

Sources:

NoveList database

Mystery booklists at the FictionL website,

<http://www.webrary.org/rs/flbclistgenre.html>

Series and character information at

<http://www.stopyourekillingme.com/>



Mystery Fiction

(& Suspense)

Genre Study

September-November 2003

If a title is part of a series, the series title (or the series' main character) is noted in parentheses. The listed title is the first title published in the series (or the earliest title we own).

Mystery Writers to Try, If You Enjoy...

Fantasy

Helen Chappell

Historical

Margaret K. Lawrence

Anne Perry

Elizabeth Peters

Ellis Peters

Humor

Lawrence Block (Bernie Rhodenbarr series)

Dorothy Cannell

Janet Evanovich

Anne George

Donald Westlake

Inspirational

G.K. Chesterton

Short Stories

Alfred Hitchcock's Tales to Send Chills Down Your Spine.
Eleanor Sullivan, ed.

Bad Behavior. Mary Higgins Clark, ed.

The Best American Mystery Stories of the Century. Tony
Hillerman, ed.

The Best of Sisters in Crime. Marilyn Wallace, edl.

A Classic Christmas Crime. Tim Heald, ed.

*Classical Whodunnits: Murder and Mystery from Ancient
Greece to Rome.* Mike Ashley, ed.

Crimes of Passion: Twenty-Three Tales of Love and Hate.
Martin H. Greenberg, ed.

Deadly Allies. Private Eye Writers of America & Sisters in
Crime.

Ellery Queen's Maze of Mysteries. Ellery Queen, ed.

Hard-Boiled: An Anthology of American Crime Stories. Bill
Prozini & Jack Adrian, eds.

*Murderous Schemes: An Anthology of Classic Detective
Stories.* Donald E. Westlake, ed.

Trial and Error: An Oxford Anthology of Legal Stories. Fred
R. Shapiro & Jane Garry, eds.

Teen:

*Short Circuits : 13 Shocking Stories by Outstanding Writers
for Young Adults.* Donald R. Gallo, ed.

Vande Velde, Vivian. *Being Dead : Stories.*

Weber, Ken. *5 Minute Mysteries.*

CATS AND DOGS

Cats and dogs are not only extremely popular pets, but they are popular figures in many mysteries. Sometimes they have human attributes and even help solve the mysteries, but sometimes they are just companions to the main character.

- Adamson, Lydia. *A Cat in the Manger*. (*Lucy Wayles Mysteries*)
- Berenson, Laurien. *A Pedigree to Die for*. (Melanie Travis)
- Braun, Lilian Jackson. *The Cat Who Could Backwards*. (Jim Qwilleran, *The Cat Who . . .* series).
- Brown, Rita Mae. *Wish You Were Here*. (Mrs. Murphy)
- Cleary, Melissa. *Hounded to Death*. (*Dog Lover's Mysteries Starring Jackie Walsh*)
- Conant, Susan. *A New Leash on Death*. (*Dog Lover's Mysteries*)
- Douglas, Carole Nelson. *Cat on a Blue Monday*. (*Midnight Louie Mysteries*)

Literary

P.D. James
Miriam Grace Monfredo

Psychological

Frances Fyfield

Romance

Elizabeth Peters
April Henry

Science Fiction

Robin Cook
Michael Crichton
Sharyn McCrumb (*Bimbos of the Death Sun*)
J.D. Robb

Western

Michael McGarrity
Tony Hillerman

From *The Readers' Advisory Guide to Genre Fiction*, By Joyce G. Saricks, P. 174, fig. 8.5 Chicago: American Library Association, 2001.

Some Suggested Mystery Titles by Subgenre

Amateur Detective

These “detectives” are not professionals who have been specially trained in detecting techniques; they are more likely to “fall” into a case (often involving someone they know) than to be asked to investigate, and they are usually engaged in only one case at a time. They have another job or a hobby that occupies their time and the details of which supplement the mystery.

- Block, Lawrence. *Burglars Can't Be Choosers*. (Bernie Rhodenbarr, burglar and bookseller)
- Buchanan, Edna. *Contents Under Pressure*. (Britt Montero, newspaper crime reporter)
- Burke, Jan. *Goodnight, Irene*. (Irene Kelly, newspaper reporter)
- Christie, Agatha. *The Murder at the Vicarage*. (Miss Marple, spinster)
- Churchill, Jill. *Grime & Punishment*. (Jane Jeffry, suburban housewife)
- Coben, Harlan. *Deal Breaker*. (Myron Bolitar, sports agent)
- Cross, Amanda. *In the Last Analysis*. (Kate Fansler, English professor)
- Davidson, Diane Mott. *Catering to Nobody*. (Goldy Bear, caterer)
- Elkins, Aaron. *The Dark Place*. (Gideon Oliver, anthropology professor)
- Evanovich, Janet. *One for the Money*. (Stephanie Plum, bounty hunter)
- Francis, Dick. *Dead Cert*. (Various horseracing professionals and enthusiasts)

Cozies

One of the most popular types of mystery is the Cozy. Cozy mysteries occur in benign, intimate environments like villages, castles, and universities, and lack graphic sex, violence, and profanity. Cozies have amateur sleuths solving crimes who use keen observations and intellect to hunt down criminals. They are ordinary, everyday people who have varied lifestyles, such as single mothers and active seniors. Often these books center around a theme, such as cooking, gardening, quilting, animals, or even archaeology.

- Albert, Susan Wittig. *Thyme of Death*. (China Bales)
- Andrews, Donna. *Murder with Peacocks*. (Meg Langslow)
- Atherton, Nancy. *Aunt Dimity's Death*. (Aunt Dimity)
- Beaton, M.C. *Agatha Raisin and the Quiche of Death*. (Agatha Raisin)
- Brett, Simon. *A Nice Class of Corpse*. (Melita Pargeter)
- Brightwell, Emily. *The Inspector and Mrs. Jeffries*. (Inspector Witherspoon and Mrs. Jeffries)
- Cannell, Dorothy. *The Thin Woman*. (Ellie and Ben Haskell)
- Christie, Agatha. *The Murder at the Vicarage*. (Miss Marple)
- Churchill, Jill. *Grime and Punishment*. (Jane Jeffry)
- Davidson, Diane Mott. *Catering to Nobody*. (Goldy Bear)
- Fluke, Joanne. *Chocolate Chip Cookie Murder*. (Hannah Swensen)
- Fowler, Earlene. *Fool's Puzzle*. (Benni Harper)
- George, Anne. *Murder on a Girl's Night Out*. (*Southern Sisters Mysteries*)
- Grimes, Martha. *The Man with a Load of Mischief*. (Inspector Richard Jury)
- Hess, Joan. *Roll Over and Play Dead*. (Claire Malloy)
- Kingsbury, Kate. *Room with a Clue*. (*Pennyfoot Hotel Mysteries*)
- MacLeod, Charlotte. *Rest Ye Merry*. (Peter Shandy)

Espionage / International Intrigue

Spies and their top-secret work are the focus of espionage novels. Characteristics include exotic characters and locales, chase scenes, the action-oriented or cerebral hero, intelligence gathering agencies, and reflection on political climates.

Clancy, Tom. *The Hunt for Red October*. (Jack Ryan)
Cussler, Clive. *The Mediterranean Caper*. (Dirk Pitt Adventures)
Deighton, Len. *The Ipcress File*.
Fleming, Ian. *Casino Royale*. (James Bond)
Flynn, Vince. *Transfer of Power*. (Mitch Rapp)
Follett, Ken. *The Eye of the Needle*.
Gilman, Dorothy. *The Unexpected Mrs. Pollifax*. (Mrs. Emily Pollifax)
Le Carre, John. *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold*.
Ludlum, Robert. *The Bourne Identity*.
Lynds, Gayle. *Masquerade*.
MacInnes, Helen. *Above Suspicion*.
Mathews, Francine. *The Cutout*.
Reich, Christopher. *The Runner*.
Silva, Daniel. *The Mark of the Assassin*. (Michael Osbourne)
Tan, Maureen. *AKA Jane*.

Hart, Carolyn G. *Death on Demand*. (Annie Lawrance, bookstore owner)
Hess, Joan. *Roll Over and Play Dead*. (Claire Malloy, bookstore owner)
Kellerman, Jonathan. *When the Bough Breaks*. (Alex Delaware, child psychologist)
McCrum, Sharyn. *Sick of Shadows*. (Elizabeth MacPherson, forensic anthropologist)
Mortimer, John. *Rumpole of the Bailey*. (Horace Rumpole, elderly “junior” barrister)
Pickard, Nancy. *The Whole Truth*. (Marie Lightfoot, true crime author)
Sayers, Dorothy. *Whose Body?* (Lord Peter Wimsey, pianist, book collector & criminologist)
Shankman, Sarah. *I Still Miss My Man, But My Aim Is Getting Better*. (Shelby Kay Tate, singer and songwriter)
Truman, Margaret. *Murder at the Kennedy Center*. (Mackenzie Smith, law professor)
White, Randy Wayne. *Sanibel Flats*. (Doc Ford, marine biologist)

Teen:

Chandler, Elizabeth. *Dark Secrets Don't Tell*.
Ferguson, Alane. *Poison*.
Kerr, M.E. *Fell*.
Nixon, Joan Lowery. *Murdered, My Sweet*.
The Name of the Game Was Murder.
Qualey, Marsha. *Close to a Killer*.
Reiss, Kathryn. *Paperquake: A Puzzle*.
Sykes, Shelly. *For Mike*.
Vande Velde, Vivian. *Never Trust a Dead Man*.
Voigt, Cynthia. *The Vandemark Mummy*.
Werlin, Nancy. *Black Mirror*.
Wynne-Jones, Tim. *The Boy in the Burning House*.

Private Investigators

Investigations, which usually form part of an ongoing series, are carried out step-by-step and are usually narrated first-person by the protagonist. Investigators may be men or women who operate under a personal moral code that may not follow the rule of law. Settings are usually urban. The tone is often darker, and many novels highlight serious social issues.

- Chandler, Raymond. *The Big Sleep*. (Philip Marlowe)
Christie, Agatha. *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*. (Hercule Poirot)
Crais, Robert. *Monkey's Raincoat*. (Elvis Cole and Joe Pike)
Doyle, Arthur Conan. *A Study in Scarlet*. (Sherlock Holmes)
Grafton, Sue. "A" is for *Alibi*. (Kinsey Millhone)
Hammet, Dashiell. *The Maltese Falcon*. (Sam Spade)
James, P.D. *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman*. (Cordelia Gray)
Lehane, Dennis. *A Drink before the War*. (Patrick Kenzie and Angie Gennaro)
Muller, Marcia. *Edwin of the Iron Shoes*. (Sharon McCone)
Paretsky, Sara. *Indemnity Only*. (V.I. Warshawski)
Parker, Robert. *The Godwulf Manuscript*. (Spenser)
Pronzini, Bill. *The Vanished*. (Nameless Detective Mysteries)
Smith, Alexander McCall. *The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency*. (Mma – Precious – Ramotswe)
Stabenow, Dana. *A Cold Day for Murder*. (Kate Shugak)
Stout, Rex. *Fer-de-Lance*. (Nero Wolfe)

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.

- 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)
Coonts, Stephen. *Flight of the Intruder*.
Cussler, Clive. *The Mediterranean Caper*. (Dirk Pitt Adventures)
DeFelice, Jim. *Coyote Bird*.
Herman, Richard. *Call to Duty*.
Huston, James W. *Balance of Power*.
Ing, Dean. *The Skins of Dead Men*.
Poyer, David. *The Med*. (Dan Lenson)
Savage, Jeffrey S. *Cutting Edge*. [LDS]
Thomas, Craig. *Firefox*.
Weber, Joe. *Rules of Engagement*.

Romantic Suspense

A story that focuses both on the developing relationship between the hero and heroine as well as on the thrill of danger and excitement, all with a happy ending.

Brown, Sandra. *French Silk*.
Cabot, Meg. *The Boy Next Door*.
Du Maurier, Daphne. *Rebecca*.
Gardner, Lisa. *The Perfect Husband*.
Gardner, Lynn. *Emeralds and Espionage*. [LDS]
Green, Betsy Brannon. *Hearts in Hiding*. [LDS]
Grossman, Jeni. *Beneath the Surface*. [LDS]
Holt, Victoria. *Snare of Serpents*.
Howard, Linda. *All the Queen's Men*.
Johansen, Iris. *Ugly Duckling*.
Krentz, Jayne Ann. *Sharp Edges*.
Lowell, Elizabeth. *Amber Beach*.
Michaels, Barbara. *Wait for What Will Come*.
Poulson, Clair M. *I'll Find You*. [LDS]
Robards, Karen. *Hunter's Moon*.
Robb, J.D. *Naked in Death*. (In Death series)
Roberts, Nora. *Hidden Riches*.
Stewart, Mary. *Airs Above the Ground*.
Whitney, Phyllis. *Emerald*.

Teen:

Armstrong, Jennifer. *Claire of the Wild Rose Inn*.
Hayden, Jan. *Has Anyone Seen Allie?*
Sykes, Shelley. *For Mike*.

Police Procedural or Police Detective

Either the department as a whole or particular members (almost always detectives) provide the focus for these mysteries, which are generally series. Details of police departments and police work figure prominently, and the details of the investigative procedures enhance the story. Settings may be urban, suburban, or small town. The police team or department is generally engaged in working on multiple cases, usually unrelated to each other, and these are not necessarily all solved.

Adair, Liz. *The Lodger*. (Spider Latham Mysteries) [LDS]
Barr, Nevada. *Track of the Cat*. (Anna Pigeon)
Beaton, M.C. *Death of a Gossip*. (Hamish MacBeth)
Burke, James Lee. *The Neon Rain*. (Dave Robicheaux)
Connelly, Michael. *The Black Echo*. (Harry Bosch)
Cornwell, Patricia. *Postmortem*. (Kay Scarpetta)
Dexter, Colin. *Last Bus to Woodstock*. (Inspector Morse)
Hess, Joan. *Malice in Maggody*. (Police Chief Hanks)
Hill, Reginald. *A Killing Kindness*. (Dalziel & Pasco series)
Hillerman, Tony. *The Blessing Way*. (Joe Leaphorn)
James, P. D. *Cover Her Face*. (Adam Dalgliesh)
Mayor, Archer. *Open Season*. (Joe Gunther)
McBain, Ed. *Cop Hater*. (87th Precinct cops series)
McGown, Jill. *A Perfect Match*. (Lloyd and Hall series)
Pearson, Ridley. *Undercurrents*. (Lou Boldt)
Rankin, Ian. *Knots and Crosses*. (John Rebus)

Historical

Besides creating a mystery story, the writers must recreate a distant time in a believable way and have the mystery solved in a manner indicative of that time. These stories use either an amateur detective or policeman or other government official as the detective who uses his/her wits to solve the crime.

Ancient Times

Christie, Agatha. *Death Comes as the End*. (ancient Egypt)

Davis, Lindsey. *Silver Pigs*. (Marcus Didius Falco, ancient Rome)

Saylor, Steven. *Roman Blood*. (Gordianus the Finder, ancient Rome).

Robinson, Lynda. *Murder in the Place of Anubis*. (Lord Maren, minister to Tutankhamen, ancient Egypt).

Van Gulik, Robert. *The Chinese Nail Murders*. (Judge Dee, ancient China).

Medieval and Elizabethan

Doherty, P.C. *Spy in Chancery*.

Eco, Umberto. *The Name of the Rose*.

Penman, Sharon Kay. *The Queen's Man*. (Justin de Quincey)

Peters, Ellis. *A Morbid Taste for Bones*. (Brother Cadfael)

Robb, Candace. *The Apothecary Rose*. (Owen Archer)

1650-1820

Barron, Stephanie. *Jane Austen and the Unpleasantness at Scargrave Manor*. (*Jane Austen Mysteries*)

Lawrence, Margaret. *Hearts and Bones*. (Hannah Trevor)

Meyers, Maan. *The Dutchman*. (Pieter Tonnemann)

Pears, Iain. *The Raphael Affair*. (Jonathan Argyll)

Rowland, Laura Joh. *Shinju*. (Sano Ichiro)

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, and, of course, a fast pace.

Cook, Robin. *Coma*.

Cordy, Michael. *The Miracle Strain*.

Crichton, Michael. *The Andromeda Strain*.

Cristofferson, April. *Clinical Trial*.

Dreyer, Eileen. *Brain Dead*.

Gerritsen, Tess. *Harvest*.

Goldberg, Leonard S. *Deadly Exposure*.

Ludlum, Robert. *The Hades Factor*.

Lynch, Patrick. *Omega*.

Palmer, Michael. *Critical Judgment*.

Pottinger, Stanley. *The Last Nazi*.

Teen Series:

Med Center series by Diane Hoh.

Body of Evidence Thrillers by Christopher Golden

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.

Bernhardt, William. *Primary Justice*.

Friedman, Philip. *Reasonable Doubt*.

Gardner, Erle Stanley. *The Case of the Velvet Claws*. (Perry Mason)

Grisham, John. *The Firm*.

Lescroart, John T. *Hard Evidence*.

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*.

Scottoline, Lisa. *Rough Justice*.

Traver, Robert. *Anatomy of a Murder*.

Turow, Scott. *Presumed Innocent*.

1830-1900

Hambly, Barbara. *Free Man of Color*. (Benjamin January)
King, Laurie R. *The Beekeeper's Apprentice; or, On the Segregation of the Queen*. (Mary Russell and Sherlock Holmes)

Lovesey, Peter. *Bertie and the Tin Man*. (Prince Albert)
Monfredo, Miriam Grace. *Seneca Falls Inheritance*. (Glynis Tryon)

Paige, Robin. *Death at Bishop's Keep*. (Kate Ardleigh)

Pearl, Matthew. *The Dante Club*.

Perry, Anne. *The Face of a Stranger*. (William Monk)

Perry, Anne. *The Cater Street Hangman*. (Thomas and Charlotte Pitt)

Peters, Elizabeth. *Crocodile on the Sandbank*. (Amelia Peabody).

1900-1960

Gardner, Erle Stanley. *The Case of the Curious Bride*. (Perry Mason)

Kaminsky, Stuart. *Murder on the Yellow Brick Road*. (Toby Peters)

Kingsbury, Kate. *Room with a Clue*. (Pennyfoot Hotel Mysteries)

Mosley, Walter. *Devil in a Blue Dress*. (Easy Stephens)

Parrish, Richard. *The Dividing Line*. (Joshua Rabb)

Roosevelt, Elliott. *Murder and the First Lady*. (Eleanor Roosevelt)

Satterthwaite, Walter. *Escapade*. (Phil Beaumont and Jane Turner series).

Soos, Troy. *Murder at Fenway Park*. (Mickey Rawlings)

Stout, Rex. *Fer-de-Lance*. (Nero Wolfe)

Todd, Charles. *A Test of Wills*. (Ian Rutledge).

Teen Historical Mysteries:

- Hobbs, Will. *Ghost Canoe*. (1874, Washington's Olympic peninsula)
- Hoobler, Dorothy & Thomas. *The Ghost in the Tokaido Inn*. (18th Century Japan)
- MacDonald, Joyce. *Shades of Simon Gray*. (19th Century America)
- Pullman, Philip. *The Ruby in the Smoke*. (Sally Lockheart trilogy, 19th Century London)
- Vande Velde, Vivian. *Magic Can Be Murder*. (Middle Ages otherworld)
- Voigt, Cynthia. *The Callender Papers*. (19th Century Massachusetts)
- Wrede, Patricia C. *Sorcery and Cecelia, or, The Enchanted Chocolate Pot*. (Regency England)

SUSPENSE NOVELS AND THRILLERS

The key ingredient to most suspense novels is that the protagonist's everyday, ordinary world suddenly turns menacing as he or she becomes tangled in a life-threatening situation. Thrillers widen the villain's target from the individual to something larger, such as a whole legal system, city or country, or even political system. Suspense novels and thrillers focus on *how* the protagonist will escape, rather than solving a puzzle.

- Bloch, Robert. *Psycho*.
- Brown, Dan. *Angels & Demons*. (Robert Langdon – also *The DaVinci Code*)
- Clark, Mary Higgins. *A Cry in the Night*.
- Fielding, Joy. *See Jane Run*.
- Highsmith, Patricia. *The Talented Mr. Ripley*.
- Hoag, Tami. *Ashes to Ashes*.
- Holt, A.J. *Watch Me*.
- Hunter, Jessie. *One, Two, Buckle My Shoe*.
- Jance, J.A. *Hour of the Hunter*.
- Mercer, Judy. *Fast Forward*.
- Patterson, James. *Along Came a Spider*.
- Thompson, Carlene. *The Way You Look Tonight*.

Teen

- Alphin, Elaine Marie. *Counterfeit Son*.
- Anderson, Laurie Halse. *Speak*.
- Avi. *Wolf Rider*.
- Cormier, Robert. *In the Middle of the Night*.
- Duncan, Lois. *Don't Look Behind You*.
- Ferguson, Alane. *Overkill*.
- Hobbs, Will. *The Maze*.
- Sedgewick, Marcus. *Witch Hill*.
- Werlin, Nancy. *The Killer's Cousin*.