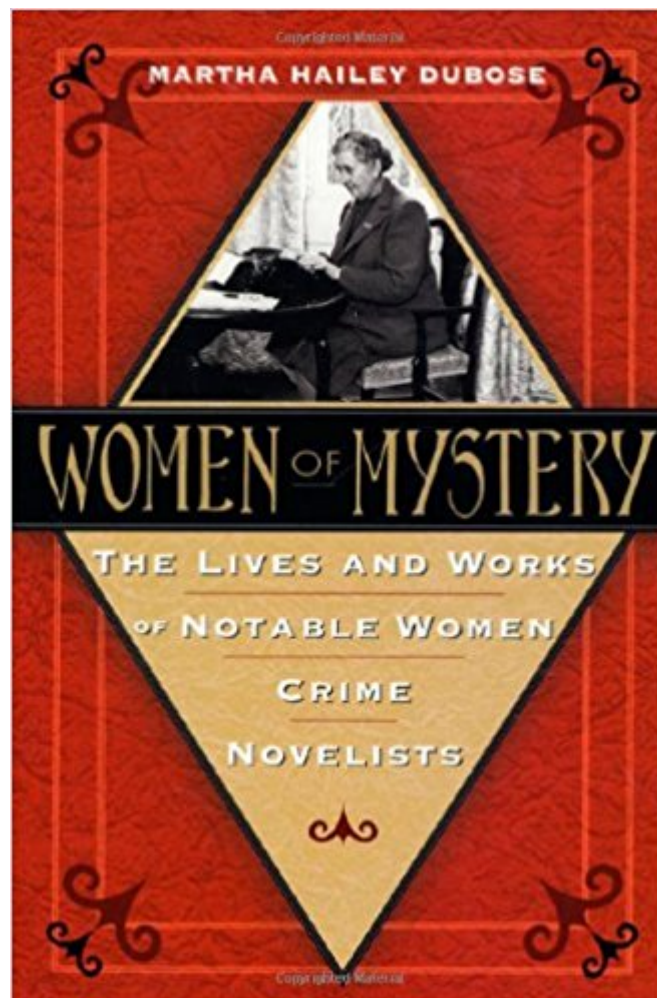




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Women Of Mystery: The Lives And Works Of Notable Women Crime Novelists



Synopsis

In this remarkable book, Martha Hailey DuBose has given those multitudes of readers who love the mystery novel an indispensable addition to their libraries. Unlike other works on the subject, *Women of Mystery* is not merely a directory of the novelists and their publications with a few biographical details. DuBose combines extensive research into the lives of significant women mystery writers from Anna Katherine Green and Mary Roberts Rinehart with critical essays on their work, anecdotes, contemporary reviews and opinions and some of the women's own comments. She takes us through the Golden Age of the British women mystery writers, Christie, Sayers, Marsh, Allingham and Tey, to the leading crime novelists of today, focused on the women who have become legends of the genre. And though she laments, "so many mysteries, so little time," she makes a good effort at mentioning "some of the best of the rest." When DuBose writes of the lives of her principal players, she relates them to their times, their families, their personal situations and above all to their books. She subtly points out that Sayers, whose experience with the men in her life was inevitably disastrous, created in Lord Peter the ideal lover -- one who is all that a woman desires and needs. DuBose gives us the curriculum vitae that Dorothy Sayers created to help her bring Peter Wimsey to a virtual actuality. Ngaio Marsh would give up an active presence in the theatrical world she loved, but she recreated it for herself as well as her readers in many of her novels. The biographies of these women are as engrossing as the stories they wrote, and Martha DuBose has shined a different, intimate and intriguing light on them, their works, and the lives that informed those works. This book is so full of treasure it's hard to see how any mystery enthusiast will be able to do without it. And what a gift it would make for anyone on your list who has been heard to announce "I love a mystery." Some of the treats inside: In the Beginning: The Mothers of Detection Anna Katherine Green Mary Roberts Rinehart A Golden Era: The Genteel Puzzlers Agatha Christie 20 Dorothy L. Sayers Ngaio Marsh Margery Allingham Josephine Tey Modern Motives: Mysteries of the Murderous Mind Patricia Highsmith P.D. James Ruth Rendell Mary Higgins Clark Sue Grafton and more!!

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This book is indeed a surfeit of riches! My only complaint (and the reason for four stars instead of five) is that it is just simply too big for one volume. It's chock-full of wonderful information presented in a very accessible manner, in which any fan of the GoldenAge mysteries would be interested. How much nicer it would have been for the reader (not to mention easier to hold!) if it had been done in two or three volumes. Granted, it might not be possible to do as thorough a biography of a newer author as was the one of Agatha Christie, (74 pages) but many of the newer authors are deserving of more than a brief paragraph. At least in my opinion they are. This book, however, is more of an encyclopedia in one volume than a 'sit down and read' type of book. As it is, this book is divided into three primary sections: In the Beginning presents Anna Katharine Green and Mary Roberts Rinehart. I'm not sure I'd ever heard of Green, but have certainly read many of the Rinehart books, and I found it very enjoyable to learn a bit more about this nearly-indomitable author, who certainly paved the way for many of her followers. The second section--A Golden Era--presents the five doyennes of that time: Agatha Christie, Dorothy L. Sayers, Ngaio Marsh, Josephine Tey and Margery Allingham. In addition to a biography, which provides a bit of info (explanation or background) for nearly every title in each author's canon, there is a wonderful reference list included that not only includes the books by year published, but also mentions the US and UK publishers, and even those books with alternate titles for each country. There is also mention (when applicable) of film and television versions, plus mention of any biographical works devoted to the author.

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