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## CRIME FICTION: SUBGENRES AND AUTHORS

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Crime fiction has developed into a variety of sub-genres over the years. From the 1920s to the 1930s, clue puzzles, often known as **whodunits** were hugely popular. Their ability to engage readers in the investigative process by allowing them to participate in the detection process and posing a specific challenge to them to solve the riddle before the books reveal the solution was the secret to their success. To accomplish that, the reader must be given all the essential cues and be able to distinguish between cues that lead to meaningful information and red herrings. Therefore, the whodunit emphasizes clever storyline and logic, which are required to solve this kind of riddles.

Differently from the **hard-boiled subgenre**, it did not survive the Second World War, because logical certainty and order were probably unsuitable in post-war times (4;27-28). The unquestioned king of the whodunit was Agatha Christie, who lived from 1890 to 1976. Because it is more gritty and cynical than whodunit crime fiction, hard-boiled crime fiction sets itself apart from that genre significantly. Hard-boiled books are typically situated in a large city in the United States, whereas whodunits typically take place in a house or in a rural area. They are often connected to gangsters (4;29). They were more prevalent in the United States and tended to mirror reality's brutality and violence.

Hard-boiled crime writers Dashiell Hammett (1894–1961) and Raymond Chandler (1888–1959) have enjoyed success. **Private eye detective fiction** is so strikingly similar to hard-boiled fiction that it is listed as a subgenre in several handbooks. Its title is a play on words since it refers to both the "private investigator"

(P.I.) and the investigator-centric private eye of the genre: although its protagonists are detectives, both male and female, they are not your typical whodunit sleuths. First of all, they no longer engage in the hobby of detecting but rather operate independently, and analytical deduction is no longer as crucial.

One of the most significant private eye fiction writers is Raymond Chandler (4; 59-60). The more contemporary **subgenre of police procedural** focuses on the techniques utilized by a police officer or a team of police officers, including gathering scientific evidence, questioning suspects, and other techniques. As a result, the public "I" of police officers replaces the private "I" of the investigator in the literary market. In the United States, police procedurals first emerged in the late 1950s and were motivated by a desire for realism.

The Michael Connelly (1956-) books featuring Harry Bosch are examples of this genre of crime fiction. Particularly in this literary sub-genre, successful motion pictures and television programs have been produced. Similar to a detective mystery, **spy fiction** features a protagonist who is more of a spy than a sleuth and must either collude with others or expose others' conspiracies.

**Espionage fiction** concerns national rivalries, and experienced its most popular period in the 1960s (3;115). Therefore, it is quite likely that the Cold War's political tensions contributed to it. As some of the most well-known authors of spy novels, John Buchan (1865–1940), John le Carré (1931–), and Ian Fleming (1908–1964) are mentioned. Because he gave birth to James Bond, possibly history's most well-known secret agent, Fleming is extremely well-known.

**Thriller** is also considerably divergent from detective story, as its sole aim is to produce tension and excitement (4;148), therefore detection does not play such an important role. Glover explains the distinctions between the two genres in detail: **The detective fiction and thriller** do not differ in their reluctance to use deductive procedures to solve crimes, however when they are used, they always play a supporting role. Instead, the thriller was and still is largely characterized by its constant attempt to

elevate the stakes of the story, enhancing or magnifying the sensation of events by turning them into a rising curve of danger, violence, or shock (2;137).

Legal thrillers, psychological thrillers, noir thrillers, political thrillers, forensic thrillers, and other types of thrillers are only a few of the sub-genres that have grown out of the 23 Thriller genre. Legal thrillers have experienced notable success among them. This particular genre of **mystery fiction**, as the name implies, immerses the reader in the world of lawyers, judges, courts, and trials. In order to establish the innocence of his or her client, an attorney assumes the role of the sleuth. Authors of recent **legal thrillers** include John Grisham (1955-), who writes about Mickey Haller, and Michael Connelly. Criminals are typically lower-class people who willfully breach the law for their own benefit in noir fiction. Noirs typically feature a lot of graphic violence and overt amorality. John M. Cain (1892–1977) was a talented author of noir fiction.

Another branch of detective fiction is **historical crime fiction**. Its defining feature is that it takes place in a historical era, whether it be the Middle Ages, Ancient Greece, or Rome. It may be totally set in the past or it may involve a modern detective attempting to solve a mystery from the past. The regard for historical accuracy and verisimilitude is the main priority for writers of this genre of crime fiction. The 1980 book “The Name of the Rose” by Umberto Eco is a good illustration of a historical crime fiction book. “Death Comes as the End” (1944), one of Agatha Christie's novels, is likewise set in ancient Egypt.

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