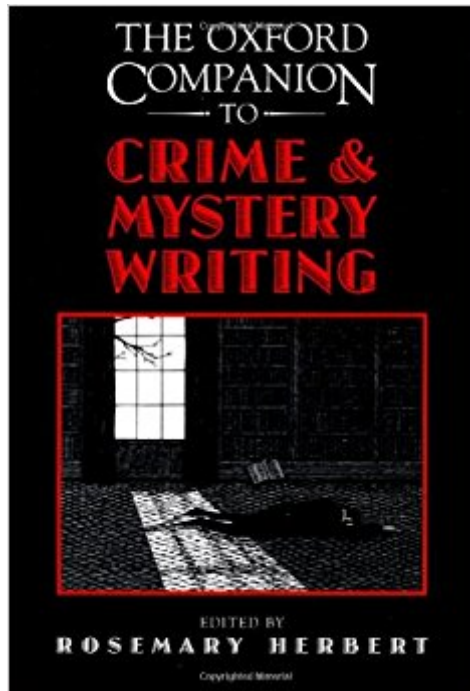




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The Oxford Companion To Crime And Mystery Writing



Synopsis

From the penny dreadful, which challenges seekers of sensation to discover the truth in a pattern of gory details; to the twentieth-century detective novel, which offers an intricate puzzle solved through the application of the intellect; to the crime novel, which probes the psyches of the characters, the crime and mystery genre offers readers an intellectual excitement unsurpassed by other forms of fiction. Now *The Oxford Companion to Crime and Mystery Writing* provides scholars and fans of this genre with an authoritative yet playful compendium of knowledge about a literature known for its highly entertaining treatment of deadly serious puzzles. Editor Rosemary Herbert has brought together 666 articles--written by such authorities as Edward D. Hoch, Sara Paretsky, and the late Julian Symons--that will accompany readers in their armchair investigations. Here can be found informative biographies of great mystery writers from Edgar Allan Poe to Rex Stout to Ruth Rendell. Here, too, favorite sleuths--including Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot, Sam Spade, Nero Wolfe, Adam Dalgliesh, and Kinsey Milhone--keep company with master criminals such as Professor Moriarty and Fu Manchu. Character types--from the country constable to the omniscient sleuth to the femme fatale--sleuth, think, or slink within these pages. In the great tradition of Oxford Companions, this volume features extended essays on the development of this literature, its subgenres and schools of writing. It also serves as a catalogue of the components of mystery writing, such as famous clues, authorial ingenuity, and even an entry on "The Butler Did It." A strength of the volume is found in linked articles which can guide readers from, for instance, a careful definition of Murder to a delightfully quirky compendium of fictional victims in an article on The Corpse.

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Customer Reviews

Informative, fascinating, great fun. This book includes an enormous variety of topics, expected and not, such as occult mysteries, feminism, religion, politics, conservative and radical world-views, gays and lesbians, country house mysteries, fairy tales. It is more comprehensive, and has a more objective tone, than Bruce Murphy's "Encyclopedia of Murder and Mystery." There are extensive cross-references. Too bad the editors didn't hire some proofreaders and fact checkers. The book is riddled with typographical errors, misspellings and factual mistakes. Sue Grafton's Kinsey Millhone is consistently misspelled "Milhone." In one instance, Margery Allingham's "The Crime at Black Dudley" is attributed to Ngaio Marsh. In another, Dorothy Gilman's 1975 book "A Nun in the Closet" is credited to Sister Carol Anne O'Marie. I hope these errors will be corrected in a later edition.

This book has been helpful in learning about crime and mystery fiction. It is great for current terms, history, and even authors. Everyone from novices to experts who love or are just learning to love the genre could use this book.

This book is full of everything related to mystery novels. I love it. I recommend it highly to anyone who reads or writes mysteries.

As is true of any encyclopedic work, there will be quarrels with what is included and what is not. Nevertheless, this is a highly readable, well organized book. It is accessible to scholars and more casual fans as well. Every college library should have this book. Stylistically and typographically it could be improved, but that would have sent costs even higher. The essays are well-done and the authors of the essays are respected, knowledgeable people. This is just a fine piece of work.

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