (1985) 359-60. Claims Dickens's source for John Jasper was in Southey's ballad "Jaspar." Also believes that certain scenes in the novel are foreshadowed by episodes in the ballad.

D75. Thomas, Marilyn. "*Edwin Drood:* A Bone Yard Awaiting Resurrection." DQ 2:1 (1985) 12-18. Not seen. Cited and described in AES 29:2 (1986) 161, Item 86-1029.

DICKINSON, PETER
Ref: Cannon, AHMM, Jan 84, pp. 56-58 [photo].
See also A62, A111.

DONOVAN, LAURENCE
See BROOKER, WALLACE

DOW, JOHN
See A11.

DOYLE, SIR ARTHUR CONAN
See A30 [*The Hound of the Baskervilles*, w/intro. by John Bennett Shaw, pp. vii-xii], A36, A49, A52, A89, A110, A126, D37, D85, D105, D127, D220.

DU BOISGOBEY, FORTUNE
See B8.

DUKE, MADELAINE
Ref: Reilly 2.

DU MAURIER, DAPHNE
See A6, A18 [#11, Jan 85, pp. 19-25].

DUNNE, JOHN GREGORY
See A44.

EBERSOHN, WESSEL
Ref: Reilly 2.

ECO, UMBERTO
See also A62, A119.

D76. Eco, Umberto. *Postille a Il nome della rosa*, 1983; trans. William Weaver as *Reflections on the Name of the Rose* (NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984; 84pp.). Not a reflection on the meaning of his novel (the author should "die" when he has completed his work) but on the process of writing it. He also talks about ways in which novels are read.

D77. Robey, David. "Umberto Eco." In *Writers & Society in Contemporary Italy*, ed. Michael Caesar and Peter Hainsworth, pp. 63-87. NY: St. Martin's Press, 1984. Eco's *The Name of the Rose* is discussed briefly (pp. 84-86) as an "interesting commentary on his earlier writings." With bibliography of primary and secondary sources.

EDWARDS, JAMES G.
See A11.

EDWARDS, LEO
See C21-C23.

EGLETON, CLIVE
See A111.

ELLIN, STANLEY
Ref: *Writer* 98:2 (Feb 85) 5-7, 47 [on description in detective fiction].
See also A82, A89, A127.

ELLINGTON, RICHARD
See A103.

ELLIS, EDWARD S.
See B26.

ELSTON, ALLAN VAUGHAN
See B28.

ENDRÈBE, MAURICE BERNARD
See A14.

ENGEL, HOWARD
See A39.

ESTLEMAN, LOREN D.
Ref: Reilly 2; *Writer* 98:4 (April 85) 11-13, 47 [on plotting].

FARRIS, JOHN

D78. Mermet, H. Y. "John Ferris." *Enigmatika*, No. 28, Sept 85, pp. 36-37. Examination of detective and fantasy elements in several novels of Farris published in French translation.

FELDMAN, ANATOLE FRANCE
See C4.

FERRARS, E. X.
See A6, A33, A51, A58.

FÉVAL, PAUL
See A16.

FINDLEY, TIMOTHY
Int: In A37, pp. 229-38.

FISCHER, BRUNO
See B21.

FITZHUGH, PERCY KEESE
See C18.

FLEMING, IAN
See also A3, A18 [#1, March 84, pp. 4-13], A91 [TAD 17:4 (1984) 376-81], A100, A123, D172.

D79. Benson, Raymond. *The James Bond Bedside Companion*. NY: Dodd, Mead, 1984. xiii + 256pp. Illus. Bibliography and index. Not seen but cited and reviewed by Jon L. Breen in TAD 19 (1986) 100.

D80. Bryce, Ivar. *You Only Live Once: Memories of Ian Fleming*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1984. Revised edition of a work originally published in 1975. With photos and a checklist of Fleming's writings, including title-page inscriptions to Bryce. A memoir by a close friend of Fleming's who was also a professional colleague and fan.

FOLLET, KEN
Ref: Reilly, 2.
See also A110.

FORREST, RICHARD
Ref: Reilly 2.

FOX, JAMES M.
Ref: Reilly 2.

FORSYTH, FREDERICK
Int: *MD Magazine*, Aug 84, pp. 84-86, 88, 90, 92 [photo and film stills]; *Espionage* 1:3 (May 85) 92-100 [photo].

FRANCIS, DICK
Int: *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 22 July 84, Sunday Magazine, pp. 7-8 [photo]; *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 5 April 84, Section D, pp. 1, 4 [photos].
See also A9, A18 [#11, Jan 85, pp. 35-40], A111, D184.

D81. Gould, Charles E., Jr. "The Reigning Phoenix." TAD 17:4 (Fall 84) 407-10. Photo. A hyperbolic tribute by a fan of Dick Francis.

D82. Zuckerman, Edward. "The Winning Form of Dick Francis." Photos. *New York Times Magazine*, 25 March 84, pp. 40-41, 50, 54, 60, 62, 64. Profile. Francis's racing career, his move to writing, his esthetic (tell a "good story"), the contribution of his wife to his novels, and comments by Zuckerman on Francis's plotting and characterization. Nothing surprising here, but a good survey of Francis and his career.

Part Three of Walter Albert's bibliography will appear in the next issue.

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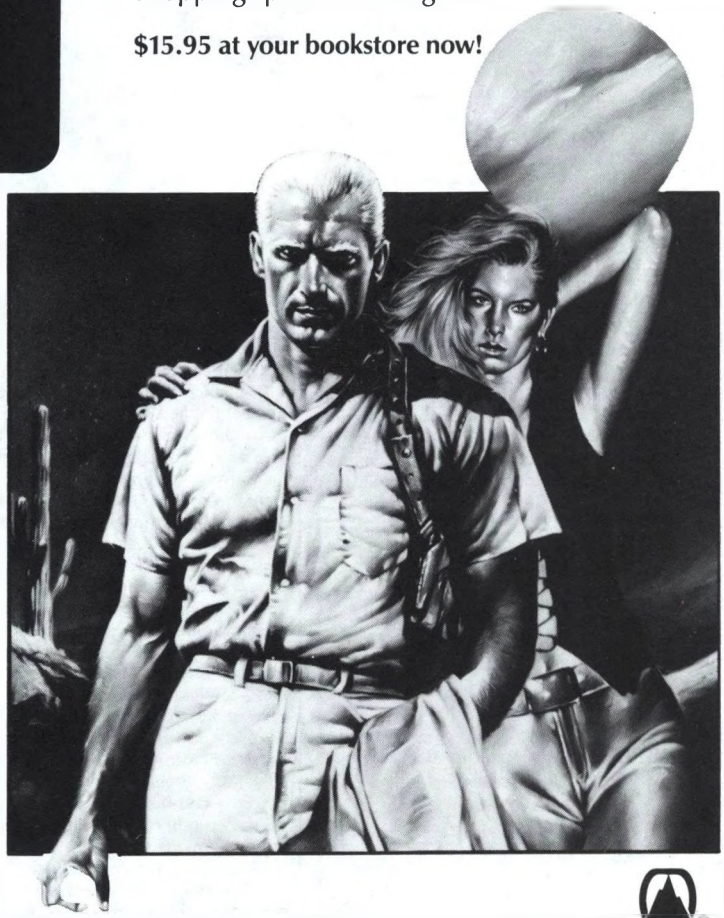

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What About Murder

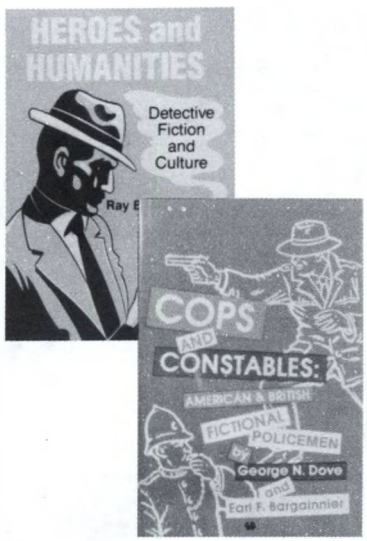
BY JON L. BREEN

• BROWNE, Ray B. **Heroes and Humanities: Detective Fiction and Culture.** Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1987. 141 pp.

Of the fifteen essays gathered here, three are from *Clues: A Journal of Detection*, one from *The Armchair Detective*, and the rest apparently original to this volume. All concern writers who "demonstrate their concern with human society" (p. 5), and most subjects represent commendably fresh ground. The book starts well with a strong essay on Arthur W. Upfield and a good piece on Peter Corris, a more recent Australian writer less well known in this country. (Fawcett-Gold Medal have recently published several of Corris's novels about private eye Cliff Hardy at $2.95 each: *The Dying Trade, White Meat, The Marvelous Boy, The Empty Beach,* and *Make Me Rich.*)

After leaving Down Under, however, things go downhill fast. If Bill Pronzini ever does a *Gun in Cheek* on critics, some of Browne's sentences in a well-meant but woolly piece on Judson Philips (a.k.a. Hugh Pentecost) will have to be included. About the Julian Quist books: "Mild tempered, mild styled, they pretty much picture language and life as it is, at least in fiction" (p. 33). On Peter Styles: "Like the birth of all classic detectives, Styles was, like Shakespeare's Caesar, torn from his parent's womb, in this case his father's; and like Oedipus he had to slay his father before he could become his own tormented self" (p. 34).

Other subjects include Ed Lacy, E. V. Cunningham, Thomas B. Dewey, Michael Z. Lewin, Jonathan Valin, George C. Chesbro, John Ball, Ralph McInerny, Martha G. Webb, Martha Grimes, and Thomas Brace Haughey (author of a series of Evangelical Christian detective stories). A final chapter discusses some current Canadian authors, with primary attention to Ted Wood and none to Howard Engel, supposedly "studied in another paper in this collection" (p. 136), but I could not find it. All Browne's subjects are worthy ones, and he usually has some valid points to make about them. Thus, it is truly regrettable that most of the writing in this volume is so bad. The book reads like an unedited first draft.



• CRAIG, Patricia, and Mary Cadogan. **The Lady Investigates: Women Detectives and Spies in Fiction.** New York: St. Martin's, 1981. 252 pp. Illustrated. Bibliography. Index.

Beginning with W. S. Hayward's Mrs. Paschal (in the 1861 volume *The Revelations of a Lady Detective*) and Andrew Forester, Jr.'s *The Female Detective* (1864) and finishing with contemporary favorites such as P. D. James's Cordelia Gray and Amanda Cross's Kate Fansler, the authors trace the history of women leading characters in crime and mystery fiction from a strongly feminist perspective. Although they "have tried to keep literary judgments to a minimum," there is ample indication of which authors and series are most worth seeking out, and the writing is intelligent and stylish. Many of the most familiar characters are, of course, covered, but, for the buff, the attention given relatively obscure names will be of greatest interest. For instance, the authors pronounce Hugh C. Weir's *Miss Madelyn Mack, Detective* (1914) superior to Anna Katharine Green's sleuth of the same period, Violet Strange. Among authors of girls' fiction, the British writers for Amalgamated Press are credited with a more effective use of atmosphere than the writers of the Nancy Drew series. Will Oursler's Gale Gallagher (whose adventures were published under that name as author) is given a strong vote of confidence, while Leslie Ford is seen as anti-feminist.

Among the characters given interesting treatment here are Nigel Morland's Mrs. Pym, G. D. H. and M. I. Cole's Mrs. Warrender, Nancy Spain's Miriam Birdseye, Mignon G. Eberhart's Nurse Keate (whose adventures do not fill "many volumes" as claimed here—more like a handful), and a special favorite of the authors, Gladys Mitchell's Mrs. Bradley. Female spies such as Dorothy Gilman's Mrs. Pollifax and Peter O'Donnell's Modesty Blaise are covered. A separate chapter on the wives of famous detectives includes Sayers's Harriett Vane, with much emphasis on *Gaudy Night*, along with the wives of Nicholas Blake's Nigel Strangeways, Margery Allingham's Albert Campion, and Ngaio Marsh's Roderick Alleyn. Some of the husband-and-wife detecting teams (the Lockridges' Mr. and Mrs. North, Francis Durbridge's Paul and Steve Temple) are also discussed, and there is room to celebrate a few notable secretaries, such as Erle Stanley Gardner's Della Street.

While it sometimes seems that every notable female sleuth in fiction must be in here, there is no pretense of completeness. And it is surprising that Jenny Melville's Charmain Daniels is covered but that Lillian O'Donnell's Norah Mulcahaney is not. American female private eyes seem to have been slighted, though admittedly most of the current crop have come into their own since the book's publication date.

In summation, this is an outstanding treatment of its subject and a good choice for any basic library of detective fiction history.

• DOVE, George N., and Earl F. Bargainnier, eds. **Cops and Constables: American and British Fictional Policemen.** Bowling Green, Ohio: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1986. 204 pp. Bibliography.

Following an eight-page introduction by both editors, this collection is divided into an American section, "Cops," edited by Dove, and a British section, "Constables," edited by Bargainnier. Most of the subjects represent relatively fresh critical ground. The essays are primarily profiles of the various series detectives, and, as if often true with this approach, there is less critical differentiation among titles than the reader might desire. Leading off the "Cops" section, Barrie Hayne provides the best article to date on Anthony Abbot's Thatcher Colt. Also outstanding is Joan Y. Worley's piece on Hillary Waugh's Fred Fellows. Other subjects and their critics include Joseph Harrington's Francis X. Kerrigan (Martha Alderson and Neysa Chouteau), John Ball's Virgil Tibbs and Jack Tallon (editor Dove), Dell Shannon's Luis Mendoza (Mary Jean DeMarr), Colin

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Wilcox's Frank Hastings (Frederick Isaac), and Tony Hillerman's Joe Leaphorn and Jim Chee (Jane S. Bakerman).

The somewhat briefer "Constables" section is highlighted by Donald C. Wall's concluding roundup chapter on current types and trends in British police fiction, covering briefly the work of Colin Dexter, Patricia Moyes, William McIlvanney, Jack S. Scott, James Barnett, Peter Hill, Reginald Hill, Peter Turnbull, John Wainwright, and G. F. Newman. (The wide range of this chapter makes especially regrettable the lack of an index to the whole volume.) Among the individual profiles is the volume's weakest, Liahna Babener's dullish treatment of a fascinating writer and character (Christianna Brand and Inspector Cockrill), in which nearly all the author's solutions are given away for no compelling reason. Others given chapter-length treatment are Henry Wade's John Poole (Leah A. Strong), Colin Watson's Walter Purbright (co-editor Bargainnier), Bill Knox's Thane and Moss (Constance Hammett Poster), and Peter Lovesey's Cribb and Thackery (Jeanne F. Bedell).

On the whole, this is an admirable collection. But the editors make a dubious claim in their introduction: that there were no notable American examples of the "great policeman" in the 1920s and '30s aside from Thatcher Colt, Earl Derr Biggers's Charlie Chan, and William MacHarg's short-story sleuth O'Malley. What about Helen Reilly's Inspector McKee, Rufus King's Lieutenant Valcour (according to Howard Haycraft's *Murder for Pleasure,* nearly as popular as Perry Mason in the '30s), Milton M. Propper's Tommy Rankin, and George Bagby's Inspector Schmidt, whose career-in-print lasted nearly fifty years?

• GIDEZ, Richard B. **P. D. James.** Boston: Twayne, 1986. 153 pp. Illustrated. Bibliography. Index.

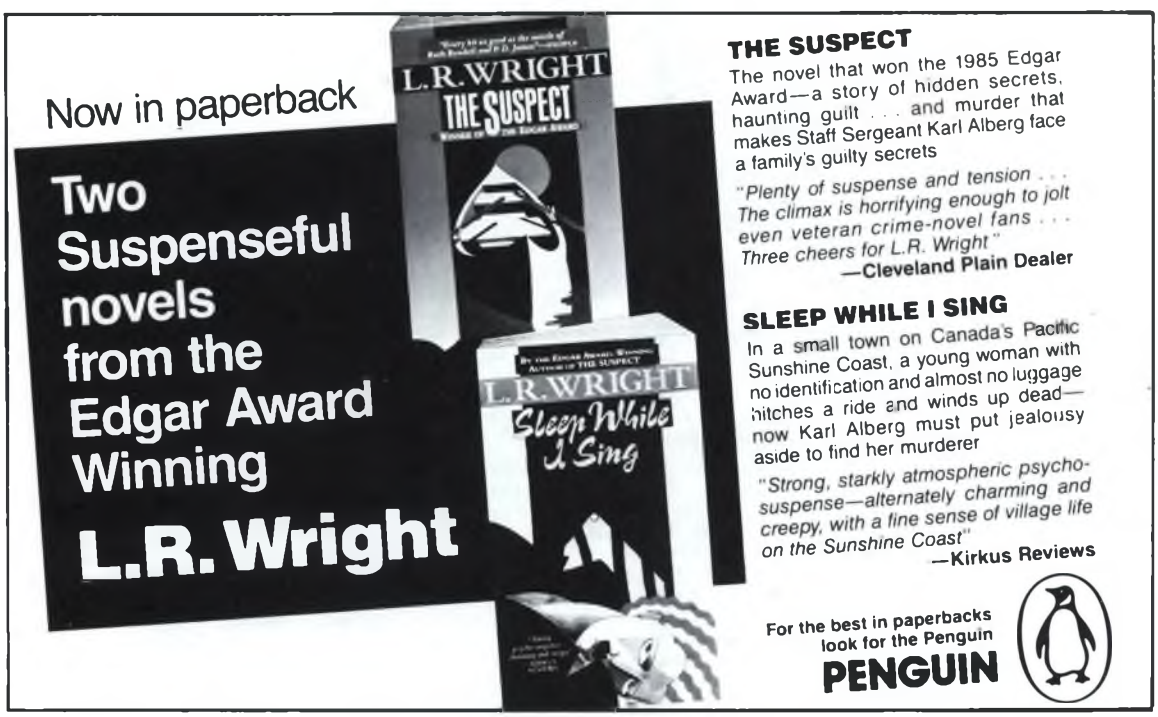
While sharing with Norma Siebenheller's earlier study (see below) an over-emphasis on plot summary and a determination to reveal every solution, Gidez's work has several advantages over its predecessor. It gives full coverage to James's short stories and considers the author's output through *The Skull Beneath the Skin* (1982). Its bibliography is more thorough, both on primary and secondary sources. Gidez presents slightly more biographical information, including the standard Twayne chronology. He also does a better job of putting his subject in the context of detective fiction history, even if he overstates his case in claiming that the classical detective novel has been "long dominated by women" (p. 7)—what of Queen, Carr, Crispin, Blake, Innes, Berkeley, Freeman, Crofts, Van Dine, Philip MacDonald, Kemelman, and quite a few others?

On the whole, Gidez does a good, efficient, if not especially exciting job. Aside from the introduction and conclusion and a separate chapter on the short stories, the novels are treated chronologically with a chapter devoted to each. Gidez values *Death of an Expert Witness* most highly and gives a very unfavorable notice to the mainstream bestseller *Innocent Blood* and to *Unnatural Causes,* discussed as a parody of classical detective fiction, as is *The Skull Beneath the Skin.*

• SIEBENHELLER, Norma. **P. D. James.** New York: Ungar, 1981. x + 154 pp. Bibliography. Index.

The first full-length critical study of James begins with a brief and somewhat unpromising overview chapter: in championing her subject's importance, the author denigrates earlier women puzzle-makers more than is necessary and proves overgiven to generalizations, especially about the American detective story. Approximately the first half of the book offers a chronological survey (including somewhat excessive plot summary) of the novels through *Innocent Blood* (1980), of which the author makes the truly fatuous statement, "One cannot savor the unsavory" (p. 72). The reader is warned at the outset that no attempt will be made to avoid solution giveaways. Things begin to look up in the second half of the book, with good chapters profiling series sleuths Adam Dalgliesh and Cordelia Gray, followed by a topical treatment of James's themes, secondary characters, and style. Siebenheller decries James's distasteful treatment of women: aside from Cordelia and Dalgliesh's Aunt Jane, almost all the other women are "fussy, neurotic, sadistic, simple, scheming, or evil. They are, on the whole, a depressing lot" (p. 128). The author makes some interesting points in support of her implication that James dislikes women, but she may be unfair in assuming that Dalgliesh's views are always shared by his creator.

In summary, this is a good, thorough job, better overall than the early chapters might lead one to expect. A valuable feature of the bibliography is a listing of selected reviews of James's novels, all from general review media rather than specialized mystery publications.



Minor Offenses

BY EDWARD D. HOCH

The late John D. MacDonald began his writing career with short stories in the pulps during the 1940s, and it is fitting that his posthumous fiction during the early months of this year has consisted of two previously unpublished short stories. *The New Black Mask #8* (the final issue before its rebirth as *A Matter of Crime*) carried a brief interview with MacDonald, along with a short story written back in the 1960s but not previously published. Unfortunately, the story, "Night Ride," is nothing special, reworking a type of plot long familiar to regular readers of mystery magazines.

Much more rewarding is MacDonald's story "Bimini Kill" in the April issue of *The Yacht*, a slick bi-monthly which sells for $5.00 a copy. It is a very well-written whodunit about the skipper of a charter yacht who reluctantly agrees to a trip from Fort Lauderdale to Bimini with his ex-girlfriend, her estranged husband, and her new lover. Although the mystery is not too hard to solve, the writing reflects MacDonald's fondness for the sea and for yachting. It is a nice story and a fitting conclusion to a distinguished writing career.

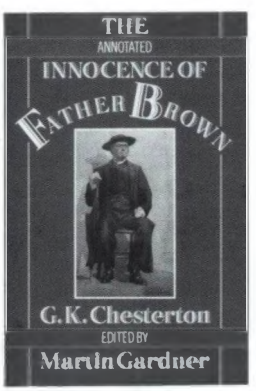
In this era of list-making, I do not believe that there has been a list of the ten best books of detective short stories since Ellery Queen published one in *Good Housekeeping* back in the early 1940s. For the reader with a short memory, EQ named, chronologically, Poe's *Tales*, Doyle's *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, Morrison's *Martin Hewitt, Investigator*, Orczy's *The Old Man in the Corner*, Freeman's *John Thorndyke's Cases*, MacHarg and Balmer's *The Achievements of Luther Trant*, Chesterton's *The Innocence of Father Brown*, Bramah's *Max Carrados*, Post's *Uncle Abner*, and Bailey's *Call Mr. Fortune*.

Now we have something approaching a new list, with H. R. F. Keating's *The Hundred Best Crime Books*, soon to be published by Xanadu Books in England. Keating's list, as reported by the British fanzine CADS, includes eight short-story collections: Poe's *Tales*, Doyle's *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, Hornung's *The Amateur Cracksman*, Futrelle's *The Thinking Machine*, Chesterton's *The Innocence of Father Brown*, Post's *Uncle Abner*, Wallace's *The Mind of Mr. J. G. Reeder*, and Ellin's *The Specialty of the House*.

Queen's list stopped at 1920. Keating's list, though it includes novels published through 1986, has only one collection—the 1979 Stanley Ellin volume—published since 1925. Have the last sixty years really been that bad for books of short stories? And what would we add to Keating's list to bring it up to a ten-best selection? I would certainly add Carter Dickson's *The Department of Queer Complaints*, for one.

Chesterton's first Father Brown collection appears on both of the lists above, and, as I mentioned in an earlier column, Oxford University Press has now published *The Annotated Innocence of Father Brown*. The introduction and some 200 footnotes by Martin Gardner are a good companion to Chesterton's text, and include at least one startling bit of information. There exists, according to Gardner's bibliographic note, an unpublished Father Brown story, the manuscript of which is in the hands of someone not yet willing to allow its publication.

Last season's original anthology *Murder in Manhattan* has been followed by *Murder in Los Angeles* (Morrow, $16.95), with original stories by Jon L. Breen, D. C. Fontana, George Fox, William Campbell Gault, M. R. Henderson, Vincent McConnor, William F. Nolan, and Ray Russell. To me, the stories



seem to concentrate too much on film industry intrigues of the sort one used to read in the old *Hollywood Detective* pulps, to the neglect of Southern California's other attractions. But George Fox does offer an interesting view of Venice Beach, and Jon L. Breen's "Starstruck" makes nice use of the locale with a mystery involving the stars on the sidewalk along Hollywood Boulevard. Less successful is M. R. Henderson's novella-length "Dream House," which might be called a Hollywood Hills Gothic. It is rumored that Morrow paid an advance of around $50,000 for each of these anthologies. We were hoping for something better.

I have never been a big fan of Isaac Asimov's brief tales about Griswold and the Union Club, the solutions of which are often more far-fetched than those in Asimov's Black Widower stories. But the latest Griswold story, "The Stamp," in the June issue of *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, is one of the best, as Eleanor Sullivan's introduction promises, with an unseen hiding place that John Dickson Carr might have envied.

John Lutz has followed in Lawrence Block's footsteps and converted his Edgar-winning private eye story into a full-length novel. *Ride the Lightning* was published in March by St. Martin's Press.

It is sad to report that *Ellery Queen's Prime Crimes*, the annual anthology of new stories published by Davis for the past five years, comes to an end after the current *Prime Crimes 5*. The series, ably edited by Eleanor Sullivan, was a good showcase for stories just a bit too off-trail or daring for EQMM. Happily, the regular anthologies of EQMM reprints will continue to appear every six months or so. The latest of these, *Ellery Queen's Bad Scenes*, opens with a tribute to Stanley Ellin, reprinting his own favorite story, "The Question." There is also a nice touch with the reprinting of three tales by Helen Reilly and her two daughters, Ursula Curtiss and Mary McMullen. They were a true mystery-writing family, and they will all be missed.

The first issue of the new large-format *Espionage* has appeared, dated May 1987, but, except for passable items by Josh Pachter and Percy Spurlark Parker, there is nothing very exciting about it. A promised interview with John Le Carré turns out to be reprinted from the Baltimore *Sun*, where it appeared a year ago when *A Perfect Spy* was published.

Speaking of Josh Pachter, the reader of this column should know that Pachter is now publishing a mystery short-story fanzine called *The Short Sheet*, containing news, reviews, features, and occasional short stories. The second issue has a new story by Mary Kittredge, winner of this year's Robert L. Fish Memorial Award. The subscription price is $20 a year for eleven issues, from Josh Pachter, Erlangen Elementary School, APO NY 09066.

Better Late Than Never Dept.: The first American edition of Catherine Louisa Pirkis's *The Experiences of Loveday Brooke, Lady Detective* has appeared from Dover Publications. This 1984 collection of seven stories has more historical than entertainment value today, but the Dover edition has a fine introduction by Michele Slung and includes the original magazine illustrations. The price is $4.95, paper.

Also of some historical interest is *A Cent a Story: The Best from Ten Detective Aces*, edited by Garyn G. Roberts (Bowling Green State University Popular Press, $9.95 paper, $21.95 hardcover). These ten stories give a good sampling of the so-called "hero pulps" and help to illustrate why *Black Mask* was so far superior to other pulp magazines of the period. Authors include Lester Dent, Frederick C. Davis, Richard B. Sale, and G. T. Fleming-Roberts, not always at their best. □

RICHARD III: TRIAL BY JURY

A new novel brings the controversy back to life and launches a new sub-genre

BY DAVID ALLEN

PERSEVERENCE PRESS, a new mystery publisher in Menlo Park, California, has recently published a novel in the Hyst'ry Myst'ry® genre that is seminally important. In point of fact, there being only five examples of this genre existing, it is inevitable that each new one should have a formative impact on its development. Thus, a conventional review of this new novel inevitably becomes a simultaneous discussion of the evolution of the genre itself. It will be convenient to start this review by briefly recapitulating its history.

In 1951, Elizabeth MacIntosh, under her alternate pen name Josephine Tey, published her last mystery novel before her death, *The Daughter of Time.* It was to be her most outstanding book, for the novel became a classic and the archetype of a new genre of novel, which went for thirty years without a name. I have ventured to call this genre the "Hyst'ry Myst'ry."®

The genre remained unnamed for so long because it went unrecognized as a new and distinct type. Though the book made an instant impression upon the reading world, the response to it was intuitive rather than rational. Those who came under its spell knew that it was fascinating but could not articulate the reason why. It was fascinating because it was the first example of a new kind of literature. The recognition of this took a long time in coming. But now it is here.

The book actually had a word-of-mouth following rather than media acclamation. Written by an established, name author, published by a reputable house, Macmillan, *The Daughter of Time* received a few critically important rave reviews from prestigious sources—but not many. Just enough to give it birth. Thereafter, it swam upstream to find its true audience—which was not necessarily the existing

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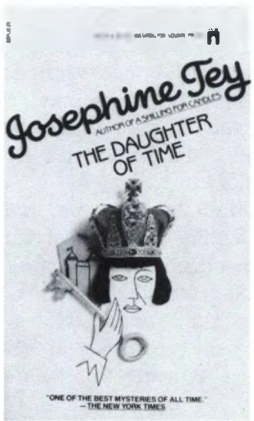
mystery audience. But swim it did. This writer did not discover it until nine years later, recommended as it was by a friend in response to a known interest in history. The book remained in hardcover for thirteen years before it went into a mass-market paperback edition, and it has remained in mass paperback ever since. Though its sales have not been staggering, they have been good enough to make the book profitable for a publisher, and so have some of its successors, so the genre does not suffer from a lack of audience. Conspicuously, even the most recent Dell edition does not in artwork and blurb accurately target the book at its natural audience, the H/M reader, because the publisher is still not aware that the novel is a new genre which has to be treated differently in



promotion from other genres in the mystery stream. In my opinion, it still has not found its largest audience because of this publisher failure to target properly. Nothing about the book's appearance signals to its potential audience its true contents, so it is easily passed by the browser.

Though the book is known by everyone in the book publishing business, it is a book to which many offer lip service without actually having read it. And many veteran mystery editors do not really like it, though they genuflect in its direction. One noted critic, Jacques Barzun, found the book interesting but "lacking in action," having missed completely the real action of the book. And many devoted mystery readers are turned off by it.

In order to enjoy a novel of this type, one has to have some taste for scholarship and for the ferreting out of documents that are in themselves dry but contain precious jewels of information. The reader has to be able to savor the significance of a documentary or archeological find, usually discussed in nonfiction, not in fiction. Anyone who has suffered through the research of an M.A. thesis without developing an aversion to scholarship has the kind of orientation this genre might require, even though many of its readers have not progressed that far down the academic path. *Hyst'ry Myst'ry® Magazine* has on its mailing list an unusually high proportion of J.D.s, M.D.s, and Ph.D.s, types who have been trained in research and in hard scholarship and science. Yet many common folk enjoy the genre.

Of course, while lack of accurate audience targeting by publishers is a big inhibiting factor in the spread of this genre, the main reason is because so few novels of this type exist—four to my knowledge—which is why I developed the genre name and logo and a magazine. To those who do not know what this genre is like, it involves a crime, or problem, or controversy, or mystery, that happened a long time ago. But it is a *real* crime or controversy, with an objective existence, not an invented or fictional one imagined by an author. If the crime or problem happened a long time ago, then the style of investigation becomes, necessarily, "historical." If it is a scientific crime, then the style of investigation is necessarily "scientific," such as a medical mystery (which was no sooner born than it sprang onto TV as *Quincy*). This type of investigation is not new, but traditionally it took place within expository forms of writing, or nonfiction. What is new and unique about the H/M is that the investigation takes place within the novel or fictional form. This fusing together of fiction and nonfiction creates a new literary form.

For example, in the archetypal *The Daughter of Time,* Tey has her well-established Scotland Yard detective Alan Grant, Oxford-educated, pipe-smoking, and tweed-wearing, laid up in bed with a broken leg. To while away the time, he begins sleuthing the question of the true character of Richard III. Because a picture of the king seems to him benign rather than evil, and being a firm believer in his own ability to read character by sight, he affects to disbelieve Shakespeare's characterization of the man as a hunchbacked villain who delighted in cruelty and murder. This characterization, Grant stoutly maintains, is a result of a bad historical press. He was a defeated Yorkist, and the history about him was written by Lancastrian publicists and perpetuated by generations of supine "establishment" historians. Grant sets out to prove that Richard III did not murder his nephews and usurp the throne but was more sinned against than sinning.

To do this, he has to re-research the facts upon which this image is based. In other words, the detective schooled in police methods extends his technique to include and embrace a crime committed centuries ago. He detects by "doing" history. In the process, a brand-new genre emerges. The "plot" of the story, or its "thesis," is that Richard III has been wrongfully convicted, by historians, of a crime he never committed. Through Scotland Yard detective Alan Grant, justice will belatedly triumph. And a new genre is created in passing.

Notice the uniqueness of this novel. A "fictional" detective, who does not really exist, goes to work to solve a crime that really does exist, not a concoction of an author's imagination. Thus, the fictional detective for the first time becomes bound by the laws of reality and scholarship. *He may not invent a solution.* He has to *discover* the real one. This genre, then, has to be judged on two levels, as a work of art and as a work of scholarship, whereas the conventional mystery novel is simply judged as a work of art. The development of the medical mystery and the H/M presents some fascinating new theoretical problems in literature, which we must bypass for the moment.

As if this literary uniqueness were not sufficient unto the day, now Guy Townsend comes along and piles uniqueness upon uniqueness. The publishing world has not yet had time to digest the birth of a new genre when it is called upon to accept a new variant of that genre. Josephine Tey's "solution" to the murder of the little princes in the Tower of London is essentially a "thesis." Henry Tudor did it, not Richard III.

Guy Townsend rejects this "thesis" and opposes it with a rebuttal, or counter thesis, or "anti-thesis": Henry VII did not do the crime, Richard III *really* did do it. Richard III is not really the good guy that Tey makes out, but the bad guy history always said he was. Controversies such as this are usually carried out on the debating platform, or in the equivalent, the scholarly press, or in the media. This is the first time, to my knowledge, that one author has written a full novel to contest a novel written by another author! A novel contesting a novel. It could only happen within the H/M genre. A permutation upon a mutation.

Guy Townsend is the champion of that historical "establishment" that Tey derides. He is a professional historian, a college teacher of history, and a publisher (Brownstone Books and *The Mystery Fancier*), as well as a proficient novelist. In entering the lists against as formidable a jouster as Josephine Tey, Townsend has some jarring things to say. Principally, he throws down the gauntlet by declaring that Tey's history is false history. Richard III is the multiple murderer that history says he was. As Tey's book is justified, apparently, by the claim that he was not, this is a weighty charge. But he goes further. He accuses Tey of using another man's work without credit or attribution—in effect, of plagiarism. Possibly worse, she knew of, and deliberately withheld from her readers, evidence which would have destroyed her case. In an H/M, this is not acceptable, if provable. It identifies a serious flaw in Tey's work, hence doubt is thrown upon her claim to lasting immortality. Townsend challenges the ranking of *The Daughter of Time* as a classic and a masterpiece. If truth is really the daughter of time,

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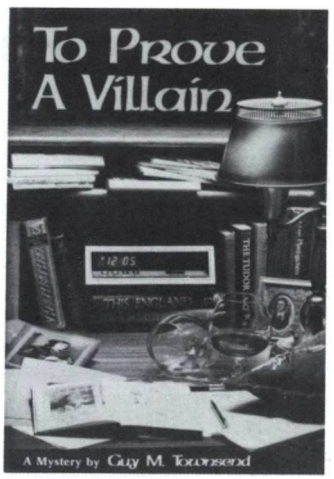
then *The Daughter of Time* is not a legitimate offspring of Josephine Tey.

Townsend makes these charges seriously. He has now published twice about them; first, some years ago in *The Armchair Detective,* he wrote a conventional scholarly criticism of Tey's thesis in expository form. Now he returns to the lists with a full novel in rebuttal. These sundry charges merge into the general questions of just what an H/M is and is not, what are its ethics, and how significant it is as a literary form, so we will discuss them in that context. And we have not even considered *To Prove a Villain* on its own merits yet.

Townsend's protagonist is, like the author himself, a college history professor, who gets himself inextricably entwined in a campus murder investigation that seems to be paralleling a classroom investigation of the Richard III controversy. People in the college, who have names like those of the real people actually involved in the Richard III case, start getting murdered in reality. By the time the second murder takes place, it begins to look as though the current murderer is deliberately patterning his murders to fit the murders of the little princes and the usurpation of the throne of England. So what starts out as a classroom exercise in historiography becomes a matter of an actual, if fictional, criminal investigation.

This ingenious bit of plotting permits the novel to develop on two levels, which technically is a sophistication over Tey's technique. On one level, a historical crime is investigated, on the other a contemporary one. The author moves up and down and back and forth from one crime to another effortlessly. Guy Townsend, historian/novelist, is a fit adversary of Josephine Tey, novelist/historian. Townsend has a competent command of the commercial novelist's art; his scene descriptions and characterizations ring true, as does the mood he establishes. But, where he goes Tey one better in creating two levels of investigation to her one, he does not weave his discovery of the Richard case into the fabric of the story, as she does, and as the H/M form requires, so he falls down a little there. Rather, the case against Richard and Tey is lumped into two brief classroom lecture episodes instead of being distributed throughout the text. The actual hunt and discovery of clues is confined to the ongoing contemporary plot. But I do not think that Townsend was any more aware of writing an H/M novel than was Tey, so the question of whether he was or was not meeting H/M criteria of performance has to be delayed until we decide which author is telling the historical truth. Which one is right, Tey with her good-guy or Townsend with his bad-guy interpretation? To render a judgment, some background facts must be noted. Briefly:

On 9 April 1483, Edward IV, the Yorkist King of England, died, naming as his heir his elder young



son, Edward V, and his younger son Richard, Duke of York, as second in inheritance. The dead king named his brother Richard, Duke of Gloucester, as Lord Protector until the prince gained maturity.

This succession was crystal clear and legal—but not politically acceptable to everyone, including the Lancastrian party (in perpetual opposition to the Yorkists) and the Queen's relatives, the Woodvilles. The deceased king had married considerably beneath himself when he married Elizabeth Woodville. For her family, it was a lottery ticket to riches and power, a dazzling stroke of fortune which lifted them to heights to which they quickly became accustomed and were unwilling to relinquish now that Elizabeth was a widow. They decided to ignore the King's clear will appointing brother Richard as undisputed Lord Protector—King in effect—and attempted to treat him as merely one of a committee of equal members who would rule as regents. They attempted to prevent Richard from taking over the rearing of the Prince by denying him supervision and control of the person of the boy. A veteran warrior, Richard put the quietus on that posture by simply and swiftly arresting all the Woodvilles who contested his authority. Clearly, he was moving swiftly to avoid a civil war over who was running the country. Some of the Woodvilles escaped to France, together with their Lancastrian supporters, to bide their time, and Elizabeth the widowed Queen successfully obtained sanctuary in Westminster Abbey together with her youngest son.

But there was more than competing families involved. The ruling dynasts were Yorkists and had been in an adversarial relationship to the Lancastrians for some generations. No king had been universally accepted by the nobility, who were split between both houses and who frequently shifted

sides in power plays. When the Yorkists were in, the Lancastrians were in opposition, and vice versa. The coronation of one party was usually the prelude to civil war. The challenge to Richard by the Woodvilles and their Lancastrian supporters ushered in the last battle on Bosworth Field of what the historians have labelled the Wars of the Roses.

By 30 April 1483, the Lord Protector, Richard, Duke of Gloucester, had the young prince Edward V in his control and started preparations for the boy's coronation. He requested that the Queen in sanctuary give up the younger prince so that the boy could take part in the coronation ceremonies. Somewhere along the way, he lost the support of Lord Hastings, an ally of the dead King and an early supporter of Richard. Hastings may have been turned off by Richard's vigorous moves against the Woodvilles, or he may simply have decided, as was so often the case, to switch parties to obtain some advantage. Whichever, his motives have never been known.

On either 13 June or 20 June 1483, exact date disputed, Richard again made a move. He arrested Lord Hastings, as well as Lord Stanley and John Morton, Bishop of Ely, also now in opposition.

Not only is the date in dispute, but exactly what happened on that date. Traditionally, the establishment has maintained that Richard arrested, tried, and convicted Lord Hastings in a kangaroo court and executed him—all in one day. This interpretation supports the bad-guy theory of Richard, who is seen as moving toward personal power in his own right, not merely as Lord Protector.

But the revisionists, like Tey, claim that Richard did not do anything that hasty at all. He took advantage of opportunity and arrested and tried Hastings for treason, but did not execute him until a week later, and so showed no undue haste signaling a seizure of power for himself.

Until recently, what happened in this episode was a matter of scholarly opinion rather than hard fact.

Whichever, by 16 June 1483, the Queen had relinquished custody of her younger son to Richard so that he could play his part as Prince of Wales in the coronation ceremonies.

So far, the Lord Protector has accepted with legal propriety. Each swift move he has made could be justified as forestalling any oppositional growth to his legal hold on power. The rapid execution, if it occurred, could be seen as a veteran commander's swift move to resolve an unstable situation in his own favor, and to forestall a coup.

But on 22 June 1483, an event occurred that, if it were due to Richard, could be seen as a step over the line of legal propriety into criminal treason. On this date, sermons were purportedly preached in church, and hence in public, making the charge that the dead King's marriage to Elizabeth Woodville was illegal, hence the children were bastards and not legitimate successors to the throne. It was claimed that Edward IV had already been married to another, one Lady Eleanor, when he underwent a marriage ceremony with Elizabeth Woodville. If this "publicity release" can be traced to Richard himself, it supports the theory that he was moving to seize the crown for himself. But, if it came from some other source, Richard was then merely the captive of events. According to the good-guy theorists, the charge came from a Bishop Stillington in a Sunday sermon—according to the opposition, from Richard himself.

Again, whichever, Parliament accepted the charge and rapidly incorporated it into an Act, *Titulus Regius,* which declared the boys bastards and hence not legitimate heirs to the throne. Richard was named as the legal successor. On 26 June 1483, Parliament formally petitioned Richard to accept the crown, which he did. On 6 July 1483, he was crowned King.

It was at this point, according to the establishment historians, that Richard decided to kill the two princes, seeing in them, alive, a constant rallying point for Lancastrian opposition to his kingship.

But the revisionists such as Tey deny this. They point to the lack of hard evidence that Richard murdered the princes, and they claim that the boys were alive and well all the way into the reign of Richard's successor, Henry VII, the real killer. They further claim, by inference and surmise, that the murder must have taken place between 16 June 1486 and 16 July 1486, well into the reign of Henry Tudor.

What has never been disputed is that, on 22 August 1484, the short reign of the Yorkist, Richard III, came to an abrupt end on Bosworth Field, where Richard was defeated and killed in battle by Lancastrians under Henry VII, who landed from France and inaugurated the reign of the Tudors. The Wars of the Roses were at long last finished.

Richard had taken the field with a superior force, 10,000 men, against an invasion force of only 5,000. But Richard's right-hand man, the Duke of Buckingham, turned against him and 5,000 of Richard's troops stood on the sidelines and refused to fight for him. Why is not clear. It could have signified that his supporters did not believe that his cause was worth dying for, or maybe politics pulled them out of combat. Henry VII quickly consolidated Tudor control of the throne by marrying Elizabeth, eldest daughter of the House of York, thus uniting the Yorkist and Lancastrian claims to the throne. He also locked up the ex-Queen, Elizabeth Woodville, in a convent for life, and had the infamous *Titulus Regius* repealed and most copies of it destroyed (and then, according to the revisionists, murdered the two little princes in the Tower).

Having resolved the Wars of the Roses, we can

now turn our attention to the more parochial question of who was right, Tey or Townsend, and who killed the princes, Richard III or Henry VII.

Though this question has been disputed for generations, the research of the twentieth century and the discovery of new facts has at last made it possible to decide definitely between Tey or Townsend. Significantly, all of this new information was available to Tey before she wrote *The Daughter of Time.*

First, the matter of whether or not Lord Hastings was tried by a kangaroo court and executed in one day has been cleared up. He was. And this tells against Richard's innocence, if not completely.

Second, the matter of the legitimacy or illegitimacy of the two little princes has also been cleared up. They *were* legitimate. According to Mortimer Levine, one of the best Elizabethan historians in the business of nailing down these points upon which so much hangs, it was not Bishop Stillington who innocently introduced into public discussion the charge of bastardy in a Sunday sermon on 22 June; it was Richard himself who raised the issue in Parliament! Richard did this based upon documents submitted to him by the Duke of Buckingham (who later deserted him on the battlefield), who eventually said that he had thought the documents were valid at the time, but later changed his mind. "Now I know them to be feigned and testified by persons with rewards untruly suborned," he said. The very documents which tell us that it was Richard himself who made the charge in Parliament also tell us that the charge was based upon false evidence. It did not matter a tinker's damn about Edward IV's prior marriage to Lady Eleanor Butler, because that Lady died in 1468, *two full years before* the elder prince was born from the marriage to Elizabeth Woodville! The two princes were born in 1470 and 1473, respectively, of what was clearly a legal marriage between Edward IV and Elizabeth Woodville, and hence were the legal heirs to the throne. No one but Richard III could have profited from a false charge of bastardy. The case by Tey begins to stand on shaky ground.

A damning piece of evidence that Richard and not Henry VII killed the princes surfaced in 1936, centuries late but still fifteen years before Tey wrote her brief. For centuries, no eyewitness testimony to the events of that critical summer in 1483 were known to have survived, leaving room for speculation. Then the improbable happened. In 1936, there was discovered in the Bibliotheque Municipale, in Lille, France, an account by an Italian clergyman who had actually been in London during those fateful months in 1483. His name was Dominic Mancini. A copy of his account of those events had languished in the library for three centuries before its relevance to the murder of the little princes in England was noticed and understood and it was finally translated and published.

Mancini had been in London from the summer of 1482 until the late summer of 1483. As a literate clergyman from abroad, he would have met well-informed people in England. After returning to Italy, he must have written an account of his stay in London that circulated and was copied. A copy made its way to France.

The Mancini account supports staunchly the traditionalist view of Richard III and offers critical new circumstantial evidence about the murders. It is Mancini who affirms the arrest and judicial execution of Lord Hastings as all on the same day, and *after* the Queen had surrendered the younger prince to Richard's care, which had happened on 16 June. The exact quote is:

> After this execution [of Hastings] . . . the townsmen . . . became panic striken . . . But to calm the multitude . . . Richard sent a herald to proclaim that a plot had been detected in the citadel [Tower] and Hastings, the originator of the plot had paid the penalty: Wherefor he [Richard] bade them all be reassured. . . . At first the ignorant crowd believed, although the real truth was on the lips of many, namely that the plot had been feigned by the Duke [Richard] so as to escape the odium of such a crime.

This first-hand account from a witness on the scene at the time destroys the revisionist claim that a week

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There can be no doubt that Richard III murdered the two little princes. Tey was wrong and Townsend was right.

had passed between the trial and execution of Hastings—which would have supported the view of Richard as measured and judicial in his decisions—and it also showed that a large number of Richard's contemporaries had pegged him as a villain even before he was crowned King.

The Mancini document supplies one more crucial point of circumstantial evidence that allows us to choose between Tey and Townsend. The priest gives direct testimony as to when the boys disappeared.

> . . . [A]fter Hastings was removed, all the attendants who had waited upon the [boy] king were debarred access to him [in the Tower]. He and his brother were withdrawn into the inner apartments of the Tower proper, and day by day began to be seen more rarely . . . till at length they ceased to be seen altogether. . . . I have seen men burst into tears when mention was made of him [young Edward V] . . . and already there was a suspicion he had been done away with. . .

While this account is one of opinion, it is the opinion of people living at the time, which is hard evidence in historical courts, and it does include one fact, that the princes disappeared from public view during the time of Richard's reign. If this still does not convince that the traditionalists were right and Tey wrong, there is another point of clinching evidence, also known to Tey before she wrote.

In 1674, the bones of two children were discovered in the Tower at the foot of a staircase where legend had it they were buried. Charles II had the bones placed in an urn and laid to rest in Westminster Abbey, where they reposed undisturbed until 6 July 1933. Forensic science had by now progressed to the point at which identifications from bones were made and accepted by courts of law as routine. The urn was opened and the bones examined by qualified pathologists (where the H/M and the medical mystery intersect).

The bones were definitely identified as belonging to two young boys, one slightly less than thirteen, the other between nine and eleven. Given the known birthdates of the royal princes, 1470 and 1473, death for both must have occurred in 1483, exactly the year Richard assumed the Protectorate. There can be no doubt that Richard III murdered the two little princes. Tey was wrong and Townsend was right. Richard III was the villain Shakespeare had painted. Tey purveyed wrong history, and, as both the forensic evidence about the bones and Mancini's document were known well before she wrote, Tey withheld evidence that would have invalidated her thesis.

What are we to make of this situation? We assert that Tey wrote a book that was a classic and an archetype for a new genre. Now we have to admit that this classic is flawed. It purveys a false interpretation of history. Is therefore the classic not a classic? Is it to be downgraded? Must we alter the rating?

Not actually. Tey's claim to immortality rests upon her invention of a new genre, not upon the accuracy of her history, even though we claim that one of the

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distinctive characteristics of this genre is that *the author may not invent the mystery, and must not falsify the facts.* Tey did not invent this mystery and she gave that interpretation which she believed to be true. She was wrong in her judgment and she did withhold facts that would have proved her thesis false. But there is a caveat that applies here. In fact, two.

One, Tey was not consciously writing an H/M. She created one by accident. She was bound by the ethics of the mystery novelist, not by the ethics of the H/M writer. What mystery writer, even today, uses footnotes and documents her sources? The criteria that the writer in the H/M genre may not invent his mystery or withhold or distort facts that offend objective truth is brand new. It has been laid down *after* the genre was invented. Heretofore, the need to observe objective truth has been confined to the genres of expository scholarship or science. It never applied to literature. Tey was creating literature. Only after the H/M was created did the criteria of science and scholarship invade literature, and only in the medical mystery, and in the H/M, and others like it. The rest of literature still ignores it. (We do not dispute that all literature aims ultimately at truth-telling, but of the subjective poetic or rhetorical kind, not the scholarly and scientific kind.) I do not believe that Tey was fully conscious of what she was doing or fully aware of what consequences her creation would entail. The ethic of being bound by objective truth applies to all those authors who are *consciously* writing in the H/M genre. Tey was not. Even though she created the first one. Therefore, I think she is not guilty of the charge which Townsend levies against her. In the mystery story, it is perfectly ethical to withhold whatever the author wants to withhold.

The second caveat which applies here is that there are two alternative hypotheses that apply to Richard III. One is that he murdered the princes; the other is that he did not murder the princes. In scholarship, it is perfectly legitimate to pick and choose facts to fit a hypothesis and then argue the hypothesis. If it is wrong, it is wrong. Tey's error was discovered by an author arguing an opposite hypothesis, so that the issue became self-correcting. The stricture that the author of an H/M must be bound by truth does not mean that the author cannot make an error. Tey did. For both of these reasons, I think that we can absolve Tey of wrongdoing in writing *The Daughter of Time.* It is still a classic, only a flawed one.

Because it is written in the format of the traditional detective novel, *The Daughter of Time,* and those which have emulated it, are regarded as mystery stories, which, strictly speaking, they are not. To his credit, Guy Townsend recognizes that the novel is not a mystery novel. But he then goes on to criticize it as though it were. But an H/M is not a mystery novel. It has its own criteria of performance. It does not suffer

from a lack of action as Barzun maintained; it simply has another kind of action. One either likes it or one does not. The true fan accepts it as it is. Barzun, while intrigued, was probably not a true H/M fan. Historians essentially do the same thing that cops do but in different time-frames and with different kinds of evidence. And they use different vocabularies. The cop uses fingerprints and the like; the historian, documents and pottery shards. This submergence in documents and shards is what gives the H/M its difference. It is inevitably a "scholarly" investigation. One either has the taste for it or one does not. If one does not, one probably finds the genre "lacking in action" as Barzun did.

I think that Guy Townsend wrote as intuitively with *To Prove a Villain* as Tey did. He never heard of the phrase "Hyst'ry Myst'ry"® until his publisher sent a review copy of the novel to *H/M Magazine.* But, intuitively, he had obeyed the laws that apply. The very nature of his "anti-thesis" novel proves that. Yet, when he claims that Tey's novel represents "sophomoric" historical research, he is in error. The technical problem of how the characters search for and discover the historical "facts" is the gut technical problem of the H/M. As anyone who has struggled with the research for an M.A. thesis knows, library research is dreadfully dull. How, then, do we justify the claim that the H/M is intrinsically interesting?

The answer is that it is the results of the research that are interesting, not the riffling through files and papers itself. The same applies to gumshoeing. The discovery is the thing. As the mystery writer has to gloss over the day-to-day drudgery of ferreting out evidence, so does the H/M writer have to do the same thing. The search is not thoroughly reprised. It is condensed, and the discoveries come easily and fast. How to make this grubbing through books and files interesting is the central technical problem for the H/M writer. It has never been done before. But it obviously can be done, as Tey has done it. As writers become more skilled over time, this situation will improve. At this moment, there are only four novels that qualify as H/Ms: *The Daughter of Time* by Tey, *The Cosgrove Report* and *Poor Richard's Game* by G. J. A. O'Toole, and *To Prove a Villain* by Guy Townsend. With only four examples of the genre extant, the state of the art is still primitive. Development is still very much going on. But Tey's and O'Toole's books have found instant and easy acceptability and profitability, even if badly targeted at their audience.

Guy Townsend's contribution to the development of the genre is not in technique—how to make the documentary research look interesting in itself as well as for its results—but in the invention of the "anti-thesis" gimmick. This is an unexpected development, as was the invention of the original H/M, a "thesis" type. It is an invention within an invention. Now that it has been done, one can see that such an evolution was implicit. But that is hindsight. Townsend had the foresight and did it. As someone who has thought long and hard about how H/Ms are to be done, this development took me completely by surprise. But here it is.

The H/M is truly a hybrid form, as much as the medical mystery. It is the result of a marriage between fiction and nonfiction in the same way that a mule is the result of a mating of an ass and a horse. Yet, unlike the mule, this mating is not sterile and can reproduce itself. Because the creator Tey died a year after *The Daughter of Time* came out, we cannot know how deliberate her creation was. I think she just muddled through. She developed an interest in the mystery of Richard III and then debated it in terms of the thing she normally did, novel-writing. Which is why she withheld information damaging to her thesis and without crediting her main source of information, Sir Clement Markham. In her own mind, she was just writing a novel, not a work of scholarship. She must not have been aware that she had pole-vaulted clear out of the mystery genre into a brand-new one. Those who do nothing should not fault those who do something for not having done still more. It is quite enough to create a new genre.

To Prove a Villain is right where Tey was wrong. But all other charges Townsend makes are to be rejected, and attributed to the heat of battle. However he is to be commended for having written a good read and for inventing the anti-thesis H/M. □

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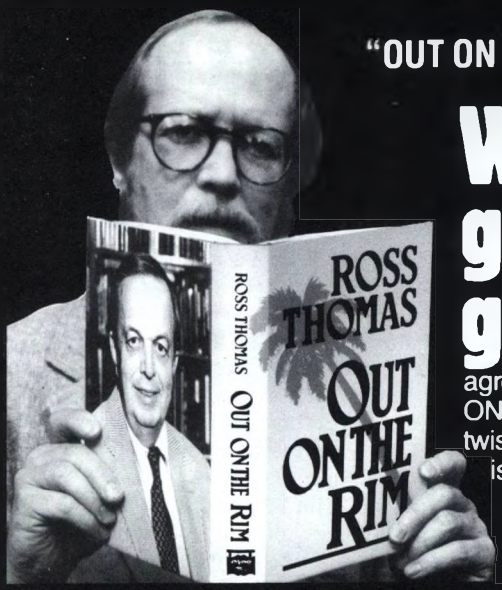

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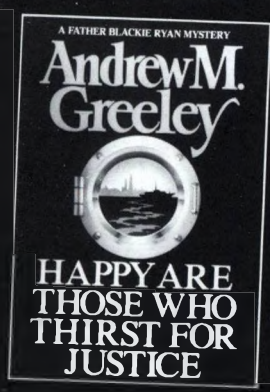

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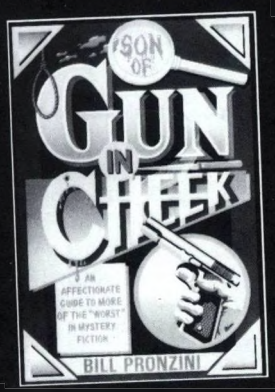

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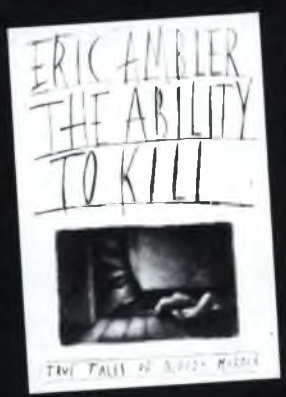

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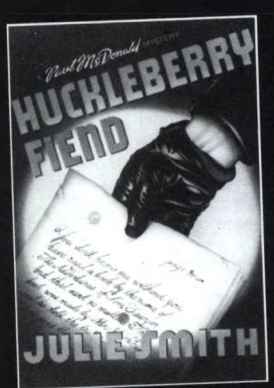

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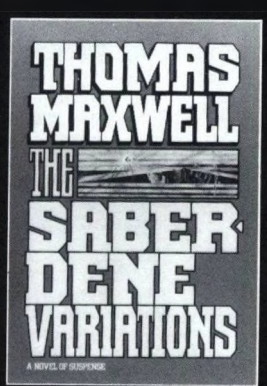

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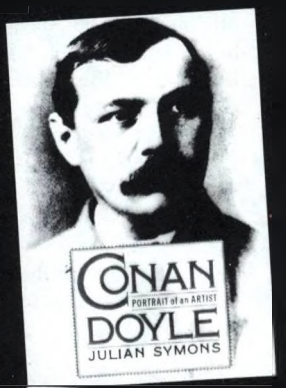

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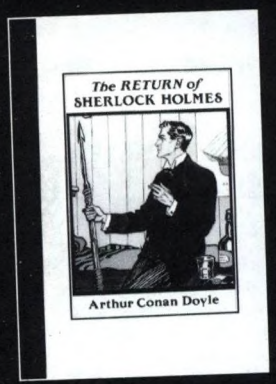

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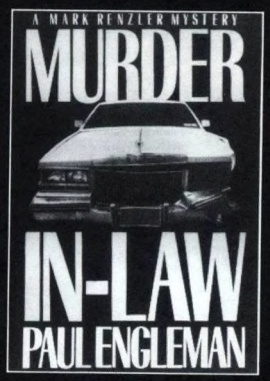

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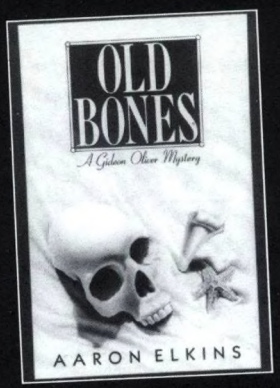

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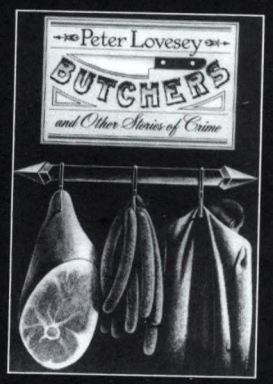

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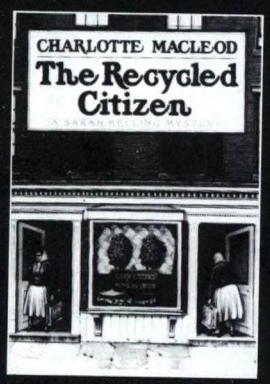

THE RECYCLED CITIZEN
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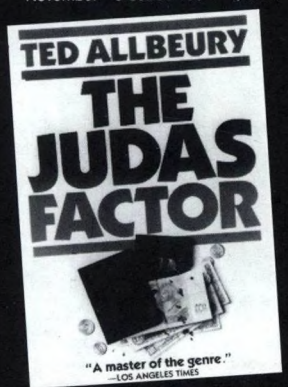

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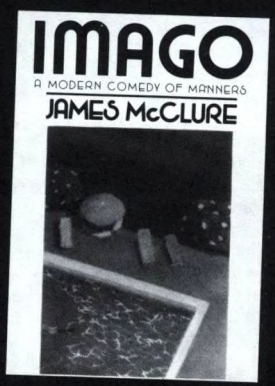

IMAGO
By James McClure
A world-weary, wife-weary doctor falls in love with a friend's 18-year-old daughter. The first nonmystery affair for McClure's "convincing characters and wry sense of humor."—N.Y. TIMES
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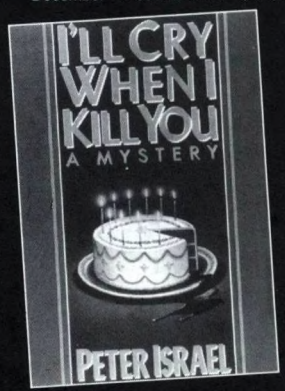

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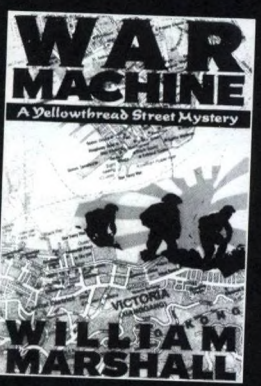

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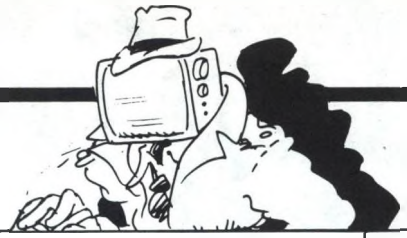
TAD on TV



BY RICHARD MEYERS

In a past letters page, a correspondent suggested that, if this magazine needs room, a "TAD on TV" column which considers only already-cancelled shows can be excised. Our illustrious and intrepid editor rallied to my defense, mumbling something about the wondrous age of videotape recorders in which we live. (I can just hear Michael now: "I don't mumble!") I have considered both point and counterpoint gentle hints, to finally explain, after something like six years, the raison d'column.

Gloriously, I am not like other reviewers. Some criticize. Some suggest what to watch and not to watch. All I do is consider. This is a scholarly publication, after all, and I am sure that said correspondent would not suggest that the book critics consider only novels still in print. *People* magazine is for a week's reading and out. *The Armchair Detective* is FOR THE RECORD.

This is why I do it. I probably watch more television that most of you combined anyway; my pathetic niche in the mystery world is, and has been, television, for one reason or another; so I consider it an honor (it better be; I get no honorarium) to keep you informed. The way I look at it: I watch so you will not have to. It makes no real difference whether the show is on or off by the time TAD and I get to it. (My opinions will seem just as stupid and short-sighted.) Series come, series go in the cold, hard, ugly world of television . . . This warm spot exists in the unique position of marking their passing.

I mean, after all, you cannot depend on my taste. A column or so ago, I took **Matlock** to task for being such an obvious ripoff of *Columbo* and *Perry Mason*. Its ripoff status has not changed, but it seems that the public's love for, and the talents of, star Andy Griffith (not to mention producer and creator Dean Hargrove) has held sway. *Matlock*, on NBC, has made it to ratings heaven, while a favorite of mine, **Spies**, languishes in ratings hell opposite it on CBS.

I liked the idea of a new spy show. Spies have not been in plentiful supply since the dearth of camp-espionage programs of the mid-'60s 007 craze. And I really liked the idea of George Hamilton starring as legendary super-secret agent Ian Stone. The part was originally for Tony Curtis, but he had to step out at the last minute. Hamilton filled the shoes as if they had been specially made for him.

HOUSTON KNIGHTS *STARS MICHAEL BECK (LEFT) AND MICHAEL PARE*

As each of the "golden era" actors of sophistication retire in the wake of more deadening entertainment, those remaining become more precious. And, while Hamilton has never been considered in the league of greats, his timing and *panache* is something to treasure in this modern age of sullen, stubbled, anti-heroes. It is pretty humbling to consider that Hamilton and Robert Wagner, performers at whom I scoffed a few years ago, I now look upon as the last vestiges of a bygone style.

Spies, in the meantime, has gone from an amusing little wine to piquant ginger ale. The pilot episode had the extravagant Stone teaching the espionage ropes to his new, naïve, bookish partner, played by Gary Kroger (who survived two stormy years on *Saturday Night Live*). As such, it was quite good, with many droll lines and cinematic surprises—as when Hamilton, in full tuxedo, skates out of an icy fog . . . where he has been romancing a figure skater in the middle of a rink.

In subsequent weeks, however, rather than plunge the pair into extroverted plots, in which they go out and take care of business, the stories have been introverted, wherein things happen to the partners, rather than their making things happen to others. Ben the bookworm falls in love with an enemy spy; Ben the bookworm thinks Stone is a double agent; Stone takes over the agency, etc. I long for the pair to break out of these "buddy show" clichés and take on the espionage genre's clichés. To do a number on *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*, in other words. I like the show. I just don't like what they are doing with it.

The same could be said of **Houston Knights**, a dour *Miami Vice*-like ditty on CBS. Here's how it goes, by the numbers. One, take a scintillating city (Dallas has already been taken). Two, take two swarthy hunks, make one a local boy and the other an outsider. Three, slather on a lot of production value. Four, make it about as realistic as "Pig Night" at Harry's Barbeque Heaven.

I was expecting to like this a whole lot less than I did upon watching the pilot. But, in the following weeks, it withered on me. Initially, I kind of liked the fact that the two Texas cops disliked each other and bickered constantly. But I subsequently realized I liked that because I didn't like them either. Then again, I have a very low threshold for pinch-faced hunks. I was astonished by the miscasting of Michael Beck, who plays local Houston detective Lundy, in the movie musical *Xanadu*, and was never that impressed with Michael Pare, who plays the sullen transferred Chicago cop La Fiamma

I am still saddened by the death of Richard Levinson. I had met him during the writing of *TV Detectives*, and interviewed him three times, the last for the recent TAD cover story. I had accepted for him, and presented to him, the first "Anthony Award"—given at the 1986 Bouchercon for the best television series. I had talked to him on the phone. I had said, before, during, and after I met him, that he and his partner William Link were not just two of the medium's best mystery talents, but two of the medium's best talents, period. I had always thought that they would be considered in the same breath with Rod Serling and Reginald Rose . . . that, indeed, their body of work would mark them as this era's best.

I am deeply distressed that I would have to write something that sounds so much like an obituary so soon. My sympathies to his loved ones, the television audience, and myself. I will miss him and his work. I hope Bill Link will be able to carry on. The medium still needs talents such as theirs.

(that's the moniker, folks), in movies such as *Streets of Fire* and *The Philadelphia Experiment*. About the only reason to watch is Robyn Douglass, a fine, fetching actress wildly miscast as the boys' police superior.

And your own enjoyment of the show will probably rest with your own resistance to the two of them spatting "What's your problem?" at each other throughout plots left over from *Charlie's Angels*. One week, a psycho-killer models himself after La Fiamma. The next, a buddy of Lundy's may be targeted by a bunch of Chicago mobsters. Talk about incest: can't any TV cops keep their friends out of the office?

This is a common, rotten malady afflicting the entire genre. It is not enough that every relative, friend, and casual acquaintance of Mike Hammer and Jessica Fletcher has to be either murdered or accused of murder—now every person who even comes in contact with the Miami and Houston bozos has to be a drug addict, drug pusher, shooter, or shootee. Can't the producers let the writers let the actors out of the incestuous sphere? Take this plot line, please!

Meanwhile, over at ABC, drastic steps are being taken. Whoever thought that being the last-place network for the past few years would lead to such extreme measures as **Max Headroom**? Max, of course, is the supposedly computerized individual whom Americans have come to know through magazine articles, then commercials and a cable television talk show. His fame literally preceeded him from England, where a television movie called *Twenty Minutes into the Future* captured the audience's imagination. It told of a 1984-type future in which television could not be turned off and an intrepid investigative reporter discovered that a new type of compressed commercial could make viewers explode.

This is what desperation has brought ABC-TV to: an anti-TV TV show. Even more hilarious: instead of simply retelecasting the British production, they remade it with (except in one case) American voices. Although not quite as freewheeling as the original version, the new *Max Headroom* is pretty heady stuff. As before, the character is created by a computer wiz in "Network 23's" research-and-development division, from the thoughts of Edison Carter, the investigative reporter. The character's name comes from the last thing the reporter saw before an accident which put him in the scientist's clutches: a parking-garage sign warning drivers of the ceiling's "MAX(imum) HEADROOM." Now Max and Edison team up to battle the extreme ills of their media-stuffed society.

Max is not actually computerized, although the show's originators tried to keep that secret for a while, much to the dismay and detriment of Matt Frewer, the actor playing both Carter and Max. (Funny—they tried to pull a "Network 23" on him themselves.) Actually, film of Matt in Max makeup is "digitalized."

You do not have to know what that means to enjoy the unusual show, which is the latest result of the "sarcasm generation." That is, they who take nothing seriously, which has given rise to *The David Letterman Show*, *Moonlighting*, and this. Television has taught many not to trust anything, least of all the medium itself, so these self-satires succeed in the resulting skeptical vacuum.

This lack of credibility is not limited to these shores, however. Witness **Dead Head**, the second "limited series" in the Arts & Entertainment channel's new English-imported anthology program *Suspense*. Its first, *Lovejoy*, based on the Jonathan Gash novels of intrigue in the antiques trade, just got better and better in its eight weeks, making me long for many more. With any luck, the resulting sales of Gash's two new books (*Moonspender* in hardcover and *The Tartan Sell* in paperback) will inspire the British producers to rehire Ian MacShane for another eight episodes (or ten or twenty).

Dead Head, on the other hand, is another kettle of kippers. Written by Howard Brenton, as a four-part video version of an espionage game, it tells of a likable lowlife named Eddie Cass (played by Denis Lawson) who is given a decapitated cranium in a hatbox. From there, it's "Eddie Through the Looking Glass" as muckety-mucks and scuzzbuckets alike alternately chase, and are chased by, him. He wants to know who done it, and those who aid him turn out to be either killed or the killers. He soon discovers that he can trust no one, least of all his beautiful, blonde wife, who has taken up with the high-ranking government officials . . . one of whom, it becomes apparent, is the psychotic murderer and dismemberer of women.

I have been noticing for some time just how consumed by guilt much of the British entertainment industry is. In movies such as *Privates on Parade* and *A Private Function*, as well as television shows like this one, they seem so very anxious to tell all just what scum they are; how nasty, rotten, petty, and awful the Englishman is. They seem to want the entire country to writhe in a fit of self-loathing.

As you may have gathered, *Dead Head* is very strange stuff, filmed in a likewise style as Eddie is befriended and tortured by odd characters, like a mincing manic-depressive secret agent and a rastafarian crime king. It is also extremely watchable and extremely entertaining until it comes time to tie up all the loose ends. Eddie has witnessed murders on golf courses and under city bridges (one by a silenced revolver . . . will they never learn that you *can't* silence a revolver?), but he has been treated like a rat in a maze. Finally, he comes to the end, discovers that his wife's sexy ways have kept him alive, and is told who the murderer is (we never are).

"Oh," he says. "That's different."

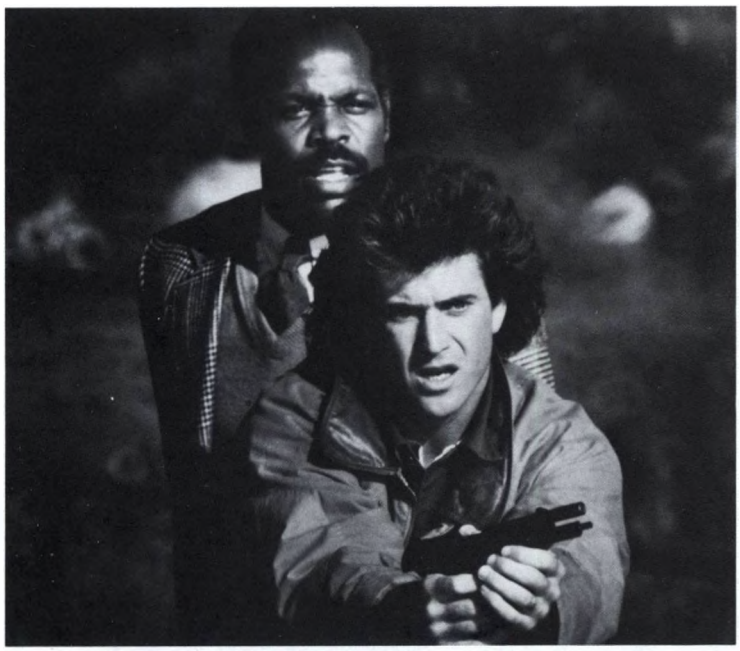
When last we see Eddie Cass, he is with his wife in Bermuda, happily living off the half-million dollars the government paid him to get rid of the last two decapitated heads (they assure him that there will be no more). "Goodbye Eddie Cass," reads the legend after the final credits. "A hero for our times."

How clever. How facile. How cynical. "But I *meant* it that way," the filmmakers would no doubt cry. Great. Terrific. Where does that leave us? To just say "Why bother?" like the filmmakers?

No chance, jerkface. We're better than that. Watch Richard Levinson. Ask William Link. Good work lives on. □

TAD at the Movies

BY THOMAS GODFREY



***LETHAL* GIBSON AND GLOVER OUT-GUNNED THEIR MATERIAL *IN* LETHAL WEAPON.**

Lethal Weapon (1987) Danny Glover, Mel Gibson, Gary Busey (D: Richard Donner)

Lethal Weapon brings the same frustrations to the screen that we have been experiencing all decade in the mystery-suspense field: half-baked stories in half-hearted productions. Here, better may be worse, for much of the early portion of the film is promising and well done, which makes its later disintegration all the more dismal.

And it does start strongly with Danny Glover (*Places in the Heart, Witness*) as an LAPD detective, head of a *Cosby Show*-style family, facing the twin crises of a fiftieth birthday and a new partner—flaky, shaky Mel Gibson.

Gibson, a wacko who lives life just inches away from the Edge, has a death wish the size of the National Debt.

As the film opens, a nymphet hooker takes a swan dive off the balcony of a highrise apartment complex onto the roof of a passing car. This adolescent turns out to be the estranged daughter of an old friend of Glover's, who was trying to reach him just before the incident.

As Crazy Mel and Middle-American Danny investigate, they discover that the girl was poisoned before she jumped, that her death is part of a much larger conspiracy, that Glover's friend is not just a bereaved father, and that the two men grow to like each other. That's a full plate on which to feed a good mystery-suspense plot.

As in *Places in the Heart*, Glover brings warmth and a masculine sweetness to his character. You can see why the producers thought he could carry this film, and with a little help he might have. Gibson, unexpectedly in what is the character part, romanticized with a dead wife mourned and a flirtation with Glover's daughter, is very engaging, though he gives us a few too many wide-eyed stares and flared nostrils. We know that this guy is nuts from the moment we see him, and what we crave is elucidations, not reminders.

But, *then*—and it is a *big* dropping off—this methodically set-up plot and carefully crafted characterizations are plunged into a hopeless soup of developments that bring in a laughable showdown in the desert, a sex-drenched kidnapping, assorted shootings, high-speed car chases, a helicopter assassination, electrocution tortures, and a surpassingly stupid male mudwrestling finale.

What a miserable end to such a promising picture. It's as if the original writer were fired about mid-picture and the producer brought in his teenaged son-in-law to finish it off. Whatever the explanation, someone has made a major blunder in not trusting good actors and some basically good material. Maybe this was all done for its box office thrill value, but it is no thrill watching good talent spiraling down the creative drain. Is there anybody out there who understands how to put a good action-adventure film together? The makers of *Lethal Weapon* don't seem to have a clue.

Eight Million Ways to Die (1986) Jeff Bridges, Rosanna Arquette, Alexandra Paul (D: Hal Ashby)

Strained, silly thriller, adapted from Lawrence Block's series book of the same title, about an alcoholic ex-cop (Bridges) getting involved with a high-priced call girl (Paul) who is later murdered.

Oscar winner Oliver Stone (*Platoon*) is credited with co-scripting this feeble collection of contemporary mystery-suspense clichés. The result is so synthetic, so illogical, that I doubt there is a believable scene in the picture. Some of this stuff is also so old that even television has abandoned it. Instead of drawing you into the mystery, this story keeps putting you off with its clumsy tricks and dimwitted dialogue.

Bridges is his usual competent self as tough ex-cop Matt Scudder, however dull he may be in the party scenes and unconvincingly overdrawn in his alcoholic down-and-out sequences. The latter comes right out of the Joan Crawford stare-'em-dead school of overacting. It reminded me of Professor Irwin Corey doing *The Lost Weekend*.

Arquette, as yet another hooker and friend of the dead woman, is pretty much a loss, acting in an uninvolved, uninterested fashion. You keep noticing everything else when she is on the screen. Even the smell of popcorn wafting in from the lobby is liable to upstage her.

Though a lot of profanity would be natural to these settings, Stone and Co. seem to have decided to let the actors improvise a swearing contest in several of the scenes. The action grinds to a halt as the players bob around, tossing obscenities at each other. It has all the dramatic value of a tie-up on the freeway.

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The ending compounds the film's shortcomings, sliding from a swear-down shootup to a commando raid to a car chase to another shootup. The villains are so full of lead at the end, you may wonder how they can get up just from the sheer added weight. You may also have the same problem struggling back to your feet when the theater lights come up.

The great mystery of *Eight Million Ways to Die* is that director Hal Ashby (*Shampoo, Harold and Maude*) was within a hundred miles of it during the shooting. Could this be another Hal Ashby? Nothing here gets above an episodic TV level.

Block should sue. As immortalized here, his Matt Scudder becomes one of the least interesting private eyes ever brought to the screen. In fact, Scudder is so unmemorable that he raises the possibility of a poor film realization having a negative impact on an otherwise successful book series.

BRIDGES AND ARQUETTE SUFFERED THROUGH EIGHT MILLION WAYS TO DIE.

Blue City (1986) Judd Nelson, Ally Sheedy, Paul Winfield (D: Michelle Manning)

This early Ross Macdonald novel about a rebellious boy who becomes a man by solving the mystery of his father's murder has been moved up forty years and given the style of a contemporary "brat-pack" film. The original story, an uneven but involving fantasy about adolescents confronting adult corruptions, was deeply rooted in the disillusionment that followed World War II. The boy who had

ROBERT MITCHUM—JUST ABOUT THE TIME OF WHEN STRANGERS MARRY—*A CLASSIC BY ANY YARDSTICK*

run away had been in the service and returned to his coastal Florida home town to find it much changed after the war. The corruption and duplicity that had always been there under the surface was now out in the open. In many ways, this was the *Blue Velvet* of its generation.

A lot of these underpinnings are lost in the updating, co-scripted by Walter Hill (*Southern Comfort, Streets of Fire*). Hill and his colleagues have oversimplified, demeaned, and jerry-built the moody, convoluted Macdonald plot into something much less challenging. The murderer finally gives himself away almost off-handedly. The mystery is unraveled with ham-fisted intricacy.

Nelson is miscast, playing the introspective kid with all the depth of an Encino-bred college freshman at his first party weekend. The character never develops, and we never get involved in his struggles. This emotional distancing is compounded by the casting of Ally Sheedy as the girl-he-finds-back-home. She is an irritating, vacuous actress, as narcissistic and shallow as a Jordache jeans commercial. Together, they make an unappealing, unsympathetic screen couple. If they ever film the Roxanne Pulitzer story, this may be the pair to do it with.

Only Paul Winfield, as the hungry, overindulged police chief, stands out in a mediocre cast, and he shows up the limitations of the other actors very dramatically. Sadly, like Ry Cooder's excellent music, his art is wasted on second-rate material, a compromised film that will appeal neither to the teen-scene audience nor to Macdonald's many loyal readers.

As an antidote to the current mediocrity, the following revival turned up on cable television:

When Strangers Marry (*Betrayed*) (1944) Kim Hunter, Robert Mitchum, Dean Jagger (D: William Castle)

Neat, efficient thriller made on a tiny budget by the King Brothers, a pair of independent producers who released their modest offerings through various studios. They really hit the jackpot here with excellent performances by Mitchum and Oscar winners Hunter (*A Streetcar Named Desire*) and Jagger (*Twelve O'Clock High*) at the starts of their notable careers. It was also one of director William Castle's earlier efforts. He had done a few series assignments (*Crime Doctor, The Whistler*) previously and would go on to a series of gimmicky thrillers (*The Tingler, I Saw What You Did*), none of which surpassed the sure stylistic mastery on display here.

Either the King Brothers were incredibly lucky or they knew talent in the bud when they saw it, for they also had the services of screenwriter Philip Yordan (*Detective Story, The Big Combo, Broken Lance, El Cid*) and composer Dimitri Tiomkin (*High Noon, The High and the Mighty, Lost Horizon*) to bolster this suspenseful tale about a waitress who marries a salesman whom she barely knows and later has cause to wonder if he is a murderer after he suddenly disappears.

There are many sure-fire *noir* elements—shadowy city streets, flashing neon signs outside cheap hotel windows, eccentric camera angles, dark corridors, and ambiguous secondary characters. No apologies need be made for the budget. *When Strangers Marry* is a genuine mystery-suspense classic by any yardstick.

Finally—a big ray of hope on the filmic horizon, via a postcard from H. R. F. Keating in Bombay, where the Ivory-Merchant team (*Room with a View, The Bostonians*) have begun work on their adaptation of his *A Perfect Murder*. □

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Dial N for Nonsense

BY LOUIS PHILLIPS

Richard Watts, Jr. on Watson and Holmes

For many years, Richard Watts, Jr. was the number one drama critic for the New York *Post*. In his "Two on the Aisle" column for Thursday, April 10, 1951, he wrote: "I don't believe James Agate's theory that Samuel Weller had contempt for Mr. Pickwick, but I have always suspected that, in his later years, Dr. Watson came to hate the patronizing Sherlock Holmes." I wonder if many other readers agree with Watts's theory.

Great Moments in the History of Crime

KIND BURGLAR
FEEDS THE KITTY

Philadelphia. April 16, 1951. (UP) A kind burglar stole two watches from tailor Michael Corso, but fed the family cat a pint of cream before making his getaway, police said today.

THIEVES PHONE FOR COMBINATION;
OWNER GIVES IT TO SAVE SAFE

July 2, 1954. Thieves who managed to steal a heavy safe containing $1,200 cash from Giffel's Supermarket early Monday morning found they still had a problem. They could not open the thing.

Monday night, at the height of the electric storm, the market owners received a telephone call. "We just want your money," a voice said. The caller asked for the combination, offering in return to leave the strong box and a quantity of checks intact.

The telephone caller got the combination and hung up. Detectives were notified.

To the younger Giffel, getting a safe back in one piece is no small matter. "On one occasion, we had one stolen and broken open. We had to haul it back to the store, and then pay to have it hauled off as junk."

Armchair Detective Jokebook: Chestnut #1

MURDERER: Is that the lawyer you've picked out to defend me?

JUDGE: Yes. He's your lawyer.

MURDERER: Tell, me, Judge, if he should die, would I be assigned another lawyer?

JUDGE: Yes, you would.

MURDERER: Could I see him alone for a few minutes?

On Danger

Danger is a word that often crops up in the mystery reader's vocabulary, but have you ever wondered about the origin of the word? Basil Hargrave, in his book *Origins and Meanings of Popular Phrases and Names* (1932), tells his readers: "There are many survivals in our present-day words of the old fashioned feudal system, and the word 'danger' is a case in point. According to Skeat, it comes to us through the old French *dangier*, from the Latin *Dominus*, a lord, and originally it implied the absolute power possessed by the feudal lord – hence, the power to hurt, which is the underlying meaning of danger."

It's Murder

Here is an easy trivia question for the reader of TAD. Can you come up with at least ten movies the titles of which contain the word MURDER?

Some possible answers:

1. *Murder, He Says* (1945)
2. *Murder, My Sweet* (1945)
3. *Murder at the Gallop* (1963)
4. *Murder By the Clock* (1931)
5. *Murder in Reverse* (1947)
6. *Murder in the Music Hall* (1946)
7. *Murder Most Foul* (1965)
8. *Murder Will Out* (1930, 1953)
9. *Murder on a Bridle Path* (1936)
10. *Murder on a Honeymoon* (1935)
11. *The Alphabet Murders* (1966)

Bibliographical Notes from All Over

The Spring 1986 issue of *South Dakota Review* is a Ross Macdonald issue, featuring essays by Richard Snodgrass, T. R. Steiner, L. L. Lee, Paul Skenazy, Dennis Lynds, and John Milton. Dennis Lynds's contribution is called "Expanding the *Roman Noir:* Ross Macdonald's Legacy to Mystery/Detective Authors."

If you did not read the December 8, 1986 issue of *People*, then you missed a very charming short profile of P. D. James. The bio by Joyce Walder quotes James as saying: "[I]t is not the method of murder that interests me. I think most of us apply a coat of varnish to our lives, and murder cracks it open. And to study people under that influence is absolutely fascinating."

The front page of the January 4, 1987 *New York Times Book Review* features an essay on Sherlock Holmes, "The Sainted Sleuth, Still on the Case" by Anthony Burgess. Burgess also points out how the French Structuralists have paid homage to Agatha Christie: "The late Roland Barthes, in his book about degree-zero style, has her name in his index more times than that of Shakespeare or Racine." □

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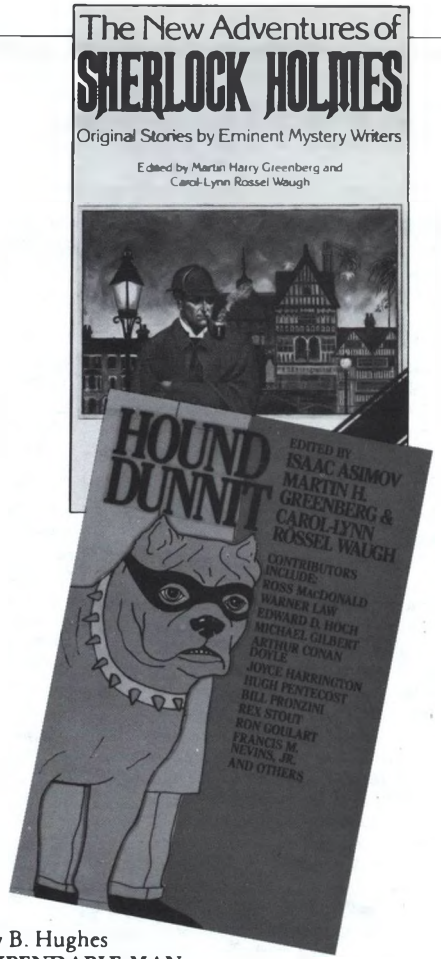

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Book Reviews

Cozy

A Shroud for Delilah by Anthea Fraser. New York: Doubleday, 1986. $12.96

This author is not to be confused with Lady Antonia Fraser, even though both are currently active British mystery writers. Less familiar to readers, although this is her tenth book, Anthea Fraser provides a light, satisfying, and suspenseful novel which is loaded with characters who might be guilty of the serial murders at hand.

The scene is a village in Britain today. It is clear that Kate Romilly is not the criminal. Attractive and intelligent, she is serving in the role of amateur detective while also definitely in a vulnerable position to be the next victim. Part of the time, she is afraid, but the reader can be alarmed at other moments when she seems unmindful of the risks she is taking.

With the exception of Kate's young son Josh, every other person who comes into the story is rapidly suggested as one who could well be the killer. Scene after scene gives every indication that violence to Kate is seconds away. Nobody can be trusted.

There is Michael, Kate's husband. He has repeatedly been unfaithful, Kate has just left him, and Michael happens to be a journalist covering the story of the first murder in which "DELILAH" has been written in lipstick on the mirror. It is also revealed that Michael has been acquainted with the dead woman, a divorcee.

Kate takes Josh and goes to live with her friends, Madge and Paul. The second murder takes place in this new neighborhood, evidence develops that Paul is having an affair with an artist, and suspicion also grows when observing the behavior of three people in the antique shop where Kate is working. Any of the others on the staff at Pennyfarthings might be planning to murder Kate.

The mystery is sustained and suspense never fades even though the story is told at a slow, quiet pace. One never knows when another sign of danger to Kate will appear, or when one of the potential murderers will behave in a menacing way, revealing his true nature. Meanwhile, the focus is on mundane daily matters such as getting Josh to school or on the growing romance between Kate and her employer (who continues to remain under suspicion).

In another part of the story, and keeping all the clues on the table, there is the assembly of characters who represent the law. Detective Chief Inspector Webb is the key person here, and he solves the case just in time.

There are few elements which are common to British cozies, but Anthea Fraser does nimbly avoid the distracted or disjointed construction present in some recent "totally modern" mysteries. *A Shroud for Delilah* is conventional, all right, but far from dull.

—Martin Fass

The Claverton Affair by John Rhode. New York: Harper and Row, 1986.

The Claverton Affair is one of those puzzles the British do best. Wrapped in gloom and shrouded in Spiritualism, the story gives us a murder which could not possibly have occurred and which, indeed, cannot even be proved to be a murder.

Dr. Priestly, physician and amateur detective, is upset and mystified by the death of his old friend, Sir John Claverton. Claverton, ill of a mild stomach complaint, was making a steady recovery, helped by the nursing of his niece, Helen Littlecote. All seems well until Claverton's physician is

called from town. Two days later, Claverton is dead of an unexpected acute gastric inflammation. Priestly is sure that the death is murder, but an autopsy reveals no poison or unusual circumstance. Was it murder, and who stood to profit?

Claverton was an old man with a fortune for his heirs. These include his niece Helen, her mother, Claverton's long-estranged sister, and a nephew, Ivor Durnford. All are in and out of the Claverton house daily. Helen nurses Sir John while her mother, a professional medium, sits brooding in the parlor, waiting for something to happen. Ivor Durnford comes and goes from his job as a research chemist, hoping for a fortune. When the will is read, everyone receives a shock as the principal heirs are the young woman and her mother who live far north of London. Not the Littlecotes, Durnford, nor Priestly, who is appointed a trustee of the will, has ever heard of these two women, who appear to be ordinary, pleasant, well-liked people. How do these women, the younger only fifteen, come to be Claverton's heirs?

Three months pass with no sign of either murder or murderer. The gloomy old Claverton house is sold and razed to the ground. The Littlecotes take a depressing flat in Putney, and Durnford quits his job to do independent research. The heirs, Mary Archer and her mother, continue their placid lives in a country village when things begin to happen. Mrs. Archer receives a blackmail note, and Mary and a friend are shot at in a dark country lane. Who is behind this chain of odd and unproven events? Priestly finds the solution with a little help from Scotland Yard, a séance, and some strange flames. Sir John was indeed murdered in a clever and masterful fashion.

These seemingly impossible British mysteries of the 1930s appeal to the intellect. They are perfectly polished gems of brain-teasers which cry out to be examined closely for the tiny flaws which will lead to their solutions. *The Claverton Affair*, first published in 1933, is such a tale and has the added benefit of rarely referring to its age. Aside from a slight air of formality and an occasional allusion to the War (World War I), the story could come from a declining London side-street today. The book is the perfect choice for the fan of the classic puzzle mystery.

—Lynda Painton

The Missing Mr. Mosley by John Greenwood. New York: Bantam, 1986. $2.95

A gallows is advertised for sale in Hemp Valley. The regular C.I.D. man on the scene, Jack Mosley, is on annual leave, so Detective Superintendent Grimshaw visits the valley to investigate the matter of a gallows for sale. With this strange beginning, a stranger tale unfolds of life in the isolated English countryside.

When Grimshaw and Sergeant Beamish arrive in the valley, the search for the gallows is thwarted by the disappearance of an old woman. Was she kidnapped, and why is Inspector Mosley's briar pipe found at the scene of the disappearance? Mosley is found using his leave to participate in a local "neighboring" program of helping the valley's elderly with spring chores. He has no intention of being sidetracked from this program and even ropes in Beamish to help. As Mosley makes his way through the valley, hanging out curtains, tuning pianos, and digging gardens, Beamish trails behind him, hoping against hope to discover the truth of the local situation. Indeed, the situation in Hemp Valley is rapidly deteriorating. The search for the missing person is marked with scattered women's clothing, a missing child, and another missing woman. During the search, six working sets of gallows are discovered to be in Hemp Valley. When Mosley takes himself off for Kenya, Grimshaw sees little

hope of discovering the mysteries of Hempshaw End and Hemp Valley.

John Greenwood, the pseudonym of the British writer who is Inspector Mosley's creator, has given the reader a delightful tale of those who people the odd corners of rural England. The characterizations of the close, reticent, and suspicious inhabitants of an isolated valley are perfect. The outside does not stand a chance, and it is fun to watch Grimshaw and Beamish chasing around after Mosley as they try to puzzle out the incomprehensible activities of Hemp Valley.

—Lynda Painton

The Crack in the Teacup by Michael Gilbert. New York: Harper and Row, 1986. $3.50

Harper and Row's Perennial Library series here reissues Michael Gilbert's engaging 1966 *Bildungsroman*-cum-mystery, featuring a somewhat wet-behind-the-ears but essentially solid young British solicitor, Anthony Brydon, and his intelligent, assertive secretary and growing love-interest, Ann Weaver. Anthony's emotional growth and risk-taking takes a quantum leap when a chance event drops him —although not as precipitously as happens to his counterpart in Michael Innes's *From London Far*—into a mess he did not even know existed. Anthony's coincidental observance of the brutal beating of two youths ejected from the Pleasuredome (a seaside attraction that features swimming pool, bowling lanes, and dancing) in his home town of Sandling places him in the middle of a local land-development issue that involves many of the town's old and newly prominent citizens.

Anthony and Ann employ their various sleuthing skills to track down deed records and conduct titles searches, to figure out the local newspaper's role in the upcoming borough council elections, and to see who benefits from plans to develop the town's seashore attractions. Anthony's dry but gentle humor and his "old money and power" ties to Sandling's rich and influential citizens provide a perfect foil to Ann's logical insights and galvanizing instincts. In effect, she is a wonderful counterpart to his staidness, well-meaningness, and honesty. Telling him not to trust others as much as he trusts himself, she prods him to look beneath the surface, saying: "There's a thing I read when I was at school that always gave me the creeps. 'The glacier knocks in the cupboard, the desert sighs in the bed, and the crack in the teacup opens a lane to the land of the dead'." Ann's allusion to W. H. Auden intrigues Anthony, who initially reiterates incredulously: "You think Sandling is all right on the surface, but rotten underneath," and who later watches the crack in the teacup widen into a fissure, comes to recognize the drawbacks of a bureaucracy that his profession supports.

This reissue of *The Crack in the Teacup* benefits not only older readers who will recall the particular style of mystery that Michael Gilbert—and Andrew Garve, for example—fine-honed in the 1950s and '60s but also newer readers who will enjoy the mixture of puzzle, social problem, and romantic relationships at which Gilbert excells. Gilbert here follows a tried-and-true recipe for detection-cum-romance, but he does so with a careful adherence to stylistic features. The dialogue rings true, the settings and characterizations are carefully drawn, and the case is depicted as being worthy of investigation—and, what is most commendable and what makes for a "good read" is that none of it comes across as precious. *That* is good writing.

—Susan L. Clark

Anthology

Mystery in the Mainstream edited by Bill Pronzini, Barry N. Malzberg and Martin H. Greenberg. New York: Morrow, 1986. $18.95

Little-known crime stories by world-renowned authors are resurrected in *Mystery in the Mainstream*, a new anthology of suspenseful and thought-provoking tales.

The late Ellery Queen, who once edited a volume with a similar motif, *The Literature of Crime*, once stated that: "Few people realize—few critics, too—that nearly every world-famous author, throughout the entire history of literature, has tried his hand at writing the detective or crime story." Editors Pronzini, Malzberg, and Greenberg, among the busiest and most knowledgeable anthologists of suspense and science fiction, concur with Queen and, in an illuminating introduction, trace the criminous theme from Homer's *Iliad* through *The Canterbury Tales*, plays by Shakespeare, and works by Sir Walter Scott, Honoré de Balzac, Victor Hugo, Feodor Dostoyevsky, Joseph Conrad, and Mark Twain.

Among the mainstream writers who have made lasting contributions to the development of the mystery genre, the editors enumerate Edgar Allan Poe, who "in but five tales anticipated every major plot device associated with the form"; Charles Dickens, who "in his unfinished and posthumously published *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* provided an unsolved mystery that has tantalized readers and scholars for well over a century"; and Wilkie Collins, whose *The Moonstone* and *The Woman in White* are "oft-imitated giants of the Gothic crime novel." The editors continue their treatise with twentieth-century authors who influenced, by style and substance, the genre's short-story output—notably Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, and James M. Cain —and theorize that "whatever the type of crime story mainstream writers choose to write, they generally do it well." Based on the 21 entries collected in *Mystery in the Mainstream*, they do it very well.

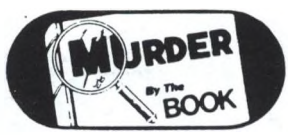
Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804–1864) is introduced as "the first American writer to explore the dark side of human nature." His short story "The Birthmark" is a brooding and powerful narrative about an eminent scientist troubled by a slight defect in his wife's perfect beauty and the tragic consequences of tampering with the mystery of life.

"A Pair of Gloves" is one of several excursions that Charles Dickens (1812–1870) made into the realm of crime. It is a short-short about the stabbing murder of a young woman and an early example of the police procedural. "The Bitter Bit" by Wilkie Collins (1824–1889) is the first recorded humorous detective story. It unfolds in the form of droll correspondence between Chief Inspector Francis Theakstone of the London Detective Police and an extraordinarily conceited member of the force who is assigned to investigate a case of robbery.

Other lighthearted yarns included in the anthology are "Mr. Brisher's Treasure" by H. G. Wells (1866–1946), in which a treasure hunt proves to be the downfall of a shy suitor (or does it?); "Without the Option" by P. G. Wodehouse (1881–1975), featuring the inimitable duo of Jeeves and Bertie Wooster in a comic misadventure; "How Mr. Hogan Robbed a Bank" by John Steinbeck (1902–1968), a rollicking heist caper; and "The Interview," in which Evan Hunter—creator of the "87th Precinct" saga under the pseudonym Ed McBain—throws satirical darts at an extremely cynical and pompous movie director who may, or may not, have caused the drowning of a leading lady during the shooting of his latest epic.

Two important Russian authors are included in the anthology. Leo Tolstoy's (1828–1910) "God Sees the Truth but Waits" is a deceptively simple tale of crime and punishment under Czarist rule. Anton Chekhov's (1860–1904) "The Bet" is a tale of pure suspense, the theme of which is capital punishment *vs.* life imprisonment. The main locale of each story is a state prison.

"The Killer," an early short story, almost



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completely unknown, by Norman Mailer (who, according to the editors, "is generally acknowledged, even by his detractors, as being the most significant and probably the most talented living American writer") also unfolds in jail. The protagonist is a model prisoner anxiously awaiting parole.

A few additional modern mainstream American authors are represented in the volume. Bernard Malamud (1914-1986), whose honors include the National Book Award for 1959 and 1967, the Pulitzer Prize in 1967 (for his novel *The Fixer*), and the O. Henry Award for short fiction in 1969 and 1973, depicts in "My Son the Murderer" a total estrangement between father and son, related in the unusual mode of interweaving —even in the same paragraph—the inner thoughts of both characters. Joyce Carol Oates, whose novel *Them* won the National Book Award in 1969 and whose briefer fiction graces almost twenty volumes of Best American Short Stories, appears here with "Sentimental Journey." It is a study of a lonely, over-the-hill woman who renews a relationship with a former high school classmate with terrifying results.

Budd Schulberg's explosive "Murder on the Waterfront" is sure to intrigue everyone who remembers Schulberg's screenplay for the Academy Award-winning film *On the Waterfront*. Famous playwright Arthur Miller, noted for his probing analyses of family relations in such plays as *All My Sons* and *Death of a Salesman*, has contributed here a tongue-in-cheek vignette about the theft of $91,000 and the dilemma facing the robbery victims—an elderly married couple—whether to inform the police, as the cash money was not entered "on any ledger or income-tax form."

James M. Cain's (1892-1977) never-before-collected story of a hardboiled "Cigarette Girl" is the one disappointing entry in the collection. Its plot and dialogue are but pale echoes of the author's metallic, riveting *Double Indemnity* and *The Postman Always Rings Twice*.

The editors introduce Ambrose Bierce (1842-1914?) thus: "Although he wrote relatively few mystery stories, Ambrose Bierce himself became one of the great real-life mysteries when he disappeared in Mexico in 1914, a disappearance that has never been fully explained . . . It is an enigma that Bierce himself would have relished . . . His caustic pen and his fascination with death and horror earned him the nickname 'Bitter Bierce'; his work has been called, among other things, "Paranoid,' 'Malevolent' and 'Venomous' "—assessments that may be applied to "A Watcher by the Dead," a twisty, memorable tale about a creepy practical joke that fatally backfires.

"An important figure in American letters in the early part of this century, Edith Wharton (1862-1937)," state the editors, "understood the human condition and wrote of it with considerable sensitivity and intensity." As evidenced by "Bewitched," a haunting story of a love that is stronger than death, Wharton has a deceptively quiet style that endows her macabre themes with potency and wallop. Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) is known primarily for *The Jungle Book*, *Captains Courageous*, *Kim*, and fiction set in India under British rule. "The Return of Imray" is an atmospheric murder story that takes place on the Indian frontier. John Galsworthy (1867-1933), winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1932, whose *The Forsyte Saga* became a long-running television series, penned "The Neighbors," a pensive folk tale about larger-than-life country people victimized by their primitive, savage emotions.

The gem of the collection is arguably Aldous Huxley's (1894-1963) "The Gioconda Smile." The author's 1932 dystopian novel *Brave New World* is considered one of the landmark works of its type. The editors reveal that "Huxley was infatuated with mysticism and openly experimented with hallucinating drugs toward the end of his life." "The Gioconda Smile" is a mesmerizing study of a modern Don Juan who gets entangled with three volatile women, causing the eruption of whirlpool emotions. Step by step, the spiderweb proceedings depict the inevitable murder of the man's wife and his fatal entrapment through circumstantial evidence.

Almost without exception, the stories assembled in *Mystery in the Mainstream* linger in the reader's mind long after putting the book down. Whether taking the form of the pure detective puzzle, the psychological thriller, or any of the genre's other variations, these yarns will appeal to the fan of crime fiction, the literary aficionado, and everyone interested in quality storytelling.

—Amnon Kabatchnik

Police Procedural

The Rattle-Rat by Janwillem van de Wetering. New York: Ballantine, 1986. $3.50

What does an asthmatic rat have to do with murder? The answer is: not much. Or a great deal. It all depends. In *The Rattle-Rat*, there is a connection, however tenuous, between the rat of the title and a mysterious fire on the water of Amsterdam's Inner Harbor. The fire, witnessed by an inebriated constable, leads to the discovery of a badly burned corpse. A charred skull with what might be a bullet hole in it, some bones, the remains of a pen with the letters ORL still distinguishable —these are the clues that send the Municipal Murder Brigade from Amsterdam to Friesland, where they encounter, among other memorable characters, Eddy the pet rat.

Van de Wetering's style can only be described as inimitable. There is none other like it, certainly not in the mystery field. If the term Murder Brigade evokes images of a small-town fire brigade rushing to extinguish a blaze with wooden buckets and a horse-drawn handpump, you are not too far off the mark. In *The Rattle-Rat*, real murders occur, real people get roughed up and killed. But there is a comic-opera quality to the events,

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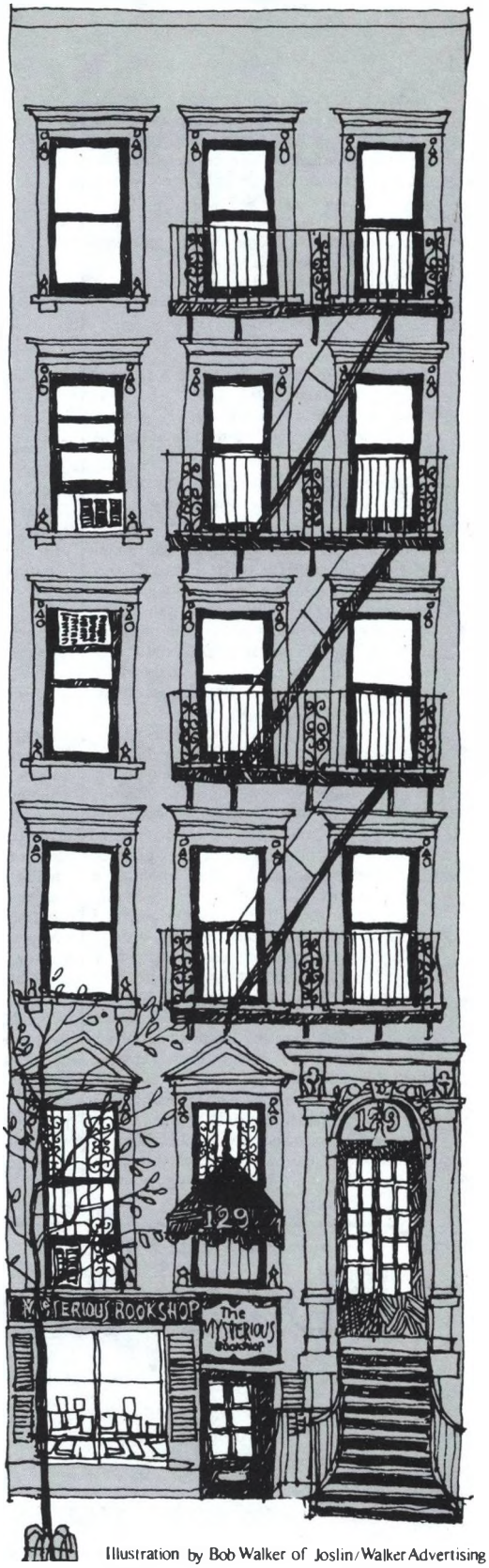


Illustration by Bob Walker of Joslin/Walker Advertising

underscored by the foibles of the principal characters: adjutant Grijpstra, Sergeant de Gier, Detective First Class Simon Cardozo, and the commissaris. Van de Wetering presents his characters satirically, yet with a gentle affection and humanity that makes them, in the end, more real to us than if depicted with the grainy realism typical of most police procedurals.

This is a fine entry in the series. Read it.

—Edward Lodi

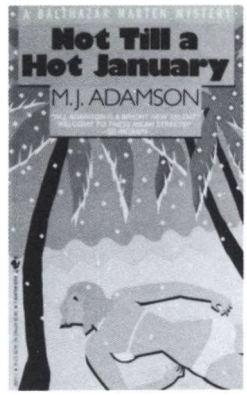
Not Till a Hot January by M. J. Adamson. New York: Bantam, 1987. $2.95

In *Much Ado About Nothing*, Shakespeare creates an exchange between an uncle and his niece:

LEONATO: You will never run mad, niece.
BEATRICE: No, not till a hot January.

The hot January that finds New York police lieutenant Balthazar Marten in San Juan, Puerto Rico, offers a twist on that Shakespearean quote when three young women associated with the university, all athletes, are discovered strangled by an assailant or assailants familiar with martial arts/Special Forces fighting techniques. Balthazar is, to be sure, a specialist in multiple murders—his solving of the notorious New York River Rat case unfortunately led to the killing of his wife—but he has been sent to Puerto Rico to investigate a gambling problem and is not entirely pleased when he, fluent in Spanish, becomes "a splendid ambassador for the New York Police" and is forced, as the visiting "expert," to look into the slayings of three attractive young females, all of whom have either boyfriends or relatives or friends who speak glowingly of their youth, vigor, and clean living: "No-no. She was such a good girl. And taking computer classes to improve herself. Very religious. You need only take my word for it. Ask the neighbors."

Balthazar, at sea in the Caribbean despite his Dutch forebears and the prepping of his Puerto Rican NYPD partner, Jorge Garrido, finds himself immersed in the local police routine—and cuisine, as his San Juan police department guide, Sixto Cardenas, shows him local eateries and serves as his sidekick. Balthazar is also drawn to a female professor at the university, Maira Knight, whom he



meets over the course of his investigations, and is repelled by another police officer, Angel Negrón, who continually goads him with sarcasm and anti-U.S. remarks.

Balthazar puts together a profile of the killer, given data from the medical examiner and the particular "figure four" choke-hold used on the victims and begins his round of interviewing people close to the three victims. Adamson assembles a large and plausible cast of suspects who had anger toward one or more of the women, armed forces experience, and opportunity, and the closing sequence, as Balthazar uses a combination of intuition and logic to put the last piece into his puzzle, is gripping. Adamson has a sure ear for dialogue, a solid ability to pace her story, and a good sense of place. *Not Till a Hot January* also exhibits welcome ventures into humor, such as when Balthazar's New York superior telegraphs him at the end of the case to take a vacation in Puerto Rico and, while so occupied, to "STOP ALL CRIME ON ISLAND." On the down side, *Not Till a Hot January* proves to be quite predictable in the conventions it follows: the mis-matched police partners, the "wound that hasn't healed yet" in the detective's emotional life, the threats on his life, and the tensions that arise when an outsider is brought into a criminal investigation. Still, all in all, it is more than adequate airport paperback mystery reading, and author Adamson shows promise in matters stylistic as well as sureness in plot and characterization.

—Susan L. Clark

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The Next To Die by Richard Fliegel. New York: Bantam, 1986. $2.95

This is a first novel for author Richard Fliegel, who has delved successfully in theatre and documentary film. It is structured in a light and easy way around Detective Shelly Lowenkopf of the NYPD, a sensitive man full of caring emotions and mannerisms, but with the dubious cop's mind lurking underneath.

Alongside his partner Greeley, a lean, tough cop, Lowenkopf appears as a divorced loner wrestling with middle age. He dines, lives, and works alone and runs smack into trouble because of it. A minor theft and foot chase end with the offender taking a celebrated leap off a rooftop. The precinct captain is not pleased, and the press are screaming for answers about the suspicious death. Lowenkopf is quickly shuffled to Hollywood to lay low and act as a crime specialist for a movie.

What looks to be a leisurely vacation in the sun turns into an endless maze of events which embarrass and lower Lowenkopf's credibility. Among an elusive briefcase, a mysterious bagman, an Arab in his bathtub, and a love affair, he manages to stumble across the charred corpse belonging to a studio executive. Before he can weed through all the suspects and support his investigation with evidence, he is recalled to New York to testify against a drug dealer named Keppler.

Now Fliegel injects a slight dilemma into the plot line. Somebody in Los Angeles is helping Keppler discredit Lowenkopf and brand him as an unreliable witness. Further confusion forms as the troupe from Hollywood arrive to film in New York, whereupon a cast member dies in an unusual drowning. Since Lowenkopf has deep personal ties to this death, he seeks a vengeful solution.

Teeming with coincidences that mislead and misdirect, *The Next To Die* draws the reader into a jolting ride which crests to a tidy solution topped with a late twist.

This is a worthy debut. Fliegel gives the reader a clever trek inside a fresh theme rapt with visual intrigue and raw humor.

—George Harvey

A Taste for Death by P. D. James. New York: Knopf, 1986. $18.95

While innocently going about their business, a timid spinster and a young truant discover a grisly double homicide in a church vestry. Unlikely companions in life, Sir Paul Berowne and tramp Harry Mack are bound forever in death, their throats cut with a straight-edge razor.

Commander Adam Dalgliesh knew the victim slightly. Prior to his death, Berowne sought Dalgliesh's advice about an anonymous letter that threatened his political career. Its author implied that proximity to Berowne could be lethal. His first wife died in a car crash; Berowne was driving. Two female members of his domestic staff died under suspicious circumstances. Dalgliesh believes that these deaths are central to the mystery of Berowne's own murder.

James, an unsurpassed master at delving into intricate relationships, lays them bare to

the reader. Through the eyes of Dalgliesh and his special squad, we meet Barbara Berowne, the victim's pregnant widow—totally superficial but stunningly beautiful. Her brother, Dominic—willful, selfish, and tormented. Her lover, Stephen Lampart—not the marrying kind. And Berowne's estranged daughter, Sarah, who flaunts her opposition to a traditional lifestyle.

So deft at chiseling out the darker side of human nature, James creates a less fatalistic plot resolution than in previous efforts, but be prepared for a few surprises. The richly complex descriptions and characterizations may discourage the casual reader—his loss. After a nine-year absence, Dalgliesh is welcomed back with open arms.

—Liz Tarpy

Trial by Fury by J. A. Jance. New York: Avon, 1986. $2.95

Seattle homicide detective J. P. Beaumont's newest case centers around an unidentified dead black man found in a dumpster. Beaumont's sharp observations, along with a hand from lady luck, lead him and his partner to a quick identification of the body. It is when the victim's identity is discovered that the case begins to get really complicated, involving a high school's teaching staff and a cheerleading squad's "rite of passage" ritual that has the power to ruin reputations.

This is J. A. Jance's third Detective Beaumont novel. Those coming to it cold might start out a little confused, as subplots from previous volumes carry on into this one—relationships among the characters, Beaumont's wealth, etc.—but Jance provides enough explanations as he carries the reader along. The characterizations are quite good—reminiscent of McBain's plainspoken policemen of the 87th—but the prose falls flat. The plot, warm characters, and Jance's ability to bring Seattle to life do much to alleviate that shortcoming, but not enough to make this a must-read series.

—Charles de Lint

Nonfiction

The Maul and the Pear Tree by P. D. James and T. A. Critchley. New York: Mysterious Press, 1986. $17.95

"The candle shook in his hand, throwing shadows and a soft fitful light over the thing at his feet. Then, with a groan the pawnbroker stumbled towards the door, and found his path blocked by the body of Mrs. Marr. She was lying face downwards with her face close against the door, blood still draining from her battered head." Similar Gothic evocations of a true crime in 1811 London make *The Maul and the Pear Tree* more than a factual recitation of two multiple murders "that shocked Regency London." The interweaving of narrative and historical background appeals to the mind and the emotions.

Mystery author P. D. James uncovered accounts of the Ratcliffe Highway Murders sixteen years ago in the Newgate Calendar while employed in Britain's Home Office. Fascinated, she discussed the case with her then boss, Tom Critchley, and the duo began the research that resulted in an English publication in 1971. The Mysterious Press recently issued the book for American reading.

The pair see the murders as both a crime story and a commentary on London's judicial, political, and police conditions. Their recreation of pre-Victorian culture is half the pleasure of the book, forays into related stories and incidents fleshing out the account. Drawing from letters, newspapers, Home Office documents, sermons, bills, bulletins, and notices, the authors covey the street and home life of turn-of-the-nineteenth-century London.

In one passage, the writers give the reader a sense of early-1800s funeral practices by describing the worst wake then known, when a Mrs. Sullivan persuaded authorities to let her keep her daughter's body in her home so that she might raise funds from sympathetic visitors for a decent burial. Authorities relented, and Mrs. Sullivan raised the necessary money—three separate times. The body remained in the house so long that 26 viewers were stricken with fever before it was seized and buried. Elsewhere, early-nineteenth-century London's belief in capital punishment is illustrated as the authors describe the nearly picnic atmosphere of public hangings, at which convicted persons were taken by cart from prison to scaffold, often beribboned and bedecked in finery, "casting coins to the mob." Early, ineffectual attempts at hanging left many luckless convicts dangling very much alive, either to be spirited away and revived by a bribed hangman or reluctantly finished off by relatives who tugged at their legs.

But, digging more deeply, James and Critchley show the historical importance of the murders of these two East End families by exposing the ineffectual policing and investigative methods of the time. Watched over by parishes, London citizens were protected by an uncoordinated crop of magistrates and watchmen, the latter nothing more than private citizens needing meager, supplemental pay. Watchmen often added to their incomes by splitting takes with burglars; others were happy enough to settle for the physical comforts of prostitutes or a bottle to ward off the cold that invaded a barely adequate watchbox.

The detection methods employed on the Ratcliffe Highway Murders were hardly more effective. Initials carved on the murder weapon went undiscovered and uninspected for days, and attempts to solicit the public for information through payment were preferred to following up clues. James and Critchley make the point that the interviewing of witnesses and suspects broke down when authorities became convinced that they had enough to convict John Williams. Like the Warren Commission's handling of the Kennedy assassination 140 years later,

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conflicting and inconclusive evidence was ignored or not pursued.

As a murder tale, *The Maul and the Pear Tree* has only one frustration in that the perpetrator goes undetected. The authors make a convincing case that Williams likely was not the murderer, noting possible men who were, but the book's compelling opening winds down a bit as the whodunit becomes a discussion of who-might-have. Still, James and Critchley have done a remarkable job of unearthing enough history to re-create an atmosphere and setting as dense as the fog rolling off the Thames, and the book's spare prose reinforces its authenticity.

I also appreciated the care which has been taken in the book's preparation—the reprinted sketches, boxed chapter headings, and Bodoni type evoking the times being written about. Combined with the writing, these make for an engaging step backward. James and Critchley have happily avoided a straight narrative, winding down side streets as dark and colorful as 1811 London's East End. They make the alleys as exciting as the highway.

—Jeff House

Death of Innocence by Peter Meyer. New York: Berkeley, 1986. $3.95

In 1981, Melissa Walbridge and Meghan O'Rourke, both twelve, were raped, brutalized, and left for dead near Essex, Vermont. Meghan survived to tell the tale, and the town was shocked to discover that the crime had been committed not by drifters or escaped convicts, or even by adults, but by two boys from nearby Burlington.

Events leading to the crime, the crime itself, and the fevered manhunt afterward, are recounted with skill and suspense, from varying viewpoints. The reader walks in the woods, finds the victims, re-enacts the crime, joins the manhunt, and attends the trials and protests that followed.

The story, however, though it takes up the greater part of the book, acts mainly as a lead-in to considerations of juvenile violence and the law. The author concedes that juvenile violence has long been a problem; only since World War II has it contained so much homicidal brutality. He declines to give an explanation of why this is so, managing to elude all the quick-fix reasons favored by the louder of today's reformers (although he does give inordinate space to a theory about the effects of "soda pop" addiction on the personality).

When it comes to juvenile justice, however, he is more definite. The questions of responsibility and age were of prime importance in this case once it became obvious that one of the killers, being under sixteen, could not be imprisoned past his eighteenth birthday. (He was released in 1983 and changed his name. The author's attempts to trace him were unsuccessful.) Meyer sees too much sympathy for juvenile offenders, too little recognition of the fact that some youngsters are sociopathic and homicidal, and not enough effort at genuine rehabilitation.

Those who are interested in true crime of a gruesome sort will find this book a worthy addition to the collection. Those who want to examine theories and practices of juvenile justice will find it thought-provoking.

—Dan Crawford

The Mystery of the Princes by Audrey Williamson. Academy Chicago, 1986. 215 pp. Illustrated. Bibliography. Index. $8.95

The Mystery of the Princes is required reading for every aficionado of Josephine Tey's *The Daughter of Time*. To this day, there are emotional defenses, and attacks on history's portrait, of Richard III as the consummate villain who assured his ascendancy to the throne by murdering his two nephews. What happened to King Edward V and his younger brother Richard, Duke of York, is a mystery that will never be solved, as Audrey Williamson notes, unless hitherto undiscovered chronicles or documents should be found. Williamson's study, winner of the Crime Writers' Association Gold Dagger Award (1978) for the best nonfiction crime book, is as good as fiction. Her thesis stresses that the partisanship of the York–Lancastrian civil strife, the lack of reliable, objective documents and chronicles, as well as the lack of media as a means of public information and communication in the fifteenth century, are all factors which prevented anything more than conjecture about the disappearance and/or deaths of the young princes. The ultimate portrait of Richard III as a deformed, monstrous murderer was perpetrated by Shakespeare, and it has remained the model for an arch villain.

The Mystery of the Princes establishes a careful framework with which the reader may separate myth from history. Although there is no solution to the crime, the reader, even if an anti-Richardian, must reassess the suspects and the motives. Williamson finds documented evidence to support the fact that Richard III was kind to women and children, that he had instituted legislation beneficial to social welfare and economic trade, and finally that, although he was the victim of scoliosis, he probably did not have a withered arm. Furthermore, by an examination of the will of Sir James Tyrell, commonly assumed to be the murderer of the princes, Williamson is able to cast sufficient doubt on that allegation. The list of suspects includes Henry Tudor, the Duke of Buckingham, and Lord Stanley.

The final puzzle, regarding the identity of the bones discovered by a workman at the Tower of London in 1674, cannot be solved. All of the mysteries raised—the characterization of Richard, the whereabouts of the princes for a long period of time, the Tyrell question, forensic studies of the bones which reveal discrepancies between the ages of the princes and the structure and condition of the bones—are revealed with the suspenseful pace of a mystery novel. Williamson has taken an especially complex period of British history, has shown how other historians have viewed it, and indeed has illustrated the tapestry of fiction woven into history.

—Katherine M. Restaino

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Private Eye

Getting Up with Fleas is the seventh Trace novel (eleventh, if you count the Digger books), and it is just as much a delight as the others. The formula is the same. Tracy Devlin, known as Trace, is asked to investigate an insurance claim. He does, meeting many interesting people, but he is unable to make any sense out of the clues. Toward the end, his Japanese-Sicilian girlfriend Chico comes to his aid and solves the mystery. Murphy has been toying with this formula in the latest two books. Trace is now a private detective in his father's agency (located over Bogie's, a real New York bar that has appeared in P.I. novels by several different authors), but he still ends up taking cases from the insurance company. Trace's tape recorder, which has played an important part in the other novels, is gone here, and, instead of investigating a murder that has taken place, he is trying to prevent a murder that he expects to occur.

A movie is being shot in an old hotel, and the backers of the film have taken out an insurance policy on the lead actor. Trace is asked by the insurance company to make sure nothing happens. Something happens, but

not to the actor. Trace is led to believe that someone wants the actor dead.

The portrayal of the movie-industry people is more believable here than in many mysteries. Each individual has both positive and negative aspects and is not written to the stereotype. The mystery is not as strong as that in some of the other series entries, but that has never been the key to the books. The key is the lead character. Trace, in less talented hands, could have been a totally unsympathetic person. He is drunken, lazy, irresponsible, disrespectful, and not very bright; and I love him. I want him to succeed. I cannot wait for Chico to get this guy straightened out.

It has been good to see Murphy getting the recognition he deserves with several awards in the last three years. An investment of $3.50 compares quite favorably with any other form of entertainment. If you have already been reading the Trace books, take the effort to find the "Digger" series; they are every bit as good.

—Jim Huntamer

In La-La Land We Trust by Robert Campbell. New York: Mysterious Press, 1986. $15.95

A severed head opens the beginning chapter in a graphic display of horror and innocence and starts a tales brimming with seedy ideals, interstate murder, and illicit pornography. Shifting back and forth from exotic New Orleans to *nouveau riche* Los Angeles, author Campbell, who has written several fine novels, utilizes scenic French Quarter culture and doses of remote backwoods swamp to contrast sharply against the affluent power merchants in Hollywood. Both locales are shady and corrupt and set the stage for the entrance of a California private eye known only as Whistler.

Witness to a car collision that includes among its ruin a headless corpse, Whistler casually rescues a budding starlet from certain involvement and then watches as the police organize a major cover-up. Whistler decides to investigate a likely connection with the unclaimed head in New Orleans and unearth whomever is manipulating the cops. Along the way, he finds a morgue attendant selling sex instead of keeping the files in order and confronts a cult killer claiming more victims than he should. When the blonde starlet disappears to New Orleans, Whistler is in hot pursuit after discovering that she has been duped into portraying a deadly role.

Campbell leans largely toward seductive atmosphere and intense character drawing to depict a wicked underworld filled with cold, desperate people struggling under the weight of pain and profit. He lets Whistler coast easily within it, at harmony with a few select friends, Bosco, who runs a scholarly coffee shop, and Isaac Canaan, a disgruntled undercover cop. Although glimpses of random brutality surface in his relaxed attitude as his path crosses those who pilfer innocent lives through kiddie-porn and snuff films, Whistler retains a quiet dignity.

He barely wins a confrontation with a malicious villain named Barcaloo as it escalates around sordid violence that smothers the senses with blood and decay. Heading back to Los Angeles with the truth about a hideous scheme controlled by a political mastermind, Whistler fights to bring the carnal enterprise to an end and slam the case closed.

This is solid, contemporary private eye fiction. Robert Campbell cuts an icy picture of cold-blooded realism and explores a bizarre world of passion and madness. He has created a savage mystery thick with snappy dialogue and haunting imagery. Whistler is a tough new face, a knight of incorruptible strength, and deserves a place on every mystery shelf, with space hopefully reserved for a sequel.

—George Harvey

Life's Work by Jonathan Valin. New York: Delacorte, 1986. $14.95

This is the newest in the Harry Stoner series by Jonathan Valin. It is an action-filled story of corruption and crime in pro football. Stoner is hired by the management of the Cougars, a team trying to recover from a damaging drug scandal that resulted in the loss of some of their best players. His task is to find one of the remaining players, Billy Parks, who has disappeared with only four weeks remaining before the beginning of the season. Stoner is reluctantly helped by Otto Bluerock, a player whom management feels is physically used up and who is now at the end of his career. The trail ends abruptly when Stoner finds the dismembered remains of Parks's girlfriend and her unborn baby. The missing person becomes a murder suspect who is being hunted by a group of people who want to prevent Parks from testifying before a grand jury about drug abuse in the game. When a friend of Stoner's turns up brutally murdered, he becomes all the more determined to find Parks and to discover the real circumstances behind the deaths.

Valin shows a side of football that is not seen on Monday nights. Bluerock is an example of a player who is so absorbed in the game that he loses any distinction between his life on and off the field. The game is his life's work. Although we never really meet Parks, we gain a real insight into a man who has been manipulated by others for the sake of the game, who has lost the ability to function as a human being. On the sinister side, we find a charismatic religious guru, the owner of a local gym, and a questionable cop. The characters, especially the players, are well presented and realistic.

This is the sixth Harry Stoner novel by Valin, but the first I have read. In this novel, the characterization of Stoner is a little weak but more than made up for by the richness of the other players. I am definitely going to look up the other five novels, which, I am sure, develop Stoner a little more. Absolutely, a recommended novel for its quick pace, great characters, and unusual view of a familiar subject, football.

—Rick Mattos

The Marvelous Boy by Peter Corris. New York: Fawcett Gold Medal, 1986. $2.95

Author Peter Corris lives in Sydney, Australia, and it is this Down Under connection that gives his prose and dialogue a fresh voice. Other than the setting—the book takes place mostly in Sydney—and some of

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mysteriosos...soothsayers...barbarians
experts...charlatans...artists...lovers
scholars...cosmologists...scoundrels

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the characters, there is nothing overtly Australian about Corris's writing. But there is a distinctly different flavor there all the same, for all that his P.I., Cliff Hardy, is basically a transplanted Hammett-Chandler-West Coast operator.

The Marvelous Boy appears to be the third in a series of six mysteries featuring Cliff Hardy, and this particular volume originally saw print in Australia in 1982. Hardy is hired by Lady Catherine Chatterton to find her missing grandson, who might not even exist. The only indication that he does comes from a drunken bum's visit—a bum who also happens to be Chatterton's ex-son-in-law.

Hardy's search takes him through Sydney's skid rows, to small beachside towns and country estates. He gets beaten up and tied up, meets a nice working girl, and otherwise handles the case with an even mix of toughness and humor. Corris's smooth prose, with its slight Australian burr, keeps the journey pleasant, and his character Hardy is likable enough that most readers will want to see more of him.

Recommended.

—Charles de Lint

General

Sleep While I Sing by L. R. Wright. New York: Viking, 1986. $15.95

The reader who first discovered L. R. Wright's talents in *The Suspect* will find his judgment more than justified with the Edgar-winning author's latest book. Once again, the locale is Sechelt, on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia, and the brutal slaying of a female hitchhiker is investigated by the small RCMP station in the charge of Staff Sergeant Karl Alberg.

The body is found by Alfred Hingle and his dog at the edge of a clearing in a wooded section along a main highway. Strangely, the victim has been propped up against a tree some distance from the actual murder site, and her face has obviously been cleaned of blood. All identification has been removed, and, because of the nature of the death wounds, Alberg is reluctant to circulate

actual photographs to establish identity. This problem gives him a perfect opportunity to contact Cassandra Mitchell, local librarian, for her help in locating an artist who will make an acceptable sketch. In *The Suspect*, Karl and Cassandra reached a rather tentative stage in their relationship, but now she has little time for anyone other than Roger Galbraith, a Los Angeles actor who is currently visiting his sister in Sechelt. Roger, handsome and charming, has also managed to ingratiate himself with most of the ladies in town, dropping in for unexpected visits. One of his staunch admirers is Norma Hingle, the fiftyish wife of the withdrawn Alfred.

Cassandra suggests the high school art teacher, Tommy Cummings, as a source for the sketch which Alberg needs, and the teacher hesitantly agrees to try. The result, in full color, is breathtaking and vibrant, and Karl is not the only one to find it so. When Roger Galbraith first sees it, it is clear to Cassandra that he recognizes the woman, although he insists that it is only a resemblance to a friend in Los Angeles and refuses to see Alberg. Fortunately, a hotel manager farther along the coast recognizes the woman in the sketch, and her identity is established as Eleanor Sally Dublin, an actress from Los Angeles. Roger is now definitely suspect, but too many residents also remember Alfred Hingle's jail term for assault with a knife.

Then Hingle's dog is killed, also with a knife, and Alberg's investigation becomes more complicated, even extending to a former unsolved slaying on an adjacent island.

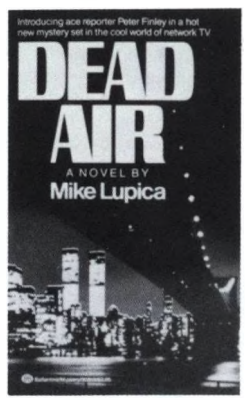
Despite, or perhaps because of, her lean writing style, author Wright manages to maintain a tension and strained relationships among her characters, matching the gloomy weather that colors all of the action. The reader may think he has identified the murderer early, but there are surprises in store in this suspenseful tale, and the writing alone will keep you turning the pages.

—Miriam L. Clark

Dead Air by Mike Lupica. New York: Villard, 1986. $15.95

It used to be "the new Agatha Christie" or "the rightful successor to Hammett and Chandler." Now, increasing numbers of mysteries are being touted with such phrases as "Move over, Spenser." As a matter of fact, that's exactly what it says on the inside flap of sports columnist Mike Lupica's first mystery, *Dead Air*.

Peter Finley is a wisecracking investigative reporter for a small New York City cable-TV



station who drinks too much and feels rather depressed about his non-relationship with his almost-ex-wife. Suddenly, Finley finds himself looking for a former girlfriend—beauty queen turned model turned very hot talk-show hostess Peggy Lynn Brady. Finley is asked to help by her ex-husband from the sticks (whom no one has ever heard of), who thinks that something nasty has happened to her. Spurred on by curiosity and the chance for an exclusive story, Finley dives into the world of television entertainment just as those close to Brady are being murdered. The plot of *Dead Air* is serviceable, so it is up to the characters and the tone of this mystery to take it beyond.

As for the Spenser comparison, Finley is more of a wise guy. This trait is almost always funny, but it also alternates between being annoying and enjoyable. It is annoying when Finley's ego swells and he begins to enjoy the sound of his own voice. It is enjoyable when Finley seems to know that his comments are overblown and lets us in on the joke. Unfortunately, the former happens more often than the latter, making Finley a

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humorous but too often obnoxious character. There are a few times that he seems more human. On one occasion, he admits to himself that his withholding of information for the sake of the story has inadvertently caused someone's death. There is also some endearing interplay between Finley and his wife, as they try to rebuild their relationship, that is refreshing to see. These instances are too often overshadowed by the fact that Finley is basically not a likable character—which seems never to have occurred to the author.

Any discussion of the supporting characters skips over characterization and goes directly to tone. In other words, the characters are essentially flat and one-dimensional in this fast-talking, tough-guy fantasy, painted by Finley's first-person narrative. All of his pals are the kinds of friends that those "buddy-buddy" beer commercials say we should have—fast-living, fun-loving, hard-drinking types who always seem to be described with the phrase "best damn _____," in attitude if not in actual words. Marty Pearl is the best friend/cameraman/bodyguard. Natalie Ferrare is the best assistant (Finley reminds himself to marry her someday). Lieutenant Mick Dunphy is the best homicide detective. And so on.

As for the solution, it is pretty obvious. Lupica brings one character out of left field and then treats this character (and what he/she represents) with such ridicule that it goes past Finley's view of this character and becomes Lupica's grudge. It is like the old saying that, if you show an axe on the wall, you had better make sure you use it. In the same respect, if you draw undo attention to a character, outside of the situation's plausibilities, the reader may be cheated out of fairly figuring out the outcome because the author's prejudices get in the way. (People have told me that Lupica's axe-grinding is very evident in his sports writing as well.) At this point, one figures that it is more or less known who did it, so let's get on with it. But that character didn't do it. What he did was to do something that started a chain of events that led to the murders. At some point, he could have ceased what he was doing, and that may have stopped the killings, but that is just a possibility. The point is that this suspect did not, directly or indirectly, murder anyone, nor should he be held responsible for these acts. Yet Finley/Lupica insists that he is guilty and tries to find a way to nail him with a "let's-get-the-bastards" attitude which brings Lupica's personal vendetta out in the open in the most blatant way.

Mike Lupica's first mystery may seem like a fun, unassuming read, but the reader may not like what he finds beneath the surface of *Dead Air*.

—John Kovaleski

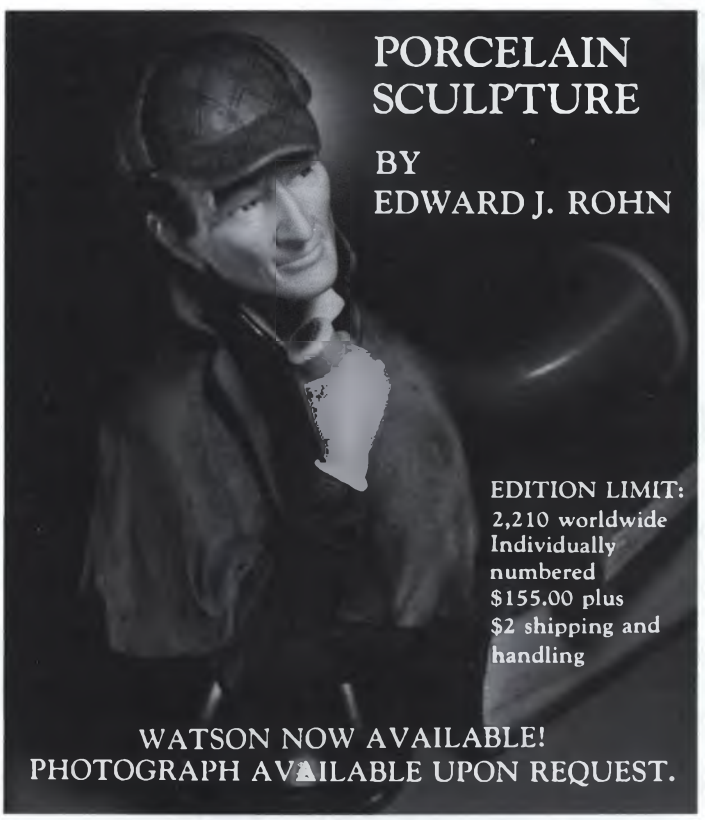
The Nocturne Murder by Audrey Peterson. New York: Arbor House, 1987. $14.95

The title of this debut mystery is accurate only in that the murder weapon is a bust of Chopin, serving as the classic blunt instrument. Regrettably, the musical background and evidence is not crucial to the mystery (as it is in *Where the Wind Blows* or *Murder in C Major*, for instance).

The first-person narrator of *The Nocturne Murder* is a young American graduate student, Jane Winfield. She is living in London to research an obscure (and apparently fictional) colleague of Chopin's who may have originated the nocturne form. She rents a Bloomsbury bedsitter, makes friends, begins a love affair, and enjoys the civilized delights of London culture.

Indeed, the London ambience is the strongest point of the book. The author does a good job on British colloquialisms and usage, with none of the usual American writer's howlers. Peterson does, however, fall into a different and all-too-common Yank trap: Jane is followed and terrorized by a mysterious stranger in the fog. According to my English in-laws, London *fog*—which is British for *smog*—has not existed since the 1950s, when the burning of soft coal was prohibited. Since this word means killer air pollution, such Americanisms as the London Fog raincoat and Sinatra singing "A Foggy Day in London Town" fall strangely on British ears.

The day after the fog incident, Jane returns to her sitting-room to find the body of her lover, eminent music critic Max Fordham, lying on the floor by the bust of Chopin, which is covered with his blood. Circumstantial evidence and the landlady's spiteful tale lead to Jane's arrest (straining credibility in British justice and legal procedure). Many others have strong reasons to want Max dead: his alienated, homosexual son, the latter's boyfriend, his spoiled daughter, her rock-musician (and we all know what *that* means)



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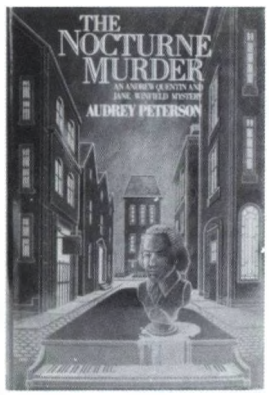
boyfriend, his estranged wife, her lover, his former lover, her husband, Jane's jealous former lover... (If you think this sounds more like California than England, you might be right.)

Jane's dissertation director, Andrew Quentin, flies over to aid in the detection, joining the young solicitor who is the landlady's son and Jane's would-be next boyfriend. Many plot twists ensue, obscured by "clouds of witness," but evidence is garnered through too many coincidental meet-



ings and fortuitously overheard conversations. The murder solution finally appears as a neatly taped confession. Quentin reappears at the dénouement to wrap everything up, but he has unfortunately never come alive as a character. (Isn't subtitling a novel "An Andrew Quentin and Jane Winfield Mystery" a little premature, like a "First Annual" something?) Perhaps Andrew will evince more personality in his next adventure.

The book begins, oddly, with a straightforward first-person statement by Jane that she was charged with her lover's murder, when and where, then flashes back over the preceding year. Another unfortunate departure from usual mystery-novel style is dialogue which turns into a "Q&A" form in courtroom scenes.

Publishers Weekly said: "It remains to be seen whether Peterson can fulfill the hint of her promise and create an American character reminiscent of one of Barbara Pym's heroines." This reader found characterization to be the weakest link, with plotting somewhat more skillful, and atmosphere the strongest point.

– Meredith Phillips

One for the Money by Dick Belsky. Academy Chicago, 1985. $4.95

Lucy Shannon is employed as a reporter for the New York *Blade*. She is investigating the murder of Nancy Kimberley, an aspiring actress and part-time clerk in a record store, Stereo Heaven.

The story has all of the usual stereotyped characters. Her city editor is a crotchety tyrant. Lieutenant Masters of the police just does not like dames who get in his way. Tony Gianni is a George Raft-type mob boss, complete with bodyguards. Lucy herself is a wisecracking Roz Russell figure. And so on.

The plot hinges on Gianni assigning one of his secretaries to deliver a briefcase, containing $500,000 in cash, to an underworld destination. On the way, this dizzy blonde stops off at Stereo Heaven to buy a record. After making a purchase, she goes away, forgetting the briefcase. When she remembers her oversight, she returns to the store, but the case cannot be found. Gianni is understandably angry. Her fate is not detailed, but she does not appear again. Tony sends his henchmen out to find the money.

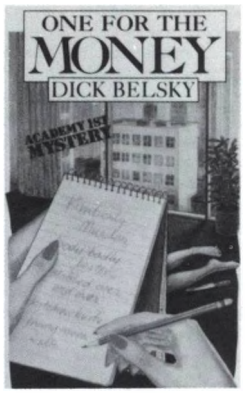
One by one, starting with Nancy Kimberley, the personnel of Stereo Heaven get knocked off. Amazingly, Lucy just happens to be on the scene of each crime. This irritates Masters no end. Nonetheless, Lucy is able to scoop the other papers and make a name for herself. The usual mysterious phone call warns her to stop her investigation or else. Of course, she continues and is almost killed by a speeding car. She is abducted by Gianni but manages to escape. All these plus a few gratuitous bedroom scenes make up the story.

Not recommended for the serious reader. Maybe okay for a funzie.

– Howard Rapp

The Gathering Place by Jon L. Breen. New York: Walker, 1986. $2.95

Life and death in the used-book business fill the pages of *The Gathering Place*, a supernatural thriller about ghostwriting and about ghosts writing. Rachel Hennings inherits her uncle's used-book store, "Vermilion's," a place she has loved since childhood and which has served as a gathering place for several literary giants and unknowns during its long and successful existence. When Rachel decides to re-open the store in the spirit and style of her late uncle, she discovers that there are murder, motive, and magic lurking on the dusty old shelves and, not necessarily, within the pages of books. Rachel, who could have been a stereotypically silly little beauty in trouble, turns out to be an intelligent, competent businesswoman able to think for herself and able to maintain her independence ever after discovering her



previously untapped psychic abilities. In her search for the truth about Vermilion's, Rachel uncovers literary fraud, behind-the-scenes doublecrossing, and professional and personal literary feuds. She is led from Dr. Rodney Wellman, a psychologist and her hometown boyfriend of sorts in Arizona, to his brother, Stu Wellman, a book columnist in Southern California, home of Vermilion's.

The Gathering Place maintains a comfortable balance of romance and sentiment without lessening the impact of its mystery. The characters are interesting and reasonably believable, but Rachel's psychic skills are not explained satisfactorily. *The Gathering Place* provides an inside view of the book-writing and book-buying population, and I am sure that many readers will be able to recognize themselves among Rachel's customers at Vermilion's. This is a well-paced, fast-moving, well-written little book that appealed to the lover of used books that I am.

– Ira Hale Blackmann

Murder Is Pathological by P. M. Carlson. New York: Avon, 1986.

All is not well in the university's animal research lab, even though Dr. Weisen's tumor-reduction experiments on rats are so succesful that he may be wooed away by a drug company. Someone has brutally killed one set of rats, and the cheerful little custodian has been found dead in a ditch. The graduate students are distracted. Monica

Whodunit?

or, rather, who's been doing it for 15 years?

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is afraid that her mentor will leave the university before she finishes her degree; she also has a curious interest in the patients in a nearby nursing home. Les is troubled by the difficulty of finishing his degree while supporting two children and a pregnant wife. Barbara knows that there is always a job for a well-educated black woman, but she is afraid that the vandalism in the lab will interfere with her career strivings. Maggie, the statistician, is emotionally torn by the arrival on the scene of an old lover, Nick O'Connor, actor and amateur detective. Tom is more interested in his radical SDS activities than in his studies.

Nick, concerned that the vandalism and the question of the custodian's death be resolved and Maggie and her friends kept safe, decides to do a little detecting on his own. With Maggie's help, he takes on a new role; together, they learn more about her colleagues than she, at least, would really like to know. Human frailties turn up, but the vandal is elusive. When at last the mystery is solved, the conclusion is stunning. A good read.

—Maryell Cleary

Murder In Georgetown by Margaret Truman. New York: Arbor House, 1986. $16.95

As its title implies, Margaret Truman's seventh Washington-oriented mystery is set (for the most part) in the affluent Georgetown section of our nation's capital. It begins with the murder of Valerie Frolich, the spoiled daughter of John Frolich, a Senator from New Jersey. Valerie was a student at Georgetown University, and one of her professors and a small army of her classmates are the immediate suspects. *Murder in Georgetown*, however, is anything but a traditional closed-society academic mystery. As the case unfolds, a host of Washington lobbyists, real-estate tycoons, nightclub performers, and government secret agents, as well as their assorted spouses and paramours, enter the plot as active participants.

The detective-protagonist in the piece is Joe Potamos, an iconoclastic, tough-minded police reporter for the *Washington Post*. Operating under an idiosyncratic code of ethics, Joe manages to ruffle his newspaper bosses, the local police, and elements of the Washington establishment before uncovering Valerie's killer. Thanks to the nature of his occupation, Joe is far more inclined to the relentless collection of information, even when his data-gathering puts him in personal peril, than he is to reflective, high-powered ratiocination. In consequence, *Murder in Georgetown* has the form of a private eye tale rather than that of a classic whodunit puzzle-mystery.

The book is flawed in several respects. First, none of the vast array of characters—except, perhaps, for Joe Potamos—comes close to achieving anything more than stick-figure shape. Second, there are so many gratuitous subplots (many of them involving Washington bigwigs in sexual liaisons) that the reader is likely to lose sight of the main story line. And, as for the principal plot itself, Truman crams in so many venal acts by so many of her one-dimensional Washington characters that the book reads something like my old, dog-eared copy of *Washington Confidential*.

Murder in Georgetown is clearly designed to appeal to a mass audience composed, one must assume, of individuals who revel in the misdeeds of America's rich and powerful. Evaluated in this context, the book can be rated competent. The pacing is fast. The writing is crisp. And, in the best moral traditions of muckraking fiction, most of the Washington elite in the story seem to get little pleasure from their sinful, behind-the-scenes activities. Also on the credit side is one cute plot fillip. Valerie Frolich was a student of journalism at Georgetown, and several of her more aggressive classmates try to help reporter Potamos with his detections. Aiming for head starts in the newspaper trade, they hope that their junior sleuthing will convince the *Washington Post* to give them second-banana bylines on the news reports which Potamos files about the late Miss Frolich's killing.

Alas, one modest innovation does not an excellent mystery make. On the whole, *Murder in Georgetown* breaks no new ground to compensate for its shortcomings. The book may well find an appreciative audience, especially among those who like their mysteries diluted with strong doses of Washington soap opera, but the serious reader in the mystery genre is likely to find *Murder in Georgetown* of only slight to moderate interest.

—John E. Kramer, Jr.

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Thriller

Floater by Joseph Koenig. New York: Mysterious Press, 1986. $16.95

Joseph Koenig's background as a crime reporter gives him excellent qualifications for tackling this story of a serial killer on the loose in Florida's Everglades. In that setting, familiar to fans of John D. MacDonald's Travis McGee series (MacDonald praised *Floater* before he died last winter), the action of Koenig's novel is suitably shocking, propelled by his muscular, evocative writing.

Norodny, the killer, is a flinty tough-guy with a memorable M.O. Fresh out of prison, he joins with Alice Rovere, who has established a tidy set-up for fraud, a scheme that victimizes women who advertise in the lonely-hearts papers. Buck White is the man on their trail, a black backwoods sheriff responsible for the territory where Norodny dumps the bodies.

Floater is Koenig's first novel, and in many places it shows. His inexperience surfaces most obviously in the odd, refracted narrative structure, which tends to trip over its own headlong momentum. For example, the novel opens on the funeral of White's ex-wife, brutally raped, murdered, and abandoned in the Everglades. But, ultimately, this murder fades into the background, used only as a motivating factor for White's pursuit of Norodny.

There are problems with the characters as well. Ostensibly, the novel's main character, White is mostly a confusing mixture of motivations and platitudes. Alice Rovere is inert, as are many of the minor figures. Only Norodny occasionally compels attention, becomes a character worth following for his unpredictability.

Still, if opening his novel with an inapt red herring betrays clumsiness on Koenig's part, it also shows his writing at its strongest—the murders themselves seem to fascinate him most, and they are what works best in this novel. It is not easy to recommend Koenig's book, but it is easy to recommend his future. *Floater* contains enough realistic detail and good writing to look beyond its flaws of structure and character. With a little more dexterity, creating suspense and streamlining narrative, plus a few interesting characters, Koenig could become a very good writer of thrillers.

—Jeff Pike

Nobody Here By That Name by Donald MacKenzie. New York: Doubleday Crime Club, 1986. $12.95

"A man's coming to England in a few days. We want him eliminated."

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pass at his girlfriend and then pressures him with a past criminal conviction certain to interfere with payment of an insurance claim. What choice does poor George have but to co-operate, even if it means...

The scheme goes awry. Enter John Raven, formerly with the C.I.D. and Drury's friend of many years. Raven's wife, Kirstie, describes him as an adrenalin addict determined to destroy himself. Considering what Raven is up against, this rings true. The police are less than co-operative, setting up roadblocks at every turn. The moralistic loner pits himself against the Establishment and an odd assortment of unsavory characters who should not be allowed to roam the streets, let alone be above the law.

The thriller's straightforward plot avoids the dizzying convolutions of the good-guy-bad-guy switchbacks. You know from square one who to cheer and who to boo. The near-fatal flaw of Raven's implausible escape from the clutches of a CIA assassin at Capel Manor is compensated for by the fast-paced, page-turning quality of the story.

—Liz Tarpy

Retrospective

Cradled in Fear by Anita Boutell. New York: Putnam, 1942.

There is no doubt about it—the lady could write. Here we have plot, atmosphere, and phrasing brought together in a great, suspenseful novel. Alas, there is not a glimmer of "what will have happened"; there is no detection at all.

The novel concerns the happenings when a young master brings his new but not quite helpless bride to his remote New England ancestral home, presided over by two maiden aunts and two ancient retainers. There is reference to one unexplained death in the past and hints of a second, unrelated one. Now there is a failed contemporary attempt to kill the heroine; Had She But Known, she could have avoided the incident.

With this book, I have completed reading this author's four-mystery output. Chronologically: *Death Brings a Storke* was a respectable first attempt at straight detection set in England. That was followed by the three country-house stories, two also set in England, and this final one in the U.S. *Tell Death to Wait* (TAD 18:3) is a competent and unusual sort of detective novel, while *Death Has a Past* (TAD 19:4) is a masterpiece with unusual detective interest. Too bad the last of the quartet has to be pure suspense. Recommended only to the lover of Gothics.

—T. J. Shamon

Scarecrow by Eaton K. Goldwaite. London: Jerrolds, 1945.

Scarecrow is an American police procedural preceding Hillary Waugh's *Last Seen Wearing* by as much as a decade. The story features Boston detective lieutenant and series character Joseph Dickerson, on loan to the Connecticut State Police to solve a society murder in a small town resembling Mystic, Connecticut. The local Chief of Police and two constables assist as Dickerson interviews, in turn, an eminent plastic surgeon, a retired industrialist, a noted portrait painter, and a whole spectrum of townies, rich and poor. The scarecrow of the title is the survivor of a World War II air battle.

There is practically nothing in our literature about this author. This is the second of his novels I have read, and I can say that he plots and writes above average. His murders involve the wealthy, but the stories are peopled with ordinary folk who generally act in a believable manner. There is no extraneous violence, and Dickerson comes up with many genuine deductions based on clues available to the reader. Unfortunately, Goldwaite's dénouements are weak, but the book can be recommended.

—T. J. Shamon

The Lucky Stiff by Craig Rice. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1945.

Whenever I finish a Craig Rice novel, I wonder anew why I bother with such juvenilia. The answer is that I agree with the "Catalogue of Crime" assessment that her writing exudes a charm which captivated me as an adolescent and recollection of which compels me to try to relive the pleasant experience. Alas, it is not possible. A mature re-reading of her work discloses less than meticulous plotting and characters who act unreasonably. It must have been a relatively unsophisticated Depression-age audience that could applaud such inanity.

This story concerns the tribulations of a Chicago gangster's moll who has been framed for her lover's murder. This lady is improbably released from Death Row minutes before her execution and sets out to find her betrayers by pretending to be a ghost. She enlists the aid of series characters John J. Malone, lawyer, and Jake and Helene Justus, pair-about-town. Various killings now take place as the protagonists visit a variety of gin mills and other fine places. Along the way, Malone falls in love with the ex-moll, who finally completes her mission and goes off to Hollywood and fame, fortune, and happiness ever after. Not recommended.

—T. J. Shamon

Dark Hero by Peter Cheney. New York: Dodd, Mead, 1946.

Despite our editor Michael Seidman's recent admonition (TAD 19:4) about submitting "pans," I feel that I should warn any fellow TADian who may also be a spy story aficionado that he should not search out this novel.

Dark Hero concerns the wild exploits of a Prohibition-era hit man improbably employed by British Intelligence during World War II. Ostensibly a spy story, its action takes place primarily in Chicago and London. The novel abounds with an Englishman's version of American gangsterese as our "hero" pursues a course of personal vendettas in the style later to be made infamous by Mickey Spillane. Definitely not recommended.

—T. J. Shamon

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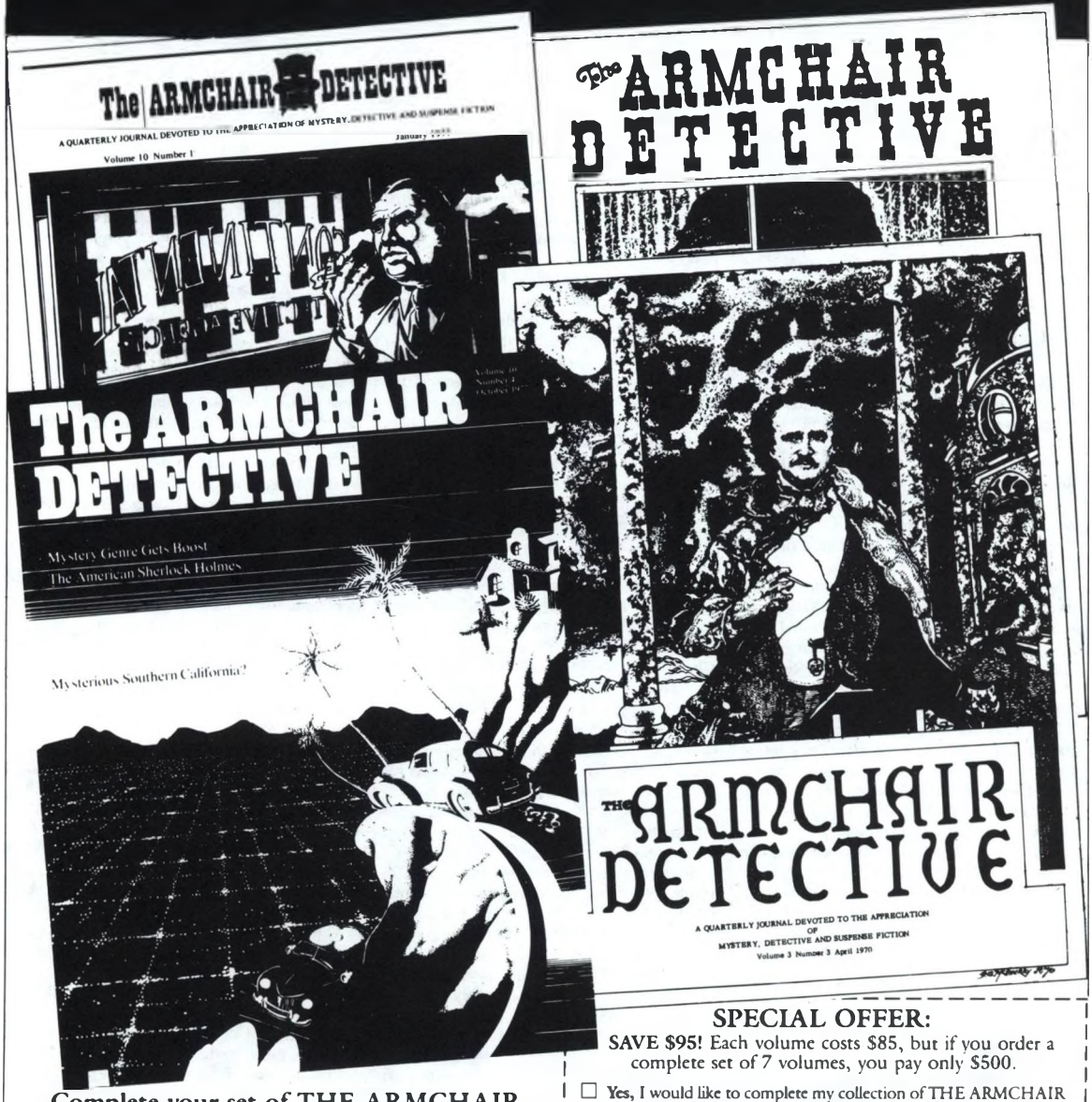

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Murderous Affairs

BY JANET A. RUDOLPH

The recent success of the mystery in the mass market is paralleled within the mystery world itself by the proliferation of mystery periodicals, fanzines, and journals over the last few years. Some of the these publications have been around for some time, being published on frequent and infrequent schedules. Others are quite new, but they have already made their mark in the field. In any case, what they all have in common is that they are, for the most part, labors of love and dedication. And, interestingly enough, there really are no competitive publications out there. Each entry in the field offers a slightly different perspective on the genre, and I believe that the reader of mystery fiction will be interested in the diversity of mystery fan and review publications.

The following is a totally haphazard list. Since there is a six-month lead time on this column, I suggest that you send an SASE to the editor of each publication. You will certainly get a response and perhaps a sample issue.

My apologies if I have forgotten your favorite (or your own) publication. Write and let me know what I have missed, and I will have an update in a future column. Send your note to Janet A. Rudolph, Mystery Readers of America, P.O. Box 8116, Berkeley, CA 94707-8116.

The Armchair Detective is probably the granddaddy of them all. Started in a basement twenty years ago, it is now issued quarterly, has columns, articles, reviews, and more. But I don't have to tell you about it since you're reading TAD now.

The **Mystery Readers of America Journal.** Edited by Janet A. Rudolph. The official publication of Mystery Readers of America. A quarterly, it is thematic in content and contains reviews, articles, and interviews on specific subjects. In 1987, the issues focus on Religious Mysteries, Sports Mysteries, the Ethnic Detective, and American Regional Detective Fiction. Also included is a column on Members in the News, a world mystery Calendar, a column on the reference shelf, and more. This periodical has gone from a one-page flyer to a fifty-page journal in just over a year. $20/calendar year membership. Write to Janet A. Rudolph, P.O. Box 8116, Berkeley, CA 94707-8116.

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Mystery and Detective Monthly. Mentioned in this column last time, MDM is a "letterzine." It is made up almost completely of letters, written by subscribers, about their recent readings, their favorite authors, and almost any other kind of mystery-related news. There is interaction between the letter-writers, and the reader soon learns who likes what and can guide one's reading by the tastes of particular writers to MDM. And you can send a letter to let others know what you think. Cap'n Bob Napier, MDM, 14411-C South C Street, Tacoma, WA 98444.

Clues: A Journal of Detection. Published by Bowling Green State University Popular Press, this bi-annual is more academic in tone than most. Many of the articles were originally papers presented to the Mystery Caucus of the Popular Culture Association. Write to *Clues,* Bowling Green State University Popular Press Publications, Bowling Green, OH 43404.

DAPA-EM is not available on subscription; rather, it is a society with a membership of 35 and a waiting list. Each member submits his own pages, which are put together to form the magazine. This is a wonderful source for information on new and old mysteries, mystery-related events in other cities, and reviews from newspapers and magazines, in addition to members' reviews and comments. DAPA-EM is issued bi-monthly. For details, write to editor Art Scott, 3558 Pacific Avenue #1407, Livermore, CA 94550.

The Drood Review of Mystery, edited by Jim Huang, is published monthly—quite a feat. It has good features, reviews, capsule reviews, and editorials. Box 8872, Boston, MA 02114. Recommended.

Mystery News is published bi-monthly. It is in tabloid newspaper format. Edited by Patricia Shnell, it reviews new fiction in such categories as suspense, espionage, hardboiled, etc. There are also special columns and featured authors. P.O. Box 2637, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.

I Love a Mystery is edited by Sally Powers. There are previews and reviews, feature reporting on conventions and mystery gatherings. I have not seen any issues lately, however. Write P.O. Box 6009, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403.

Mystery Scene. This relatively new publication has gone through many permutations, but it has certainly become the "professional" zine of the industry. Edited by Bob Gorman

and Bob Randisi, it has all the "publisher" news plus special columns and author interviews. 3840 Clark Road SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52403.

The Mystery Fancier. Edited and published by Guy Townsend (a mystery writer as well as editor and publisher). Excellent articles and reviews. Published on an irregular basis. 1711 Clifty Drive, Madison, IN 47250.

Stephen Wright's Mystery Notebook. Edited by Stephen Wright. A quarterly publication with lengthy features on themes or mystery personalities. P.O. Box 1341, FDR Station, New York, NY 10150.

The Poisoned Pen. Edited by Jeff Meyerson. Contains reviews, articles. Very interesting. Published on an irregular basis. 50 First Place, Brooklyn, NY 11231.

CADS. Edited by Geoff Bradley. CADS is "an irregular magazine of comment and criticism about crime and detective stories." 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex, SS7 1PA, England.

The Crime File. Edited by Laurie Gore. The official publication of the San Diego Mystery Club. P.O. Box 1321, Bonita, CA 92002-0890.

The Cloak. Edited by Beth Fedyn. Official publication of the Cloak and Clue Society (Milwaukee, Wis.). Local society news, listings of new mysteries. 2816 North Interlaken Drive, Oconomowoc, WI 53066.

As Crime Goes By. Edited by Kevin Moore. Short reviews of recent mystery fiction. Intended for librarians, but helpful to all mystery readers. Anaheim Public Library, 500 West Broadway, Anaheim, CA 92805.

The Criminal Record. Edited by Ann M. Williams. TCR is a co-operative venture. Essays and reviews limited to 300 words. Articles, mini-reviews, mystery quizzes. 3131 East Seventh Avenue, Denver, CO 80206.

Crime Prints. Edited by Gloria Maxwell. Excellent reviews of all types of mystery books: hardback, paperback, fiction, nonfiction, reference, plus a column on true-crime procedures. Each issue features a specific mystery writer, giving biographical information and reviews of all or many of his works. 704 East 63rd Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64110.

The Short Sheet. Edited by Josh Pachter. This monthly is the first newsletter completely devoted to the mystery/detective short story. *The Short Sheet* got its start as a column in Bob Randisi and Ed Gorman's *Mystery Scene*. Contains reviews, news, features, interviews, contests, original fiction, letters, classifieds, guest editorials. Very impressive. Josh Pachter, Erlangen Elementary School, APO NY 09066.

Some magazines devoted to single authors or themes

The Bony Bulletin. Edited by Philip Asdell. This is for fans of Arthur W. Upfield and his detective, Napoleon Bonaparte. 5719 Jefferson Boulevard, Frederick, MD 21701.

Linington Lineup. This is a quarterly for fans of Elizabeth Linington a.k.a. Anne Blaidsdell a.k.a. Leslie Egan a.k.a. Eva O'Neill a.k.a. Dell Shannon. Published and edited by Rinehart S. Potts. 1223 Glen Terrace, Glassboro, NJ 08028.

The Rex Stout Journal. Edited by John McAleer. Interesting articles about Nero Wolfe and Rex Stout. 121 Follen Road, Lexington, MA 02173.

The Thorndyke File. Edited by John McAleer. Devoted to R. Austin Freeman, creator of Dr. John Thorndyke. 121 Follen Road, Lexington, MA 02173.

The 87th Precinct Report. Edited by Russell W. Hultgren. Devoted to Ed McBain's "87th Precinct" novels. 425 Merryman Road, Annapolis, MD 21401.

The John Buchan Journal. A publication of the John Buchan Society. Limpsfield, Ranfurly Road, Bridge of Wir, Renfrewshire, PA11 3EL, England. Meetings and events as well.

The Chesterton Review. Department of English, St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan, 1437 College Drive, Saskatchewan S7N 0W6, Canada.

Woman of Mystery. A monthly compendium of ideas devoted to Agatha Christie. Edited by Amy Lubelski. Wom'n, P.O. Box 1616, Canal Street Station, New York, NY 10013.

Dorothy L. Sayers Society. Wonderful publications and a newsletter. Ralph Clarke, Pentlow Mill, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 7SP, England.

A Suitable Job for a Woman. A letterzine devoted to female mystery writers and detectives. Co-edited by Nicki Lynch and Sharon Rose. 203 Talley Road, Chattanooga, TN 37411.

The Third Degree. National publication of the Mystery Writers of America. Write to Mary Frisque at MWA, 236 West 27th Street, Suite 600, New York, NY 10001 for membership information. Regional chapters also have publications of interest; consult your local chapter or write to National for info.

Red Herrings. The official publication of the Crime Writers Association (England) is published monthly and is very impressive. Packed with membership news and information. Barry Musto, "Thistles," Little Addington, Ketering, Northants, NN14 4AX, England.

The Whispered Watchword. Newsletter of

The Phantom Friends. Dedicated to the appreciation and collecting of girls' juvenile series. Kate Hohenberger, 741 42nd Street, Brooklyn, NY 11232.

The Yellowback Library. Aimed at collectors of juvenile series fiction. At least one article per issue deals with mystery series. 811 Boulder Avenue, Des Moines, IA 50315.

The Mystery and Adventure Series Review. Deals with juvenile mystery and adventure series. Fred Woolworth, P.O. Box 3488, Tucson, AZ 85722.

Hardboiled. Edited by Wayne Dundee and Todd Moore, this magazine publishes short stories, articles, reviews, and poems devoted to the hardboiled. 903 West Jackson Street #8, Belvidere, IL 61008.

The Friends of Elizabeth Peters Newsletter. Mary E. Morman, 1802 Sanford Road, Silver Spring, MD 20802.

Many specialty mystery bookstores produce good newsletters with mini-reviews of new and reprinted mystery fiction. In a future issue of this column, I will give an annotated listing of mystery bookstores. In the meantime, check with Murder Ink (New York), Grounds for Murder (San Diego), Moonstone Bookcellars (Washington), Kate's Mystery Books (Cambridge, Mass.), Rue Morgue (Denver), Scotland Yard Books (Winnetka, Ill.) about newsletters.

Several publishers and bookstore chains offer mystery newsletters as well:

Scribner's Mystery Newsletter. Charles Scribner's Sons, 115 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003.

Crime After Crime. Walker and Company, 720 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10019.

From Our Inspector's Files. The Dell Mystery Newsletter, c/o Publicity Department, Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 245 East 47th Street, New York, NY 10017.

Whodunnit. Mail Drop 8-2, 201 East 50th Street, New York, NY.

Crime Times. Waldenbooks Newsletter, P.O. Box 10218, Stamford, CT 06904.

B. Dalton's Mystery Reporter. B. Dalton, P.O. Box 10480, Minneapolis, MN 55440.

Mysterious News. The Mysterious Press, 129 West 56th Street, New York, NY 10019.

As I mentioned at the outset, this is a haphazard list. Please let me know what I have missed and what you think of these publications, so that I can update and annotate the list. Send any mystery news about clubs, organizations, publications, events, and mystery bookstores to: Janet A. Rudolph, Mystery Readers of America, P.O. Box 8116, Berkeley, CA 94707-8116. □

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Letters

From Michele Slung:

Last year, I received a most unusual Christmas letter. It was written by a friend of mine, Tamako Hamaguchi, an editor at Hayakawa Publishing in Tokyo. It mentioned the death of a famous Japanese author – and the "mention" was so charming (despite its sad content) that I had to share it with TAD readers:

"Please pray for Kimiko Koizumi (mystery writer, translator, critic) who died last month. She fell down from the stairs and fractured her skull. She was really drunk and the accident happened when she was going to the next drinking place. (In Japan, you must use very narrow and dark stairs to the upstairs cheap bar. It is quite dangerous.) Hard-boiled style of death. But I feel it is too hard-boiled for women."

From David Gordon:

I found William L. DeAndrea's attack on Bill Delaney's excellent article to be extremely weakly argued. He makes great play with the fact that he is unfamiliar with Delaney. One cannot help wondering why it is a requirement for good criticism of mystery fiction that DeAndrea be aware of the critic's existence.

Further, after bellyaching about Delaney's audacity in criticizing Macdonald, he proceeds to launch his own attack on Chandler. Apparently, DeAndrea's mighty brain is so capacious that its left lobe does not know what its right lobe has just done.

From Jane S. Bakerman:

It is our sad responsibility to tell you of the unexpected death of Earl F. Bargainnier, Callaway Professor of English at Wesleyan College (Macon, Georgia). He died suddenly, and peacefully, in his sleep the night of January 3-4. We will all miss him, both as a scholar and critic in our field and as a warm, supportive, generous person. Both the Mystery/Detection Caucus and the Popular Culture Association as a whole are diminished by his loss.

Mrs. Rose Mary McKelvey, Director of the Office of Institutional Advancement, has written to us that: "A memorial book fund for the library has been established in memory of Earl. We consider this the most appropriate memorial for an author and scholar." We concur. Memorial checks should be made payable to Wesleyan College and designated to the Earl Bargainnier Memorial Book Fund. Gifts are to be sent to the:

Office of Institutional Advancement
Wesleyan College
Macon, GA 31297

From Bill Delaney:

After all the returns are in and the smoke has cleared, I will welcome the opportunity to reply to the criticisms of my article on Ross Macdonald. For now, I would like to respond to the letter of John W. Mitchell, who is the only writer so far to have attempted anything resembling a substantive rebuttal.

Mitchell says: "[L]et me tell Delaney that he has showed all of us that he has never traveled the California coast, for there are many places where one would have to drive around a hill, and loop under the road one was just on, to arrive at the beach. This happens because of the design of the freeway off-ramp in location to the hill." Well, just for openers, there *was* no freeway in 1949, so the off-ramp with its majestic loop would also be a figment of Mitchell's imagination. Lew Archer was traveling south – on the ocean side – on Highway 101. If he looped under the road, he would arrive at the beach all right, but it would be the beach at Atlantic City, and he would have a hell of a cab bill, even though, as Mitchell notes, cabs were cheap in 1949.

I was born in California nearly sixty years ago and have never lived anywhere else. I have lived in Los Angeles about 28 years. I was an insurance investigator for many years and averaged 2,500 miles a month driving all over the Southland, including up and down the coast every other week. I have ridden a bicycle from L.A. to Santa Barbara and back many times. I have taken the S.P. train and Greyhound buses up and down the coast countless times since World War II. I have traveled the California coast.

Mitchell confesses that Archer took the train to Santa Barbara. I *said* that he must have gotten there by "train or bus or airplane," but I have found that Macdonald fans don't read very carefully. (If they did, they would not be Macdonald fans.) The question is not how Archer got there. His mother could have driven him, for all I know. The question is: Why didn't the idiot drive his car? What does he think he's going to do when he gets to Cabrillo Canyon with his suitcase and no car? Does he have a pair of roller skates in the suitcase?

After Archer's ten-minute interview with Mrs. Sampson, he is sent to the family lawyer for further briefing. Since he has no car – or even a taxi now – he is transported into Santa Barbara in the family limousine. (They enter town from the south, which is how we can deduce that Archer must have originally been traveling south in the taxi.) The chauffeur will wait to drive him to the local airport so that he can be flown back to L.A. in a private airplane. No doubt they will have arranged for a suitable conveyance to carry him back to his apartment, cruising slowly through quiet residential streets so as not to jostle his giant brain. I haven't seen a detective treated this way since Charlie Chan. Macdonald ought to have given his hero a sidekick to feed him straight-lines such as, "Gee, Lew, why would the old guy commit suicide?" so that Archer could come back with, "Scooz, please, was not sueycide; was . . . *modo*."

Mitchell says that there really is a light-blue haze that settles in the canyons. I *know* there is a light-blue haze. I just said that it was part of a typical opaque, showoff Macdonald simile. Mitchell guesses that "slowly burning money" refers to the high price of real estate. My guess was that it refers to the people having "money to burn." But why do we have

to do so much guessing with Ross Macdonald? The answer is that we don't. If we don't pay much attention to what he's saying, it all sounds pretty good. We only get into trouble if we try to understand him.

Mitchell asks how I would address a maid at a client's house if I might "have to use her later." Well, I wouldn't pretend I thought she was the *owner*. And I wouldn't say, "I don't want to talk to you, you're only the maid," as he archly suggests. As an insurance investigator, I had to go to many mansions in Beverly Hills, Bel Air, and elsewhere. I always flashed my winning smile and said, "My name is Delaney, and I'm here to see Mr. (or Mrs.) So-and-so." (And I didn't use the service entrance.) But the maid is already expecting Archer, so he doesn't have to say much of anything. And he would have been better off keeping his mouth shut than trying to pretend he thought the maid was Mrs. Sampson—if that is Mitchell's interpretation and if he is correct. You don't get on the good side of servants by doing flaky things like that. The same interpretation crossed my mind while I was writing my article, but then I decided that even Archer wouldn't be that gauche.

Mitchell says, "It would be a simple thing for me to go on to numbers six through twenty" (and demolish the rest of my arguments); but, if he has any such intentions, I wish he would first go back and re-read my article and maybe get somebody to go over the harder parts with him.

Mitchell says he asked a Beverly Hills cab driver, "Do the people live in caves?" and the cabbie picked right up on it. *Maybe it was the same guy who drove Archer to Cabrillo Canyon in 1949.* Wouldn't that be something!

From Robert Barnard:

I enjoyed all the replies to Bill Delaney's truly terrible piece on Ross Macdonald, but nobody got to grips with his quite childish notion of what a "literary offense" is. Whether you got the phrase from Twain or not, it is ludicrous to write as if a literary offense is something laid down by Congress, with penalties appropriate to the degree of the offense. Particularly as, when he starts detailing the "offenses," what do they turn out to be? Mild deviations from (what Delaney would regard as) probability. But few novels (and no crime novels that I know of) aim at absolute fidelity to the everydayness of real life; all involve compression, cutting corners, stereotyping, and use of coincidence—to name but a few weapons in the armory. Macdonald's "offenses" turn out to be nothing but aspects of the art of telling a story well.

Delaney's article was ludicrous because he took a personal reaction (he doesn't like Macdonald) and tried to give that reaction that solemnity of a Supreme Court pronouncement. Here is an unashamedly personal reaction. For me, Chandler has a style, but Macdonald has an obsession. That means that Chandler is intermittently beautiful, but Macdonald is compulsive.

From William Claire:

A major festival celebrating the accomplishments and career of Georges Simenon, who is celebrating his 85th birthday this year, is taking place in Washington, D.C. throughout the balance of 1987.

The "Salute to Simenon" is subtitled "A Celebration in Film, Food and Food for Thought," and its description is quite literal. Several events in May emphasized the gastronomy featured in *Madame Maigret's Recipes*, as presented by the noted French writer, Robert J. Courtine. Simenon's American publisher, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, reissued the cookbook this spring, a book that has long been sought in the antiquarian book field. Courtine was the famous columnist La Reyenière of *Le Monde*.

Several prominent chefs specializing in classic French cuisine presented evenings based on the recipes as presented by Courtine, and all of which had direct narrative components in the novels—the Inspector Maigret novels featuring the commissaire of the Paris Sûreté's criminal division.

One extraordinary aspect of Simenon's life—among many—is the fact that 52 of his novels have been made into films, and over 110 adapted for television. At this very moment, a French television crew is filming a Simenon "set" in Manhattan for future distribution.

The John F. Kennedy Center, where the American Film Institute is in residence, was the setting for the screenings of *Le Chat*, starring Simone Signoret and Jean Gabin, and *L'Horloger de Saint Paul*, directed by Bertrand Tavernier. The latter, based on a novel, *The Watchmaker*, originally set in America, was filmed in France.

Readers of *The Armchair Detective* might know of individuals, scholars, fans, or readers of Simenon who might be interested in some of the future events in the Festival.

Besides all of the events in the spring, including an evening at the National Press Club, there will be another major flurry of events in the fall, in Washington, D.C.

There will be Embassy involvement, a gathering of authorities and others interested in Simenon who will explore various aspects of his writing career, exhibits, and other activities.

While I have been involved in the literary life of this city for many years, since my days as founding editor and publisher of *Voyages*, and have myself, as a PEN member, known of different tributes to writers, I do not think I can recall anything as extensive as the look that has and will be taken at Simenon, and which will result in new interpretations of his best work (together with experts making their choices of "The Best of Simenon").

I would be happy to hear from anyone with thoughts on the Festival (some events are still in the planning stages, and others might be held in other cities). My address is in care of WRI, Suite 405, 2550 M Street N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037. Phone (202) 463-0388.

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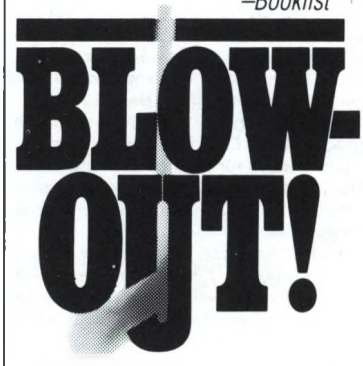

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From Ernest Leupp:

For some time now, I have been reading in TAD reviews by Susan L. Clark. The two most recent were her reviews of *The Deer Leap* and *Catskill Eagle* by Martha Grimes and Robert Parker, respectively, in your summer issue. I admire her work very much. Is Clark an author herself? If she is, please pardon my ignorance, but I would like to know about her interests and background. In her review of *Catskill Eagle*, I think her claims for Spenser and Hawk are a bit high-faluting, but she writes perceptively about their relationship.

I hold a doctorate in German literature from Rutgers University, where I studied medieval comparative literature with the late W. T. H. Jackson, my dissertation advisor. Since 1973 I have taught at Rice University in Houston, Texas, where I am currently a Professor in the German and Russian Department. I give courses in Middle High German, Renaissance and Reformation, Baroque literature, and women's studies, and have received grants from the Mellon Foundation both for writing projects and to team-teach a course on "Biology and the Study of Women." My publications treat not only older writers (Walther von der Vogelweide, Hartmann von Aue, Gottfried von Strassburg, Boccaccio, Chaucer, Chrétien de Troyes, the Gawain-Poet, Sibylle Schwarz, Andreas Gryphius, and Paul Rebhun) but also modern British and American fiction writers (Doris Grumbach, Dorothy L. Sayers, P. D. James, Mabel Seeley, Mignon Eberhart). I review books for TAD as well as for THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE, THE TEXAS OBSERVER, THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL ON WORLD PEACE, *and numerous scholarly journals.*

While I have not yet attempted mystery fiction of my own, I plan to do so in the near future, as my experience in academia has convinced me not only that there is ample opportunity to publish on detective fiction but also that academicians harbor considerable inventive malice.

– Susan L. Clark

From Ruth Hazen:

About writers and their *nom de plume* (*nom de guerre?*) which you mentioned in TAD 19:3, I think they may loose some regular readers – I didn't know that Phillip de Grave was one of my favorites and that I had missed his books until you mentioned it.

I prefer a checklist of books published rather than reviews by people whose taste does not agree with mine or is unknown to me.

I loved the "Classic Corner" – I hope it is not gone forever.

From Bill Farley:

Apparently William L. DeAndrea's new column "J'Accuse!" is intended to contain a collection of random (not to say malicious) accusations of the sort which, in mystery novels as in real life, serve primarily to mislead the gullible and harass the innocent. In TAD 19:4 he has not only accused but convicted Robert Goldsborough of high crime for publishing a book which is "supposed to be" an adventure of Nero Wolfe, against the acknowledged (though slightly misquoted by DeAndrea) wishes of Rex Stout.

He does not review the evidence. His only reference to the book itself (other than to cite its title incorrectly) is a curt dismissal: "It is not a masterpiece."

DeAndrea is guilty, himself, of gratuitous rudeness to a fellow-author, referring to him as "someone named Robert Goldsborough." (This from a man who sees himself so famous we'll all know without explanation that he's Oriana Papazoglou's husband.) He takes it from the jacket flap that Goldsborough is a respected journalist and Nero Wolfe expert, both of which he makes clear he doesn't believe.

If DeAndrea were qualified to be the guardian of Rex Stout's wishes, he would have recognized Goldborough's name as a long-time editor of the Chicago *Tribune* and author of a definitive analysis of Stout's own work ("The Fattest, Classiest, Brainiest Detective of Them All," *Chicago Tribune Book World*, July 28, 1974).

"Robert Goldsborough may have it in him to write mystery stories," DeAndrea continues condescendingly, without citing any flaw in the one he's discussing, "but he is not Rex Stout."

If Goldsborough had done a butcher job on Stout's characters, I would readily agree that he should be hanged for murder. But he did not; the book is not a "rubber pork chop," as DeAndrea implies in a wildly illogical moment. ("You do not aid a starving man by handing him a rubber pork chop. *Murder in E Flat* [sic] would have to be a transcendent masterpiece to justify ignoring an honorable man's wishes.")

As one of the many readers who were starving for another visit with Nero and Archie, I found Goldsborough's book, *Murder in E Minor*, a very tasty morsel indeed, with the flavor and nourishment of good meat. A starving man does not hold out for filet mignon. In fact (can I say this without losing my membership in The Wolfe Pack?), I put himself occasionally served up Nero and Archie in a plate of underdone hash.

William L. DeAndrea may have it within him to criticize the work of another author constructively, but all he seemed to have in him this time was vitriol. □

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Catalogue of Crime

BY JACQUES BARZUN

S342 M. C. Beaton
Death of a Cad
St. Martin's 1987

This newcomer and her creation, Hamish Macbeth, provide good entertainment in a rugged Scottish setting. A nice turn of phrase in description, fair characterization, and often witty dialogue keep up suspense despite some improbabilities that betray inexperience either of literature or of life. Hamish is a village constable, young and awkward, but he thinks and talks like a worldly philosopher, and he behaves at times like a fool. What he has to do in this tale is find out whether the rakish Captain at the houseparty was killed by accident while hunting or was murdered. Chief Inspector Blair, insufferable and hostile to Hamish ever since a previous case (*Death of a Gossip*), blunders and fusses and gets nowhere. Priscilla, the laird's daughter, is newly engaged but very fond of Hamish, her childhood friend – whence some of the incredible passages. But a second murder, the final demonstration by Hamish, and his unruffled equanimity are well handled and promise more good things.

Association Item
S343 Charles Dickens
"Scotland Yard"
in *Sketches by Boz* 1836 *ff.*

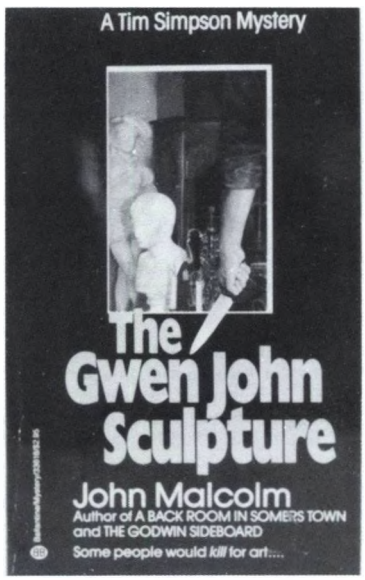
A few pages give, in the author's best descriptive vein, the color and life of this "forgotten corner" of London before the new bridge was built across the Thames. A close community living off the coal heaver's trade on the river, Scotland Yard was "opened up to civilization" by the bridge. A single sentence tells of one notable change: "The Police Commissioners have established their office in Whitehall Place," nearby.

S344 Francis D. Grierson
The White Camellia
Clode 1929

Only mild pleasure is to be expected from this author and the average product of that date. But, although the pace is gentle and the characters decent and well bred, including the villains, at least one is not irritated by any of the gimmicks that have replaced the gentility – incessant bickering between detectives, growling stomach ulcers, or pervasive guilt over a nasty divorce. The reader, not being persecuted by these interruptions, can concentrate on the struggle of two parties over a scientific secret. The clues and the reasoning about them are sound, and all is pleasantly credible until the end. It is melodramatic indeed, but the language rather than the conception betrays the passage of time.

S345 H. R. F. Keating
Mrs. Craggs: Crimes Cleaned Up
St. Martin's 1985

The creator of Inspector Ghote and, earlier, of English crime tales without recurring characters, fashioned for *Death of a Fat God* (1963) a remarkable charwoman, Elma Craggs, who now appears in short stories set in various parts of London. Wherever she plies mop and broom she finds murder, theft, and other misdeeds. She usually works in tandem with her friend, the hypochondriac and lovestruck Mrs. Milhorne, who contributes to the humor and picturesqueness of the situations. But these eighteen episodes, linked by brief dialogues serving further character-



drawing, are not serious detection. Mrs. Craggs does notice detail, but she jumps to her conclusions by processes unknown to logic and even to herself. Even so, she is well worth attending to.

S346 John Malcolm
The Gwen John Sculpture
Scribner's 1985

The formula used here for the third time and in the succeeding *Whistler in the Dark* is fundamentally sound, but its application is open to criticism. When Tim Simpson, the freelance businessman who knows a great deal about art, looks into a shady situation that soon turns violent, his first-person narrative style is engaging and his attitudes and connections plausible. But shortly we come to hear much too much about his own previous exploits and about art history itself. In crime fiction, scholarship must exercise self-restraint or it will have to be regulated by law. It is a pity, too, that Malcolm's prose, which has many qualities, is studded with blunders: What are his editors doing – making sure that Whistler had a mother?

S347 Julian Symons
A Reasonable Doubt
Cresset 1960

The distinguished literary critic and author of crime fiction here turns his great gifts of analysis and exposition on thirteen famous cases of English or colonial murder. The one that opens the series, Steinie Morrison (1911), is a demonstration of what others have believed without marshaling the reasons so brilliantly: Morrison was innocent and the killing of Leon Beron was for revenge.

The James Camb and Herbert John Bennett cases are dealt with in the same masterly manner yet may leave the reader less firmly convinced; the evidence is more evenly balanced for and against. And, in the remaining ten, all that can be done is to speculate endlessly, because the witnesses did not tell all they knew. Symons always asks the right questions after giving pellucid accounts of what was done and said. It should be added that, on the stabbing of Harry Storrs (the Gorse Hall Case) and the burning of Evelyn Foster, Jonathan Goodman has done notable research since Symons wrote and probable solutions of each case have been reached. □

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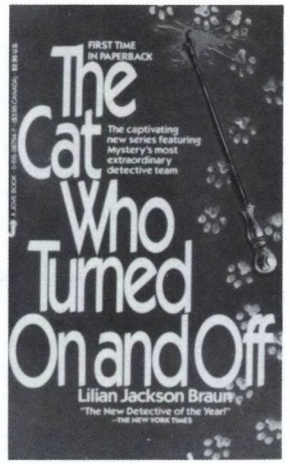

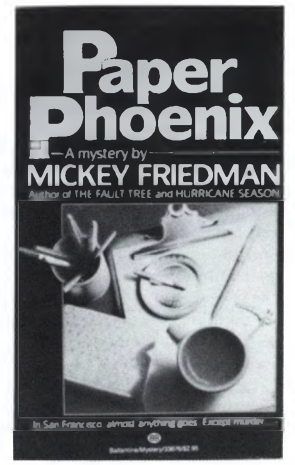

EARL DERR BIGGERS

If your acquaintance with Charlie Chan is limited to his cinematic incarnation, prepare yourself for a genuine treat because The Mysterious Press is sequentially reprinting the charming adventures of the famed Chinese-Hawaiian-American sleuth. **The House Without a Key** (1925) concerns the murder of rich, handsome, and genial Dan Winterslip, whose past is open to question. **The Chinese Parrot** (1926) witnesses the stabbing of a Chinese cook, but the investigation centers around a missing gun.

LAWRENCE BLOCK

Foul Play Press continues to reprint the early paperback originals by this popular author. **Coward's Kiss** (1961) was originally published as *Death Pulls a Doublecross* and appears to be Block's first novel. It starts when private eye Ed London investigates the murder of a young woman found in Central Park—whose body has been placed there by London himself. **You Could Call It Murder** (1961) was first published as *Markham: The Case of the Pornographic Photos* and is a novelization of the popular Ray Milland TV series. It involves a murder, an apparent suicide, an elaborate blackmail scheme, and a British private eye.

LILIAN JACKSON BRAUN

The Cat Who Turned On and Off (1968) (Jove) is a minor but ingratiating tale about several "accidental" deaths set in the junktown section of a Midwestern city that hosts antique dealers and their sometimes desirable wares. Series character Jim Qwilleran of the *Daily Fluxion* investigates, and his Siamese cat Koko provides clues and able assistance at the not unexpected climax.

SIMON BRETT

Tickled to Death (1985) (Dell) was originally published in England as *A Box of Tricks* and contains twelve short stories. At least three have appeared in EQMM; another stars series character Charles Paris. Many of these stories, unlike the Paris chronicles, are written in the inverted style and reveal hidden facts of character that inevitably lead to murder.

JAMES M. CAIN

Graham Kirby weds sixteen-year-old Sonya Lang, who is in serious trouble, and his rotten half-brother, who instigated Sonya's problem, seeks vengeance in the posthumous **Cloud Nine** (1984) (Mysterious Press). This novel may often strain credulity but is in its own way compelling, and, while nowhere near *The Postman Always Rings Twice* or *Double Indemnity*, it is definitely worth reading, and its style is unmistakable Cain.

WILLIAM L. DeANDREA

Snark (1985) (Mysterious Press), the sequel to *Cronus* (which this department has not examined), contains most of the standard ingredients of the currently fashionable spy and espionage fiction. There is also a lunatic serial murderer—with an important mission—thrown in for good measure. *Snark* has the advantage of a solidly constructed, coherent plot and is readable all the way through.

LOREN D. ESTLEMAN

One problem with the hardboiled first-person private eye novel is the startling lack of authentic toughness in both the narrative and the protagonist. In this author's case, you need have no apprehension. **Angel Eyes** (1971) (Ballantine) starts when series character Amos Walker is hired by a go-go dancer who fears her own imminent disappearance, but, when the first corpse appears, he is positively not feminine. Equally tough is **Roses Are Dead** (1985) (Mysterious Press), wherein series killer Peter Macklin discovers that someone has placed a contract on his life. This is a rapid-moving and many-stranded narrative that contains more than its share of violence but which always manages to stay within the boundary of reasonably good taste.

MICKEY FRIEDMAN

Paper Phoenix (1986) (Ballantine) is set in San Francisco and stars Maggie Longstreet, who has been unceremoniously abandoned—after 22 years—by her prominent husband,

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Grounds for Murder

Richard. The suicide of muckraking *People's Times* editor Larry Hawkins appears to have some connection with Richard, and Maggie's investigation leads to murder and civic corruption in this bright and appealing third effort from a talented newcomer.

JOE GORES

The hardboiled, suspenseful, and melancholy **Come Morning** (1986) (Mysterious Press) is this author's first novel in eight years, and one hopes that his next full-length effort will be with us very soon. Runyan, an expert at surviving, was apprehended shortly after a $2,000,000-plus jewel robbery and sent to San Quentin for eight years, but the loot was never recovered. Many people are interested to learn that Runyan has just been paroled—and their intentions are lethal.

GEORGETTE HEYER

Envious Casca (1941) (Berkley) is one of the better detective stories from the pen of the famous Regency romance writer and can be found listed in James Sandoe's "Readers' Guide to Crime." Here, the unpleasant host of a country Christmas party is stabbed to death, and series character Inspector Hemingway must deal with numerous (and equally unpleasant) relatives while trying to solve a baffling locked-room problem.

CAMERON McCABE (ERNEST BORNEMAN)

The Face on the Cutting-Room Floor (1937) (Penguin Classic Crime) concerns itself with the murder of a minor actress in the titular locale but eventually becomes a meditation on the many possibilities of the detective story. This really original and completely unpredictable novel seems to have deeply impressed Julian Symons. Barzun and Taylor are far from enthusiastic. (Why have these diametrically opposed critics been unable to correctly synopsize *The Face's* plot line?)

FRANK MacSHANE

Selected Letters of Raymond Chandler (1981) (Delta) is an oversized trade paperback consisting of 501 pages and includes an index. Chandler was an intelligent, civilized, perceptive, and sometimes witty person who held strong opinions that were not to everyone's liking, but his ethical code and standards were very high, and some of these letters are genuinely moving. There is much to be found here about films, mysteries, and the craft of writing—as well as many other subjects.

LILLIAN O'DONNELL

Perhaps the most interesting and attractive of contemporary female series characters is Lieutenant Norah Mulcahaney, head of homicide at the 82nd Street Station. In **Casual Affairs** (1985) (Ballantine), an excellent example of the police procedural, Norah investigates several disquieting incidents, including a few apparent suicides at the prestigious Chazen-Hadley Hospital, and the murder of a recently released patient, and manages to tie all loose ends into as neat a package as one could desire.

BILL PRONZINI

This column does not usually cite unmeritorious works. However—while **Gun in Cheek** (1982) (Mysterious Library) is an excellent book, this study of "alternative" crime fiction is an "affectionate guide to the worst in mystery fiction." Discover and be entertained by idiotic plots and laugh-provoking dialogue—much of which has to be experienced in order to be believed. *Gun in Cheek* is the necessary obverse of the magnificent *1001 Midnights*, which Pronzini coauthored with Marcia Muller.

PATRICK QUENTIN (HUGH WHEELER AND RICHARD W. WEBB)

The Penguin Classic Crime series of trade paperbacks starts auspiciously with the publication of this author's masterpiece **A Puzzle for Fools** (1936). Theatrical producer Peter Duluth (in his debut), on the verge of an alcoholic breakdown, commits himself to a mental institution, where he is obliged to solve a double murder. Also available are **Puzzle for Friends** (1946), which finds Duluth awakening in an amnesiac haze, after an accident, to a new identity and many problems, and **Puzzle for Pilgrims** (1947), wherein Duluth pursues his straying wife to Mexico, where she becomes a major suspect in a murder case.

DOROTHY L. SAYERS

Perennial continues to reprint the exploits of Lord Peter Wimsey. Recent titles include Lord Peter's debut, **Whose Body?** (1923), **Clouds of Witness** (1926), **Unnatural Death** (a.k.a. *The Dawson Pedigree*) (1927), **The Unpleasantness at the Bellona Club** (1928), and **Strong Poison** (1930), which introduced Harriet Vane. The short-story collections **Hangman's Holiday** (1933) and **In the Teeth of the Evidence** (1939) contain four and two Wimsey stories, respectively. The non-series **The Documents in the Case** (1930), written in collaboration with Robert Eustace, is also available.

WAYNE WARGA

Jeffrey Dean, a rare-book dealer specializing in modern first editions and detective fiction, spots a pair of Steinbeck novels with forged inscriptions at a Los Angeles antiquarian book fair—a circumstance that ultimately leads to problems of national security in **Hardcover** (1985) (Penguin). This first novel—perhaps the best of its year—is an attractive and exciting performance, and so well crafted and entertaining that I await this author's next move with great anticipation.

LAST-MINUTE ARRIVALS

As deadline approaches, three more titles in the Penguin Classic Crime series become available. G. K. Chesterton's **The Wisdom of Father Brown** (1914) and **The Secret of Father Brown** (1927), and Edmund Crispin's **Fen Country** (1979), are all excellent short-story collections and have been reviewed in this column on previous occasions. □

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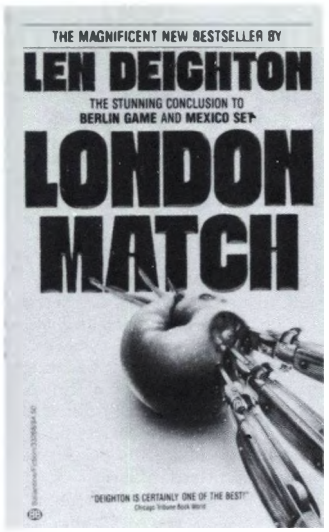

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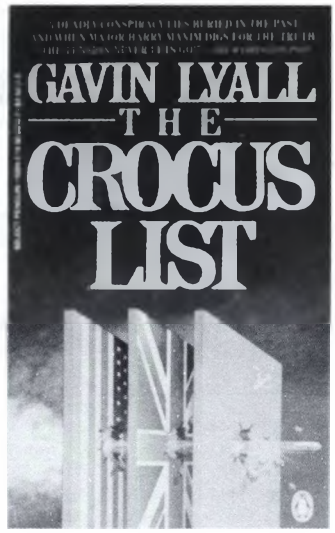

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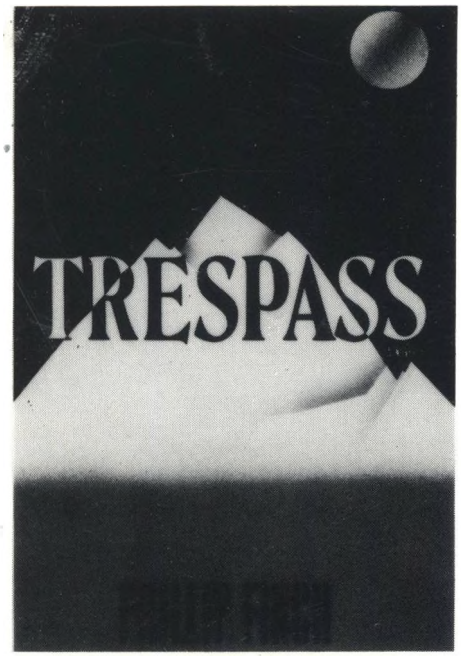

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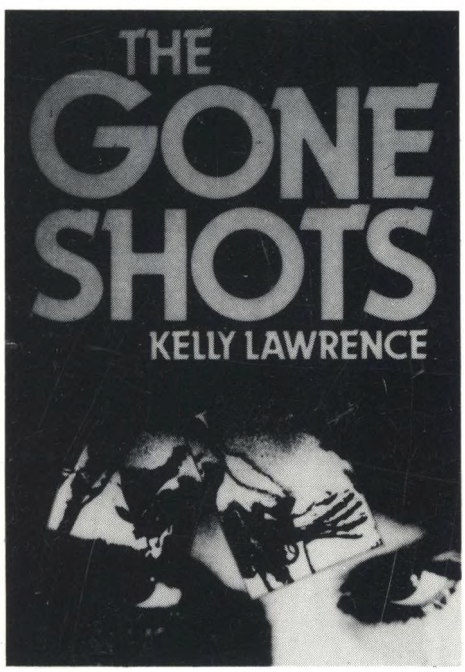

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