

Sources

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Thriller & Adventure Fiction Genre Study

Created September 2007



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Military & Naval Adventures

Military Adventures offer idealistic heroes who adhere rigorously to their moral codes. Usually there is a group of men, although one emerges as the leader when the difficult situation arises. Characters and plots are more realistic than many adventures and plots often feature real people and historical events. Stories considered to be about soldiers of fortune can also be included in the subgenre.

Beach, Edward L. *Run Silent, Run Deep.*

Bond, Larry. *Dangerous Ground.*

Clancy, Tom. *The Hunt for Red October.*

Cobb, James H. *Choosers of the Slain.*

Coonts, Stephen. *Flight of the Intruder.*

Cornwell, Bernard. *Sharpe's Triumph.*

Coyle, Harold. *God's Children.*

Durham, David Anthony. *Pride of Carthage.*

Forester, C.S. *Lieutenant Hornblower.*

Gemmell, David. *Lord of the Silver Bow.*

Griffin, W.E.B.. *Lieutenants.*

Hagberg, David. *By Dawn's Early Light.*

Higgins, Jack. *The Eagle has Flown.*

Kent, Alexander. *Midshipman Bolitho.*

Lambdin, Dewey. *The King's Coat.*

MacLean, Alistair. *Where Eagles Dare.*

Marcinko, Richard. *Echo Platoon.*

McCutchan, Philip. *Cameron's Chase.*

Monsarrat, Nicholas. *The Cruel Sea.*

O'Brian, Patrick. *Master and Commander.*

Oden, Scott. *Memnon.*

Poyer, David. *Fire on the Waters.*

Pressfield, Steven. *The Afghan Campaign.*

Reeman, Douglas. *A Ship Must Die.*

Reilly, Matthew. *7 Deadly Wonders*

Robinson, Patrick. *Nimitz Class*

Wolfe, Gene. *Soldier of the Mist.*

Wouk, Herman. *The Caine Mutiny.*

Exotic Adventures

Exotic lands and unexplored frontiers are the perfect backdrop for action-filled adventure, adding the appeal of exotic settings to exciting story lines. Many of these authors also write adventures of other types. Although this has been a rather dormant subgenre in recent years, titles are beginning to emerge again, though many have a substantial romantic facet.

Benoit, Charles. *Relative Danger*.

Brando, Marlon. *Fan-Tan*.

Burroughs, Edgar Rice. *The Land that Time Forgot*.

Clavell, James. *Shogun*.

Conrad, Joseph. *Heart of Darkness*.

Crew, Cheryl Howard. *In the Face of Jinn*.

Crichton, Michael. *Congo*.

Cussler, Clive. *Mediterranean Caper*.

Dunnett, Dorothy. *The Game of Kings*.

Forester, C.S. *The African Queen*.

Hackman, Gene. *Walk of the Perdido Star*.

Haggard, H. Rider. *King Solomon's Mines*.

Higgins, Jack. *Night Judgment at Sinos*.

Innes, Hammond. *Isvik*.

Jones, Ben. *The Rope Eater*.

Lustbader, Eric Van. *Floating City*.

Preston, Douglas. *The Codex*.

Roberts, Gregory David. *Shantaram*.

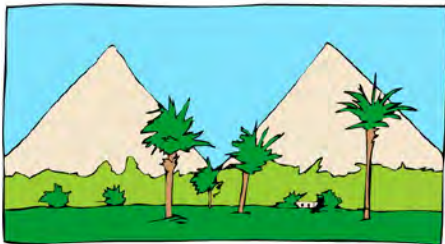
Robson, Lucia St. Clair. *Tokaido Road*.

Rollins, James. *Amazonia*.

Sabatini, Rafael. *Captain Blood*.

Smith, Wilbur. *The Sunbird*.

Verne, Jules. *Around the World in Eighty Days*.



Thriller & Adventure Writers to try, if you enjoy...

Fantasy

George MacDonald
Fraser

Nonfiction

Tom Clancy
C.S. Forester

Historical

David Liss
Martin Cruz Smith
(*Stallion Gate*)

Psychological

John le Carré

Romance

Lauren Willig
Evelyn Anthony

Horror

Stephen Spruill
Gary Jennings

Science Fiction

Linda Nagata

Humor

Donald Westlake
George MacDonald
Fraser

Inspirational

Tim F. LaHaye &
Jerry B. Jenkins
Frank Peretti

Literary

Scott Turow
John le Carré

Mystery

John Grisham
Dorothy Gilman



Espionage/Spy Thrillers

At their most popular, during the '70s and '80s, Spy Thrillers featured a world of intrigue strongly reliant on villains and situations created by the cold war. With the demise of the Soviet Empire, this sub-genre saw a rapid decline in new titles. It has seen a small revival as terrorists and mercenaries began emerging in thriller plots. Characteristics include exotic characters and locales, chase scenes, the action-oriented or cerebral hero, intelligence gathering agencies, and reflection on political climates.

Archer, Jeffrey. *The Eleventh Commandment*.
Block, Lawrence. *The Thief Who Couldn't Sleep*.
Buchan, John. *The Thirty-Nine Steps*.
Clancy, Tom. *The Hunt for Red October*. (Jack Ryan)
Condon, Richard. *The Manchurian Candidate*.
Conrad, Joseph. *The Secret Agent*
Deighton, Len. *The Ipcress File*.
Finder, Joseph. *Moscow Club*.
Fleming, Ian. *Casino Royale*. (James Bond)
Follett, Ken. *The Eye of the Needle*.
Freemantle, Brian. *The Blind Run*.
Furst, Alan. *Red Gold*.
Gilman, Dorothy. *The Unexpected Mrs. Pollifax*.
Greene, Graham. *The Quiet American*.
Griffin, W.E.B. *The Last Heroes*.
Higgins, Jack. *Eye of the Storm*.
Hunter, Stephen. *Tapestry of Spies*
Le Carre, John. *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*.
Lehrer, James. *Blue Hearts*.
Littell, Robert. *Walking Back the Cat*.
Ludlum, Robert. *The Bourne Identity*.
MacInnes, Helen. *Above Suspicion*.
Orczy, Baroness. *The Scarlet Pimpernel*.
Silva, Daniel. *The Mark of the Assassin*. (Michael Osbourne)
Tan, Maureen. *AKA Jane*.
Thomas, Craig. *Firefox*.
Willig, Lauren. *The Secret History of the Pink Carnation*.

Survival Adventures

The protagonist's life is threatened by extreme danger, but through wit and dogged determination, the heroes survive. Some of these stories have a slower pacing than other adventure stories. Protagonists are generally of the "reluctant" variety, thrown into harm's way, but becoming heroic through their actions in the face of danger.

Benchley, Peter. *Jaws*.
Crichton, Michael. *Jurassic Park*.
Cussler, Clive. *Atlantis Found*.
Defoe, Daniel. *Robinson Crusoe*.
Garber, Joseph R. *Vertical Run*.
Johansen, Iris. *Dead Aim*.
L'Amour, Louis. *The Last of the Breed*.
Nance, John J. *Blackout*.
Schulman, Audrey. *The Cage*.
Simmons, Dan. *Darwin's Blade*.
Smith, Mitchell. *Snowfall*.
Wiltse, David. *Blown Away*.
Woods, Stuart. *White Cargo*.



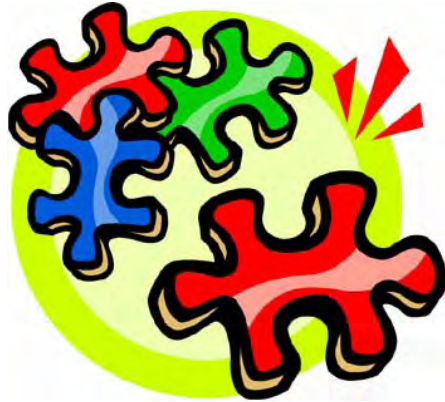
YA

Bunting, Eve. *SOS Titanic*
Fama, Elizabeth. *Overboard*.
George, Jean Craighead. *Julie of the Wolves*.
Hobbs, Will. *Far North*.
Hokenson, Terry. *The Winter Road*.
Lawrence, Iain. *The Wreckers*.



Cipher Thrillers

The runaway popularity of Dan Brown's *Da Vinci Code* has turned readers' attention to these clever thrillers that involve history and the high-level thinking required to crack codes. Recent films such as *National Treasure* and *The Librarian: Quest for the Spear* illustrate the type.



Benson, Ann. *The Burning Road*.
Berry, Steve. *The Amber Room*.
Bondurant, Matt. *The Third Translation*.
Brown, Dan. *The Da Vinci Code*.
Caldwell, Ian & Dustin Thomason. *The Rule of Four*.
Case, John. *Ghost Dancer*.
Eco, Umberto. *Foucault's Pendulum*.
Fasman, Jon. *The Geographer's Library*.
Grossman, Lev. *Codex*.
Khoury, Raymond. *The Last Templar*.
Mosse, Kate. *Labyrinth*.
Navarro, Julia. *Brotherhood of the Holy Shroud*.
Neville, Katherine. *The Eight*.
Perdue, Lewis. *The Da Vinci Legacy*.
Perez-Reverte, Arturo. *The Club Dumas*.
Rabb, Jonathan. *The Book of Q*.
Ruiz-Zafón, Carlos. *The Shadow of the Wind*.
Sierra, Javier. *The Secret Supper*.
Silbert, Leslie. *The Intelligencer*.
Silva, Daniel. *The Messenger*.
Stephenson, Neal. *Cryptonomicon*.
West, Cameron. *The Medici Dagger*.

YA

Balliett, Blue. *Chasing Vermeer*.

YA

Alias Series.
Bell, Mary Reeves. *The Secret of the Mezuzah*.
Bradley, Kimberly Brubaker. *For Freedom: the Story of a French Spy*.
Butcher, A. J. *Spy High: Mission One*.
Carter, Ally. *I'd Tell You I Love You, but Then I'd Have to Kill You*.
Clancy, Tom. *Tom Clancy's Net Force Series*.
Hale, Shannon. *River Secrets*.
Horowitz, Anthony. *Stormbreaker*.
Kipling, Rudyard. *Kim*.
Mah, Adeline Yen. *Chinese Cinderella and the Secret Dragon Society*.
Muchamore, Robert. *The Recruit*.
Spradlin, Michael P. *Live and Let Shop*.
Thomas, Jane Resh. *The Counterfeit Princess*.
Zindel, Paul. *The Gadget*.





Legal Thrillers

These novels are often set in law offices, courts, or government offices and involve lawyers or people in government. The protagonist has usually uncovered some form of illegal actions in government or business and now finds himself/herself in danger from the villains. The protagonist is usually a lawyer who has uncovered the corruption, or the lawyer is brought in by someone else who is in danger.

Arvin, Reed. *The Last Goodbye*.
Baldacci, David. *Split Second*.
Bernhardt, William. *Primary Justice*.
Connelly, Michael. *The Lincoln Lawyer*.
Dugoni, Robert. *The Jury Master*.
Ellis, David. *Line of Vision*.
Fairstein, Linda. *Final Jeopardy*.
Friedman, Philip. *Reasonable Doubt*.
Gardner, Erle Stanley. *The Case of the Velvet Claws*. (Perry Mason)
Gimenez, Mark. *The Color of the Law*.
Grisham, John. *The Firm*.
Haig, Brian. *Secret Santion*.
Hart, John. *The King of Lies*.

Techno – Thrillers

Technology and weaponry are sometimes more important than the human characters in these stories focused on the advanced technology of the ships, guns, and planes of the military.

Alten, Steve. *Goliath*.
Anderson, Kevin J. & Doug Beason. *Ignition*.
Bond, Larry. *The Enemy Within*. (Peter Thorn and Helen Gray)
Brown, Dale. *Fatal Terrain*.
*Butler, Jimmie H. *Red Lightning, Black Thunder*.
Clancy, Tom. *The Hunt for Red October*. (Jack Ryan)
Cobb, James H. *Choosers of the Slain*.
Coonts, Stephen. *Flight of the Intruder*.
Coyle, Harold. *Against All Enemies*.
Crichton, Michael. *State of Fear*.
Cussler, Clive. *The Mediterranean Caper*. (Dirk Pitt Adventures)
*DeFelice, Jim. *Coyote Bird*.
DiMercurio, Michael. *Voyage of the Devilfish*.
Flannery, Sean. *Achilles' Heel*.
Herman, Richard. *Call to Duty*.
Huston, James W. *Balance of Power*.
Ing, Dean. *The Skins of Dead Men*.
Kent, Gordon. *Peacemaker*.
Powlik, James. *Sea Change*.
Poyer, David. *The Med*. (Dan Lenson)
Ringo, John. *Ghost*.
Robinson, Patrick. *Nimitz Class*.
*Savage, Jeffrey S. *Cutting Edge*. [LDS]
Stewart, Chris. *The Kill Box*.
Thayer, James Stewart. *Force 12*.
Thomas, Craig. *Firefox*.
Weber, Joe. *Rules of Engagement*.
White, Robin A. *The Flight from Winter's Shadow*.



Crime/Caper Thrillers

Neither a Mystery nor a Legal Thriller, these are Thrillers told from the criminal's point of view. They may be humorous capers or noir escapades, but they deal with the seedy underworld of crime. Plots are complicated and action is important, though the preparations and fallout drive the story's pacing. Often graphically violent, these may also display an almost comic tone.

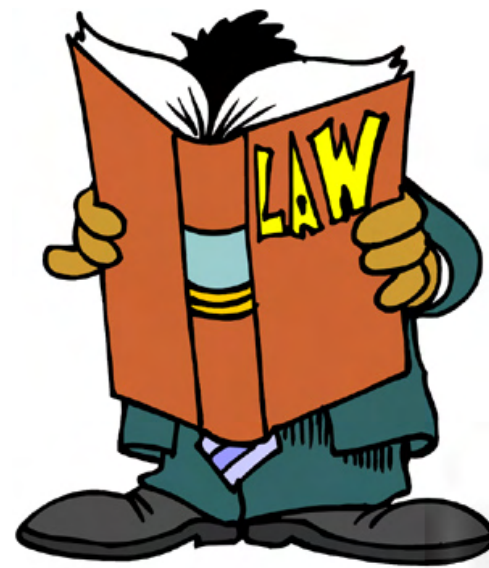
Altman, John. *Deception*.
Block, Lawrence. *Hit Man*.
Bonansinga, Jay R. *The Killer's Game*.
Cannell, Stephen J. *King Con*.
Connelly, Michael. *Void Moon*.
Deaver, Jeffery. *Garden of Beasts*.
Dickey, Eric Jerome. *Sleeping with Strangers*.
Dorsey, Tim. *Florida Roadkill*.
Hautman, Pete. *Ring Game*.
Hiaasen, Carl. *Native Tongue*.
Hunter, Evan. *Criminal Conversation*.
Hunter, Stephen. *Hot Springs*.
Izzi, Eugene. *Bad Guys*.
Leonard, Elmore. *Get Shorty*.
Neville, Katherine. *A Calculated Risk*.
Puzo, Mario. *The Godfather*.
Ramus, David. *The Gravity of Shadows*.
Rankin, Ian. *Bleeding Hearts*.
Sanders, Lawrence. *The Anderson Tapes*.
Westlake, Donald. *Nobody's Perfect*.
Winslow, Don. *The Winter of Frankie Machine*.



Hoffman, Jilliane. *Retribution*.
Iles, Greg. *Turning Angel*.
Lescroart, John T. *Hard Evidence*.
Marlette, Doug. *Magic Time*.
Martini, Steve. *Compelling Evidence*.
Meltzer, Brad. *The Tenth Justice*.
O'Shaughnessy, Perri. *Motion to Suppress*.
Parker, Barbara. *Suspicion of Innocence*.
Patterson, Richard North. *Degree of Guilt*.
Patterson, James. *Judge & Jury*.
Roosevelt, Kermit. *In the Shadow of the Law*.
Rosenberg, Nancy Taylor. *Sullivan's Law*.
Scottoline, Lisa. *Rough Justice*.
Siegel, Sheldon. *Special Circumstances*.
Traver, Robert. *Anatomy of a Murder*.
Turow, Scott. *Presumed Innocent*.

YA

Grippando, James. *Leapholes*.



Medical/Bio Thrillers

Medical/bio thrillers employ a current topic, such as fetal tissue research, the Ebola virus, genetic tinkering, or illegal organ transplants, the research and industry knowledge needed to back up the plot, storyline that focuses on the medical milieu at a fast pace.

Bohjalian, Chris. *The Law of Similars.*

Case, John. *The First Horseman*

Cook, Robin. *Toxin.*

Cordy, Michael. *The Miracle Strain.*

Crichton, Michael. *The Andromeda Strain.*

Cristofferson, April. *Clinical Trial.*

Darnton, John. *Mind Catcher.*

Follet, Ken. *Whiteout.*

Gerritsen, Tess. *Harvest.*

Goldberg, Leonard S. *Deadly Exposure.*

Hurwitz, Gregg Andrew. *Do No Harm.*

Iles, Greg. *Footprints of God.*

Kootz, Dean. *Fear Nothing.*

Ludlum, Robert. *The Hades Factor.*

Marr, John S. *The Eleventh Plague.*

McAuley, Paul. *White Devils.*

Nance, John J. *Pandora's Clock.*

Palmer, Michael. *Critical Judgment.*

Patterson, James. *When the Wind Blows.*

Preston, Douglas. *Mount Dragon.*

Robinson, Leah Ruth. *Unnatural Causes.*

Spanogle, Joshua. *Isolation Ward.*

Teen Titles:

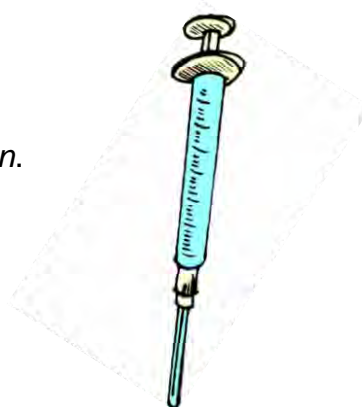
Cooney, Caroline B. *Code Orange.*

Halam, Ann. *Dr. Franklin's Island.*

Hoh, Diane. *Med Center series.*

Golden, Christopher. *Body of Evidence Series*

Werlin, Nancy. *Double Helix.*



Political/Corporate/Financial Thrillers

Although this grouping may seem like the goulash of the Thriller genre, there are characteristics that link Thrillers on these topics and distinguish them from others in the genre. Newsworthy story lines, likeable protagonists, intricate plots, and realistic details relating to corporate, financial, or political lifestyles all remain constant.

Baldacci, David. *Absolute Power.*

Brown, Dan. *Deception Point.*

Clarke, Richard A. *Breakpoint.*

Davies, Linda. *A Nest of Vipers.*

Erdman, Paul E. *The Billion Dollar Sure Thing.*

Finder, Joseph. *The Zero Hour.*

Folsom, Allan. *The Machiavelli Covenant.*

Forsyth, Frederick. *The Day of the Jackal.*

Frey, Stephen. *Vulture Fund.*

Griffin, W.E.B. *By Order of the President.*

Herman, Richard. *Edge of Honor.*

Kelly, Thomas. *Empire Rising.*

LaHaye, Tim F. & Jenkins, Jerry B. *Left Behind.*

Lawson, Michael. *The Inside Ring.*

Liss, David. *A Conspiracy of Paper.*

Meltzer, Brad. *The Book of Fate.*

O'Reilly, Victor. *Games of the Hangman.*

Patterson, James. *Black Market.*

Patterson, Richard North. *Protect and Defend.*

Reich, Christopher. *Numbered Account.*

Ridpath, Michael. *Free to Trade.*

Rosenberg, Joel. *The Last Jihad.*

Sandford, John. *Dead Watch.*

Spiegelman, Peter. *Black Maps.*

Thomas, Michael. *Baker's Dozen.*

Thor, Brad. *The Lions of Lucerne.*

