



The Imagination of Evil: Detective Fiction and the Modern World (Continuum Literary Studies)

By Mary Evans

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From its growth in Europe in the nineteenth century, detective fiction has developed into one of the most popular genres of literature and popular culture more widely. **In this monograph, Mary Evans examines detective fiction and its complex relationship to the modern and to modernity. She focuses on two key themes: the moral relationship of detection (and the detective) to a particular social world and the attempt to restore and even improve the social world that has been threatened and fractured by a crime, usually that of murder. It is a characteristic of much detective fiction that the detective, the pursuer, is a social outsider: this status creates a complex web of relationships between detective, institutional life and dominant and subversive moralities. Evans questions who and what the detective stands for and suggests that the answer challenges many of our assumptions about the relationship between various moralities in the modern world.**

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Editorial Review

Review

mention in *THES* by Karen Shook, 16 July 2009

"[Evans] lightly explores a number of works of detective fiction for the past two centuries, seeking to understand how and why murder, in particular, is at the heart of this most popular of genre fictions. In doing so, she also implicitly seeks to understand why so many of us read and reread these novels about murder.

While this study surveys a number of detective novels, it is also, more crucially, an examination of the social understanding of evil."

Times Higher Education, February 2010

About the Author

Mary Evans is Visiting Fellow at the Gender Institute at the London School of Economics, UK.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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