



The Devil Himself: Villainy in Detective Fiction and Film (Contributions to the Study of Popular Culture)

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This study of the villain in detective fiction and film examines such questions as what the villains reflect about the heroes, what they reflect about society, and what defines villainous activity. The texts discussed span the end of the 18th through the 20th century and range from Charles Brockden Brown's *Weiland* (1798) to the film *Se7en* (1995). As the villains reflect the changing ethics of society, the shift in such nebulous moral boundaries can be traced through the changing depictions of these dark characters. Correspondingly, essays address issues of gender, genre, race, and class. In addition to *Weiland* and *Se7en*, books and films discussed include Dickens's *Bleak House*, Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White*, the works of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the films of Alfred Hitchcock, the James Bond novels and films, the novels of P.D. James, Ruth Rendell, and Dorothy Sayers, A. S. Byatt's *Possession*, Patricia Conrwall's Scarpetta mysteries, Margaret Atwood's *Robber Bride*, and the movie *The Usual Suspects*.

As one of the most successful literary genres, detective fiction appeals to a wide audience. This study will interest scholars of 19th and 20th century literature, of film, and of popular culture. Each chapter concludes with a select bibliography and filmography, where applicable.

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