



The Sleuth and the Scholar: Origins, Evolution, and Current Trends in Detective Fiction (Contributions to the Study of Popular Culture)

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Is the detective novel popular fiction or serious literature? This collection of essays examines the historical, literary, and critical aspects of the genre. Three interrelated aspects of detective fiction are addressed: the mystery story as a vehicle for social criticism, women crime writers, and the American hard-boiled detective story--its origins in cowboy fiction, recent trends, and whether the mean streets still belong exclusively to men. Contributors span the ranks of well-known crime writers, popular critics of detective fiction, and academic scholars. This unusual volume aptly illustrates the nature and attractions of a style of fiction that was once dismissed as merely sensational and is now seen as mainstream.

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