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# From *The Newgate Calendar* to Sherlock Holmes

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In Arthur Conan Doyle's first Sherlock Holmes story, *A Study in Scarlet* (1887), Dr Watson is introduced to Holmes by Stamford, an ex-colleague from Bart's (St Bartholomew's Hospital, London). Stamford and Watson find Holmes conducting an experiment which, he declares, will reliably identify bloodstains. Such a discovery would have proved the guilt of any number of murderers, he tells them: "Von Bischoff ... Mason ... Muller ... Lefevre ... Samson ... I could name a score of cases in which it would have been decisive." Stamford responds by saying that Holmes seems "to be a walking calendar of crime" (Doyle 1986: 1.8), using "calendar" to mean a list or directory and admiring Holmes's encyclopedic knowledge of criminal biography. But the word is also applicable to the list of prisoners for trial at an assizes and it is in this sense that, in the eighteenth century, the title "The Newgate Calendar" came into being. Separated by over a century, the late nineteenth-century Holmes narratives and those of *The Newgate Calendar* nonetheless share common ground in their focus on crime, criminality and the criminal individual. But *The Newgate Calendar* is a collection of factual criminal biographies; the Sherlock Holmes stories are fictional representations of criminal cases in which the detective solves the crime and identifies the perpetrator. The format, structure, and function of the two crime narratives are very different and the criminographic developments which occurred in the years that separate them are a major part of the history of the crime fiction genre and the subject of this chapter.

## Beginnings

While the figure of Sherlock Holmes requires no introduction, *The Newgate Calendar* is perhaps less familiar to the student of crime fiction. It is the name given to a number of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century texts that comprised collections of criminal biographies and it derives from London's Newgate Prison, where criminals

were lodged before their trial and (often) execution. The Chaplain, or “Ordinary” of Newgate, produced reports, or “Accounts,” of the lives, crimes, confessions, and executions of the criminals under his care, which were published as cheap pamphlets. There was a ready market for such narratives; literature concerned with crime has always sold well to the public. Publishers began to produce major anthologies of the existing Ordinaries’ *Accounts*, many of which are now thought of generically as *Newgate Calendars*. According to Stephen Knight, “there was a medium one in 1728, another small one in 1748, then a large and purposefully collected five-volume version in 1773” (Knight 2004: 6). Various editions continued to appear into the nineteenth century, under various names: *The Malefactor’s Register or the Newgate and Tyburn Calendar* in 1779; the *New and Complete Calendar* in 1795, a heavily revised version of which, edited by lawyers Andrew Knapp and William Baldwin, was published in 1809 and again, re-revised, as *The New Newgate Calendar* in 1826.

The *Accounts* and *Newgate Calendar* narratives were overtly and heavily moralistic. The format was fairly constant: individual stories consisted of a frame narrative that is religious in the *Accounts* and early collected editions written by the Ordinary but which in the later versions edited by lawyers became more legalistic. Within that frame is what purported to be the criminal’s own confessional and repentant story. A typical example of a criminal biography is that of Mary Young, alias Jenny Diver, hanged in 1740. The Ordinary gives a brief and biased history of Mary’s life which is followed by Mary’s first-person confession followed by a mini-biography which, strangely, is in the third person, as if Mary seeks to dissociate herself from her criminal past. In what is a common pattern, Mary is an orphan, born and raised in Ireland. She learns to read and write and to sew, but refuses to conform to social expectations, rejecting her hometown to seek her fortune in London. Once there, she finds herself unable to make an honest living from sewing and is led into a life of crime, joining a criminal gang and rising to be their leader. The narrative relates the various crimes carried out by the gang and the ruses they use in their thievery. One feature intended to attract middle-class readers is the *Calendar’s* translation of the thieves’ language, or “cant” for the benefit of the reader. Almost an entertaining romp, Mary’s story makes criminal life seem exciting and profitable, and the basically factual account reads more like a fiction written to entertain. The narrative is eventually folded back into the religious and moralistic frame and ends by describing Mary’s repentant demeanor prior to execution and the hanging itself before finally closing with the words, “She confessed the fact for which she died for [*sic*]” (Rawlings 1992: 134).

The narrative patterns in Mary Young’s *Account* are typical of tales in *The Newgate Calendar*. The confession, explicit or implicit, in the criminal’s story served to validate the death sentence and demonstrate the efficiency of the penal system, reassuring the reader that crime could and would be contained and deterring the potential criminal with the apparent certainty of punishment. But it was the entertainment factor, a combination of the often exciting life of the criminal and the voyeuristic pleasures of reading about sensational crime and punishment, that sold the criminal biographies

to the public. In reality, many of the *Accounts* and the stories in *The Newgate Calendar* are prosaic reports of theft or other common crimes punishable by death in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. However, the texts sold on their promise of sensationalism.

The *Calendar* anthologies were expensive, limiting their audience to the higher social classes. Satisfying the demand for similar material at the lower end of the market, even cheaper than the *Accounts* and published simultaneously, were the broadsides and ballad sheets. Ballad sheets had their origins in the sixteenth century when the development of printing technology made possible the rapid publication of matters of public interest, or what is now called news, and crime and execution were frequent topics. The ballad was printed on a single sheet, often illustrated, making it affordable and attractive to its intended, often semi-literate, lower-class audience. As news began to appear in prose rather than verse form, the ballad sheet was joined by the broadside.

Broadsides covered the same topics and were aimed at the same audience as the printed ballads but were written in prose. The most popular were the criminal or execution broadsides that offered, in reduced form, criminal biographies similar to those in *The Newgate Calendar*. While paying lip service to the moral and religious aspects of representing criminality, the execution broadsides were in fact an unapologetic commodification of crime, using sensational crime and criminal lives to make maximum profits. The ballad form lingered on in the easily memorized “verses” that accompanied many of the criminal and execution broadsides, often with a suggestion for an appropriate accompanying tune which would be sung by the street “patterer,” or broadside vendor, to tempt people into buying. And, as an anonymous patterer noted, “nothing beats a stunning good murder” (Mayhew 1967 [1851]: 223). Take, for example, the case of John Gleeson Wilson, executed in 1849 for the murder of two women and children:

The surgeon thus describes the scene presented to his view,  
A more appalling case than this he says he never knew,  
Four human beings on the floor all weltering in their gore,  
The sight was sickening to behold on entering the door.

The mother’s wounds three inches deep upon her head and face,  
And pools of blood as thick as mud, from all of them could trace,  
None could identify the boy, his head was like a jelly;  
This tragedy is worse by far than Greenacre or Kelly.

(Hindley 1969 [1871]: 197)

When no new murders were committed, old ones would be reprinted or apocryphal tales such as *The Liverpool Tragedy*, in which an elderly couple murder their unrecognized son for his money, would be revisited and passed off as factual narratives. With the emphasis on entertainment, the distinction between fact and fiction in crime narratives, whether in the expensive *Newgate Calendar* anthologies or the broadsides, becomes increasingly unclear.

The development of crime fiction is inextricably linked with the rise of the novel, which is generally considered to have become a recognized literary form in 1719 with Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (Watt 1957). Defoe, a journalist, writer, and spy, spent time in Newgate Prison for political offences and wrote a number of biographies of famous criminals, including notorious housebreaker Jack Sheppard (1724) and the infamous "Thief-Taker General," Jonathan Wild. After the fashion of the *Newgate Calendars* and *Ordinaries' Accounts*, Defoe's *The True and Genuine Account of the Life and Actions of the Late Jonathan Wild* (1725), was, the writer claimed, "taken from [Wild's] own mouth, and collected from papers of his own writing" (quoted in Fielding 1986 [1743]: 221). The narrative is indeed factual, but the novelistic style and structure and the careful selection of the more entertaining aspects of Wild's dual career as simultaneously thief and quasi-detective locate the text more as prototype than as full-fledged crime fiction.

Defoe had previously used crime in fiction when he wrote the pseudo-autobiographical *Moll Flanders* (1722). This followed the narrative structure of the criminal biography, and the eponymous heroine of Defoe's novel may have been loosely based on Moll King, friend to Jonathan Wild's mistress, Mary Milliner (Howson 1985 [1970]). Where the criminal biographies were of limited length and ended unhappily in death, the fictional *Moll Flanders* follows the early criminographic pattern of youthful indiscretion leading to crime but fleshes out the characters and manages a happy ending. Moll is born to a convict mother in Newgate Prison and leads an adventurous, at times criminal, life that results in her return to Newgate as a convicted criminal. She is transported to America but eventually comes back to England and, repentant, is recuperated back into respectability.

Central to both factual and fictional early crime narratives, then, is the criminal; the accounts are retrospective, the crimes and their perpetrator known. Further, these criminals tend to be from the lower classes. This is not a problem in the broadsides or in *The Newgate Calendar*, which sell themselves as criminal narratives and portray the containment of crime. But as the novel form develops over the nineteenth century it moves from a broad representation of society to representing a predominantly middle-class audience back to itself, thereby marginalizing lower-class criminality.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century crime appears in a new form, the Gothic novel (see Spooner, chapter 19 in this volume). Here are no ordinary offences, such as pocket-picking, but apparently supernatural events that, in Ann Radcliffe's novels for example, are often revealed to be mundane hoaxes concealing some criminal act or intention. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1780 [1794]), the trappings of the supernatural and the usual Gothic tropes of secrets, hidden passages and decaying castles turn out to be the cover for a gang of smugglers. Charles Rzepka has argued that Radcliffe's heroines can be read as amateur proto-detectives (Rzepka 2005), but it is with William Godwin's quasi-Gothic novel, *Caleb Williams; or, Things as They Are* (1794) that a narrative retrospectively recognizable as crime fiction, and even featuring a detective figure, first appears (see Shaw, chapter 28 in this volume). Godwin's pro-

tagonist, Caleb, discovers – detects – that his master, the aristocratic Falkland has murdered Tyrrel, a tyrannical landowner, and has allowed the innocent Hawkinses to be condemned for his crime. The narrative locates Caleb initially as a proto-detective and subsequently as a criminal as Falkland manipulates the law in his own interests. The influence of criminal biographies is clear: at one point Caleb is the subject of a broadside and Godwin makes direct reference to *The Newgate Calendar* in a footnote (Godwin 1998: 268, 180).

By the end of the eighteenth century crime is firmly established in fiction as well as in factual narratives. But it is not just in British literature that crime and fiction are brought together. Across the Atlantic, America was producing its own, naturalistic Gothic fiction. In Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* (1798), ostensibly supernatural voices are shown to emanate from a ventriloquist attempting to incite murder; in Brown's *Arthur Mervyn* (1799), which Rzepka suggests was directly inspired by Godwin's novel (Rzepka 2005: 56), there are numerous crimes and what Knight calls an "inquirer both confident and ... successful" (Knight 2004: 20), while Larry Landrum posits *Edgar Huntly* (1799–1800) as America's first detective novel (Landrum 1999: 1). This is perhaps a little overstated, and many would say that James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* (1826), one of the five novels in the Leatherstocking series featuring frontiersman Natty Bumppo, has a stronger claim. In what will become a familiar pattern in crime fiction, Bumppo even has an assistant, in this case, the Mohican chief, Chingachgook. Cooper's novels are not really concerned with crime as such. However, the independent and intelligent Bumppo, using the Native American skills he has acquired to read the natural world, can be seen as a backwoods prototype for the urban detective. Regis Messac has noted that Cooper, among other early American authors, was a strong influence on nineteenth-century French writers (Messac 1929: vol. 3), as is demonstrated by the title of the elder Alexandre Dumas's crime narrative, *Les Mohicans de Paris* (1856–7).

## Public Policing

It is in France that the professional detective figure in the modern sense perhaps makes its *début*. Crime fiction as a genre requires a crime, a criminal, and a victim, plus (usually) a detective and (often) the police. The early crime narratives in Britain and America featured neither police nor official detectives, as neither existed until the nineteenth century. The Bow Street Runners had a detecting role, certainly, and "thief takers" were men paid to track down criminals for a fee. Jonathan Wild was both thief and thief taker and in *Caleb Williams* Gines plays a similar role first as robber and subsequently as the criminalized Caleb's pursuer. In the absence of an official police force, criminographic texts such as the execution broadsides were themselves considered to have a policing function in warning of the consequences of crime. In France, however, there had been a State-funded policing force since the

seventeenth century, a force which by the nineteenth century had a clear detective function.

Despite the fact that thief-takers like Jonathan Wild and Gines were essentially private entrepreneurs and the French police agent was managed and paid by the State, the French system, too, relied on informers and spies, and sometimes recruited officers from the criminals who informed on their compatriots, as the autobiographical *Mémoires de Vidocq* (1828–9) records. Eugène François Vidocq began his career as a criminal, but volunteered his services as an informer to the police while still in prison and, in 1812, after several years as a double agent, became chief of the newly founded *Sûreté*, a brigade of police detectives. The *Sûreté*, or “Security” force, was conceived by Vidocq and was composed of ex-criminals like himself. It proved very successful. The brigade and its leader used their knowledge of the criminal underworld and quite often its methods to track down or trap their quarry. Vidocq’s *Mémoires*, largely ghost-written, show him relying on disguise and trickery in his detective work, but also using early forensic detection, for example taking a suspected criminal’s shoes and matching them to an incriminating footprint. However, the methods used to “borrow” the shoes were unlawful: Vidocq lulled the suspect into a false sense of security by wining and dining him while surreptitiously taking his footwear (Vidocq 2003: 266–9).

In the *Mémoires* it is less Vidocq the detective and agent of the law that interests the reader than Vidocq the criminal, with his trickery and disguises, and in this sense the narrative is closely akin to the criminal biographies. Employing Vidocq’s criminal skills on behalf of the law was effective, but his criminal past and methods tainted his reputation and he was eventually forced to resign in 1827 after accusations of impropriety were made against him, allegations that seem to be supported by the nearly half million francs he had managed to amass over his 15 years of service with an average salary of five thousand francs per annum (Vidocq 2003: xii). Vidocq subsequently ran a private detective agency for a number of years, but it was his *Mémoires* that brought him fame and fortune and that made an important contribution to the development of the crime fiction genre. His career as described in the *Mémoires* offered inspiration to Edgar Allan Poe and Arthur Conan Doyle but, more immediately in France, to Honoré de Balzac, Victor Hugo, Eugène Sue, Alexandre Dumas (senior), Émile Gaboriau and others. Balzac’s criminal mastermind, Vautrin, who first appears in *Le Père Goriot* (1835), becomes, in the later books, the Chief of the Paris police and both his career and his methods are clearly based on those of Vidocq. Rzepka cites Vautrin in turn as the inspiration for lawman Javert in Victor Hugo’s 1862 novel, *Les Misérables* (Rzepka 2005: 62).

The police are a presence in Dumas’s *Les Mobicans de Paris*, but his head of *Sûreté*, “M. Jackal,” has lost the criminal edge and is a more conventional police officer, as is Émile Gaboriau’s inspired and ambitious but also practical policeman, M. Lecoq, influential around the world through his masterly crime-solving in stories like *Dossier 113* (1864) and *M. Lecoq* (1868). Not all French crime fiction focused on police: Eugène Sue’s early and very popular *Les Mystères de Paris* (1842–3) was more interested

in crime and criminals than policing, and the criminal, epitomized in the later nineteenth century by Maurice Leblanc's gentleman thief Arsène Lupin, became a major figure in French crime fiction (Rzepka 2005: 63), retaining and developing the focus on the malefactor seen in the early criminal biographies. In Britain the reverse is true: in the early part of the century the legacy of *The Newgate Calendar* can be seen in what became known as the "Newgate novel" (see Gillingham, chapter 6 in this volume) and until the mid-century in the developing crime fiction genre the attention is still firmly on the criminal.

The Newgate novel is the generic title given to a small group of novels published in the 1830s and 40s. The name makes clear the link between the *Calendar* stories and the books; contemporary critics used the term "Newgate fiction" as a derogatory descriptor for novels that featured a criminal who came, or might have come, from a *Newgate Calendar* (Hollingsworth 1963: 14). Newgate novels were accused of glorifying criminality and making it attractive. The best-known authors at the center of the controversy caused by glamorizing criminality were Edward Bulwer-Lytton, William Harrison Ainsworth and Charles Dickens. William M. Thackeray is often included in the list but his novel *Catherine: A Story* (1839–40) was a parody of and an attack on Newgate fiction. Bulwer-Lytton wrote two Newgate novels: the eponymous hero of *Paul Clifford* (1830) is a highwayman and *Eugene Aram* (1832) is a fictionalized account of an eighteenth-century true crime narrative. Written in the context of political and penal reform, *Paul Clifford* follows the classic Newgate pattern of the descent into crime. With its reformist agenda, it targets the harsh penal laws as playing a part in the construction of criminals and can be read as a prototypical social problem novel. In *Eugene Aram*, Bulwer-Lytton considered the motives of an intelligent, educated criminal. His fictional Aram, based on a real-life English philologist whose murder of a close friend became a regular feature of the *Newgate Calendars*, was a cultured, Byronic hero. William Harrison Ainsworth's *Rookwood* (1834) was more a Gothic romance than a Newgate novel, but it contained a glamorous fictional representation of the real highwayman Dick Turpin (who may have been in part the inspiration for *Paul Clifford*). Ainsworth's later text, *Jack Sheppard* (1839), was an unapologetically favorable depiction of an eighteenth-century thief and, though wildly popular with the public, it attracted a great deal of censure from critics. Dickens did not escape the Newgate taint: *Oliver Twist* (1839) was criticized as a Newgate fiction and its narrative indeed bears some resemblance in outline to that of *Paul Clifford* (Pykett 2003: 27).

In the development of crime fiction the Newgate novels are important in a number of ways: they represent an increasing interest in the construction and motivation of the criminal; they have an element of detection or feature a detective figure; they bring crime firmly into mainstream fiction and so make possible the later genre of sensation fiction (see Pittard, chapter 7 in this volume). The trend, initiated by *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* from its inception in 1817, of including fiction and serializing novels in periodicals disseminated these criminal fictions to a cross-class audience, as did the many dramatic interpretations staged over the nineteenth century.

But where their predecessors, the criminal biographies, were thought to warn against crime by portraying its consequences, the Newgate novels were accused of making criminality seem attractive. Despite, or perhaps because of its popularity, Newgate fiction contributed to nineteenth-century society's anxieties about crime in reality, anxieties that the government sought to assuage with the inauguration of the New Metropolitan Police in 1829.

The new police force operated only in London and was organized specifically to allay public fears that a State-funded police would erode civil liberties and function in the manner of the French police, that is, with informers and spies. The new force was uniformed and individually identifiable by numbers pinned to the collars of their jackets, and their remit was to prevent, not detect, crime. Such official detective work as took place was carried out by the Bow Street Runners, a small quasi-police force organized in 1749 by Henry Fielding, then the incumbent at London's Bow Street Magistrate's Court. Initially consisting of only seven men and only partially state-funded, over the eighteenth century the Runners had expanded and developed into a reasonably effective detecting agency and until 1839, when the Runners were disbanded, the two policing bodies worked in parallel: *Oliver Twist* features the (incompetent) Runners Blathers and Duff but also refers to policemen and officers of the law.

The Runners were regularly mentioned in narratives concerned with crime, but rarely took center stage, possibly because their lower-class status and criminal associations made them unsuitable fictional heroes. In 1827 *Richmond: Scenes in the Life of a Bow Street Runner, Drawn Up from His Private Memoranda*, was published anonymously. Ascribed to both Thomas Skinner Surr and Thomas Gaspey, *Richmond* recounts the eponymous fictional protagonist's progress from living among gypsies (who are, in general, positively portrayed) to employment as a Runner. A contemporary review found it to be "almost beneath contempt" (*Monthly Review*, June 1827), reflecting public attitudes to the Runners. Similarly, while there were regular police reports in the newspapers, the appearance of the official police in fiction, as in *Oliver Twist*, was limited. From the public's perspective, the police were recruited from the lower classes in order to police their peers; crime was associated with poverty and seen as a direct threat to the propertied middle and upper classes. The hero-criminals in Newgate fiction either were or were proved to be of a higher class (*Eugene Aram*, *Paul Clifford*, *Oliver Twist*), or had natural nobility (*Rookwood* and *Jack Sheppard*), and in this context the ordinary police officer seemed unlikely material for the hero of a novel.

By 1842 the police presence in London had become acceptable enough to make possible the creation of a small, plain-clothes detective police force and it is the activities of the detective police that finally bring crime and detection together in popular literature, initially in fiction. In 1849 hack journalist William Russell, perhaps inspired by the 1830s and 40s fashion for pseudo-autobiographical narratives of professional men such as physicians, lawyers and barristers, produced the first fictional account of professional policing in his "Recollections of a Police-Officer," which were

published in the popular *Chambers's Edinburgh Journal* 1849–53. Russell overcame the class problem by making “Waters,” his policeman protagonist, a gentleman forced into police work after losing his fortune to dishonest gamblers (Worthington 2005). The stories are set in the recent past prior to the establishment of the detective police, but “Waters” functions as a detective, working in plain clothes, and there are anachronistic references to his “fellow detective-officers.” The stories proved popular, beginning what Philip Collins calls a “vogue for yellow-back detective stories” (Collins 1992: 211) which continued into the 1860s and beyond (“yellow-backs” were cheap novels bound in yellow paper).

Russell’s “Recollections” were reissued in 1856 in a collected edition re-titled *Recollections of a Detective Police-Officer* (my emphasis). The change in title was perhaps the consequence of Charles Dickens’s series of articles on the real detective police, published in *Household Words* between 1850 and 1853. Dickens’s laudatory accounts raised the detectives’ actually rather prosaic activities to the level of a science, imbuing what was simply an extensive knowledge of criminals and criminality with an air of mystery. Dickens’s interest in and admiration for the police detectives found its way into his fiction, most notably with Inspector Bucket in *Bleak House* (1853), who was loosely based on a real Inspector Field. However, it was his detective police anecdotes which brought the detective force to the attention of the public and contributed to the proliferation of detective narratives that appeared in the periodicals and the yellow-back novels of the 1850s and 60s. These tended to take a diary or case-book format and claimed to be factual, but were more usually fiction. Russell followed his *Recollections* with *The Experiences of a Real Detective* (1862) and *The Autobiography of an English Detective* (1863). Charles Martel (pseudonym of Thomas Delf) offered *The Diary of an Ex-Detective* (1859) and a sequel, *The Detective’s Notebook* (1860). Ireland had Robert Curtis’s *The Irish Police Officer* (1861) and in Scotland James McLevy, a police detective, wrote up his memoirs in *Curiosities of Crime in Edinburgh* (1861) and *The Sliding Scale of Life; or, Thirty Years’ Observations of Falling Men and Women in Edinburgh* (1861).

In 1863, perhaps wearying of police detective stories, the pseudonymous Andrew Forrester Junior introduced the concept of the private detective in *Revelations of a Private Detective*, succeeded by *Secret Service, or Recollections of a City Detective* (1864). Even more radically, he created a professional woman investigator in *The Female Detective* (1864), which was followed shortly after by William Hayward’s *The Experiences of a Lady Detective* (1864). These detective narratives are doubly important in the development of crime fiction: they introduced and made central the detective figure and they established the case format which becomes an essential element of the genre. The criminal is now no longer the subject of the narrative but the object of the detective’s pursuit, and the fact that the detective is on the side of the law makes reading about crime respectable as well as suggesting its containment. The police detective’s period of fame was relatively brief; he continued to appear in crime narratives but increasingly in a minor role and, by the end of the century, is more likely to be depicted as bumbling and ineffectual, as Sherlock Holmes will repeatedly point out.

The detective continues to feature in fiction, but more usually in an amateur or private capacity.

### Private Detection

Edgar Allan Poe has been called “the father of detection” (Symons 1985b: 35) in consequence of his three short stories featuring an investigatory figure, C. Auguste Dupin: “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” (1841), “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt” (1842–3) and “The Purloined Letter” (1845). Symons’s claim is generally considered to be justifiable, but clearly the development of detection in fact and fiction was much more complex (see Lee, chapter 29 in this volume). Poe could not have set out to write detective fiction – the genre was not yet recognized – rather, his Dupin stories are concerned with how rational analysis combined with imagination can solve mysteries, as his introductory paragraphs to “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” suggest. Despite Poe’s American nationality, his three quasi-detective tales are set in a Paris that would have been recognizable to Vidocq, whom Poe calls “a good guesser and a persevering man” in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue,” indicating that he knew Vidocq’s *Mémoires*, perhaps from the extracts printed widely in the periodicals, including in America.

Locating the stories in Paris allowed Poe to evoke the decadent Gothic atmosphere that the new America lacked; Dupin is depicted as a creature of the night, living in a decaying mansion with the unnamed friend who narrates the tales, prefiguring Dr Watson’s role in Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes stories. Poe’s narrator renders Dupin and his methods comprehensible to the reader, a device that Dr Watson and later detective assistants will further develop. The Dupin stories not only offer a rational explanation of a mystery or solution to a crime, but also set in place narrative and thematic patterns that are still apparent in modern crime fiction. Perhaps most importantly, the Dupin tales are not concerned with the kind of crimes found in the detective-police narratives: in “The Murders in the Rue Morgue,” what seems to be the ghastly and motiveless murder of two women is revealed to be the work of an orangutan; “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt” seems to be an investigation into the murder of Marie, but in reality is more concerned with the mystery posed by Marie herself; “The Purloined Letter” circles around the possession of an incriminating letter, the contents of which are never revealed.

These narratives are not, then, the straightforward pursuit of the criminal seen in Vidocq’s *Mémoires* or “Waters’s” *Recollections* but something new – an intelligent analysis of facts that leads to a resolution, a process of inductive thought. Dupin’s combination of active investigation and cerebral organization becomes the model for later detective protagonists and it is the establishment of narrative patterns that makes Poe’s Dupin stories such an important element in the development of crime fiction. Read retrospectively, “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” offers a classic locked room mystery; “The Mystery of Marie Rogêt” is a model of the armchair detective as Dupin

bases his detection on newspaper reports rather than empirical investigation; “The Purloined Letter” articulates the need for the detective to be able to put him/herself into the place of the criminal and sets up what Michel Foucault calls “the intellectual struggle between criminal and investigator” (Foucault 1977: 69). Poe wrote only three Dupin stories, and he is perhaps better known for his Gothic-influenced tales of horror and the supernatural, many of which were heavily focused on the mental and physical sensations aroused by extreme states. In this, he was following a pattern that had emerged in early nineteenth-century Britain.

From its inception in 1817 *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* featured fiction, most particularly a series of variously authored macabre short stories that came to be known as “*Blackwood's Tales of Terror*.” The narratives depicted sensational actions and events and were calculated to arouse physical and psychical sensations in the reader. Poe was familiar with and probably influenced by *Blackwood's* and its tales, writing “How to Write a Blackwood Article” (1838), in which he parodied the form. Crime is not central to the “Tales of Terror,” but is a recurring theme, usually featuring death or its threat. While not precisely fitting the model of the “Tales of Terror,” Thomas De Quincey’s two essays, “On the Knocking at the Gate in *Macbeth*” (1823) and “On Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts” (1827), which both appeared in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, took as their subject the sensational and real-life Ratcliffe Highway Murders of 1811 in which seven people in two separate households were killed in apparently motiveless acts of violence. While clearly taking a satirical approach to the subject, De Quincey’s elevated style and his use of high literature and philosophy in association with violent crime gave it a kind of literary respectability. As *Blackwood's* was aimed at a relatively wealthy and educated audience, it introduced crime narratives into the homes of the nineteenth-century middle classes; in essence, *Blackwood's* appropriated the criminal material of the broadsides and repackaged it for a new readership (Worthington 2005). The sensational aspects of these short stories also found their way into the novel, initially in the Newgate fiction of the 1830s and 40s, but perhaps more radically in the subversive, middle-class narratives that the contemporary critics called “sensation fiction.”

This sub-genre took crime right into the domestic sphere, the very heart of Victorian society. Abduction, adultery, murder, bigamy, fraud, seduction, forgery: the crimes in sensation fiction were social, personal, credible, and not committed by a criminal underclass but by the men and, shockingly, women of the middle and upper classes. Where the Newgate novels tended to be set in the past, sensation fiction was made sensational by its proximity to the present in both its action and its settings. Although charged with writing sensation fiction, with perhaps the exception of *Oliver Twist* and the unfinished *Mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870), Dickens’s use of crime and sensation in his novels was part of his exploration into and *exposé* of the darker side of nineteenth-century society. It is *The Woman in White* (1859–60), written by Dickens’s close friend Wilkie Collins (see Mangham, chapter 30 in this volume), that is generally accepted as establishing the sensation fiction genre. Collins’s text

features false imprisonment, wrongful inheritance, an unhappy arranged marriage and the charming yet terrifying Italian villain, Count Fosco. A tangled love affair and romance, or suitably mediated sexual attraction, is also, as here, an essential part of sensation fiction.

Collins's novel was quickly followed by Mrs Henry Wood's *East Lynne* (1860–1), where cross-class marriage, seduction and adultery are combined with a sub-plot of mystery and murder. Charles Reade's *Hard Cash* (1863) falls into the sensation category, as do novels by "Ouida" and Rhoda Broughton. Canonical novelists such as George Eliot, Anthony Trollope and Thomas Hardy (whose first book *Desperate Remedies* (1871) draws on what seems like all the tropes of sensation fiction) incorporated sensational elements into their narratives. But one of the best-known sensation novels, which like *The Woman in White* plays an important role in the development of crime fiction, is Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1861–2). Significantly, both these texts feature active amateur detectives: in Collins's novel first Marion Halcombe and then Walter Hartright work to detect the crimes and solve the mysteries posed in the narrative, while in *Lady Audley's Secret* the detective role is taken on by Robert Audley, who reveals Lady Audley to be a bigamist and attempted murderess. The sensation novel introduces crime into the middle and upper classes, but cannot permit investigation of that crime by the lower-class police detective. Instead, the middle and upper classes police themselves: even when the criminal is revealed, he/she is not subjected to public justice but removed from the text. In *The Woman in White* Percival Glyde is burnt to death in the fire he has started in order to destroy the evidence of his illegitimate status, and in *Lady Audley's Secret* Lady Audley is, as Pykett observes, "sentenced to death-by-boredom in a Belgian *maison de santé* by her nephew Robert" (Pykett 2003: 35).

The sensation novel affords a discursive space for the amateur detective, and importantly this role is not limited to the male. Marion Halcombe proves an effective investigator until she is struck down by illness and replaced by Hartright, while in Collins's *No Name* (1862) Magdalen Vanstone actively seeks out the secrets that will enable her to retrieve her inheritance. In *The Law and the Lady* (1875) Valeria Woodville investigates the murder of her husband's first wife in order to prove his innocence. In the fiction of the 1860s and 70s the detective is established in both the public world of the police and the private world of the domestic sphere and the emphasis is firmly on detection rather than the pursuit of the criminal seen in earlier criminography. In 1868 Collins brought together these public and private worlds in *The Moonstone*, called by T. S. Eliot "the first and greatest of English detective novels" (Eliot 1951 [1934]: 464). *The Moonstone*, which loosely falls into the sensation fiction category, revolves around the disappearance of a yellow diamond or moonstone. In the process of investigation, the police are brought into the Verinder household, initially in the shape of the uniformed and incompetent Superintendent Seagrave and then in the person of police detective Sergeant Cuff, who was modeled on Sergeant Whicher, a Metropolitan police detective (see Mangham, chapter 30 in this volume).

One of the police detectives popularized by Dickens, Whicher achieved fame in the case of Constance Kent and the murder at Road in 1860, aspects of which Collins used in the plot of *The Moonstone*. Whicher's fictional avatar, Sergeant Cuff, is an able detective, but he falls just short of success within the private, domestic sphere. He wrongly deduces that Rachel Verinder, the daughter of the house, has stolen her own diamond. Once the missing jewel enters the public sphere, Cuff successfully allocates guilt, although the criminal, Godfrey Ablewhite, is punished by the original Indian guardians of the Moonstone, not by the law. The revelation of the events surrounding the disappearance of the diamond requires amateur detectives, here represented by Franklin Blake assisted by a doctors' assistant, Ezra Jennings, who provides the scientific skills of detection. The Verinders' house steward, Betteredge, whose liminal position between the servants and his employer facilitates the flow of information from one to the other (and to the reader), also has a quasi-detecting role. It is Betteredge who coins the phrase "detective fever" to describe the physical sensations aroused by the desire to discover the truth – sensations with which every reader could identify. *The Moonstone* prefigures classic English detective fiction, featuring a country-house setting, clues, witnesses and a combination of amateur and police detectives.

This is not yet fully-fashioned detection and detective fiction, but the themes and patterns are beginning to coalesce. The private, the police, and the amateur detective have all found their way into fiction and the plot structure of crime, detection, and resolution has firmly replaced the crime and pursuit narratives of early criminography.

But the development of crime fiction was not confined to Britain. Poe's setting of his Dupin stories in Paris reiterates the French-American connection discussed earlier and crime fiction developed quickly in America in parallel with and sometimes ahead of developments in Britain. In 1865, *Leaves from the Note-Book of a New York Detective*, allegedly the edited "casebook" of New York consulting detective Jem Brampton, appears. Heavily influenced by Poe, the Brampton stories differ from the British detective memoirs in that the hero is his own agent and selects his own cases; he is perhaps the first American urban detective. A real-life equivalent was Allan Pinkerton, the first detective appointed in Chicago and later co-founder of the Pinkerton National Detective Agency, who from 1866 onwards is credited with eighteen stories based on his own detective work. These were possibly ghost-written but were published under his name. In 1867, Metta Victor Fuller's *The Dead Letter*, published under the pseudonym "Seeley Regester," offered detection combined with aspects of the sensation genre, and in her first crime novel, *The Leavenworth Case* (1878), Anna Katharine Green, like Fuller, used the sensation fiction model but removed the extremes of coincidence and chance, inserting recognizable detective fiction techniques clearly drawn from Gaboriau and carried out by police detective Ebenezer Gryce. Harriet Prescott Spofford included some crime fiction in her impressive output of short stories, as did Louisa May Alcott in her foray into sensation fiction in the 1860s.

Perhaps less constrained by convention, these women authors outside Britain seemed to take to writing crime more readily and easily than their British sisters.

Their development of crime fiction was not limited to the northern hemisphere: Canadian-born Australian Mary Fortune is one of the earliest woman detective fiction writers and certainly the first in Australia (Sussex 1989). Based in and around Melbourne, Fortune wrote over 500 crime stories between 1865 and 1908, many featuring her serial police detective Mark Sinclair. Again in Melbourne, the New Zealand-born lawyer Fergus Hume wrote *The Mystery of a Hansom Cab* (1886) which Hume claimed to be modeled on Gaboriau's crime fiction and which featured a lawyer and a detective working together. The novel became a best seller upon its publication in Britain in 1887 and encouraged others, including Doyle, to work in the genre.

By the 1880s, crime fiction in a recognizable form was well established in Britain and abroad. Probably the most significant development took place in the figure of the detective, around which the earlier patterns of criminography coalesced. Yet R. F. Stewart tentatively places the first written use of the phrase "detective fiction" as late as December 1886, when it appeared as the title of an article in the *Saturday Review* (Stewart 1980: 27). Just twelve months later in December 1887, the first Sherlock Holmes narrative, *A Study in Scarlet*, was published in *Beeton's Christmas Annual*, and the career of the great detective had begun.

### The Definitive Detective

It is impossible now to imagine crime fiction without immediately thinking of Sherlock Holmes. Arthur Conan Doyle's detective is a global phenomenon: there are international societies dedicated to Sherlock Holmes, a Sherlock Holmes Museum in London, and he has been immortalized in plays, films, and on television. His "cases" have been subjected to analysis by literary critics and by amateur enthusiasts. He is the archetypal detective whose influence can still be seen in modern crime fiction and his representation is the culmination of the development of the crime fiction genre over the nineteenth century. Doyle admitted his debt to earlier crime writers, speaking of Gaboriau's "neat dovetailing of plot" and Poe's "masterful detective, M. Dupin" (Doyle 1989: 74); he knew the sensation fiction genre and it is reasonable to assume he was aware of *The Newgate Calendar* and the prolific criminography featured in the periodicals in which his own work was published. Doyle's stated aim in writing a detective story was to turn what he saw as the "fascinating but disorganised business" of detection in fiction into "something nearer an exact science" (Doyle 1989: 74–5), and he admits to basing Sherlock Holmes's detective methods in part on Joseph Bell, a surgeon with whom he had worked while a medical student. Bell's seemingly uncanny ability to diagnose character and employment as well as illness in individual patients was central to Doyle's creation of a "scientific detective who solved cases on his own merits and not through the folly of the criminal" (Doyle 1989: 26).

Doyle consciously drew on earlier models, most obviously Poe's Dupin, in shaping Sherlock Holmes, but it is possible to trace elements of other investigative figures discussed here in Doyle's detective. Nor was it just earlier investigators who contrib-

uted: the narrator-companion, the urban setting, the rational “deductive” process, the case history, the scientific approach, the eccentricity of the protagonist, the collection and reading of clues, the importance of minutiae and, perhaps above all, the encyclopedic knowledge of crime and criminality, have all featured at some point and in some form over the long nineteenth century. Stamford was right: Sherlock Holmes is “a walking calendar of crime,” and his narratives are a literary mosaic of nineteenth-century criminography. Doyle’s detective is both an end point in the development of crime fiction and a starting point: crime fiction in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries would not be the same without him.

But not for Sherlock Holmes, who, in a stunning display of intellect and derring-do, will elude his hangman's noose and live to fiddle, spy, and ratiocinate another day. Against tremendous odds Holmes will continue to defy his enemies in four more encounters, from cracking German intelligence codes, to going against Scotland Yard and the Crown in proving the innocence of a man condemned to death for the slaying of a pregnant serving girl, to an arsenic-wielding magician, and of course, to a battle of wits with the malevolent Moriarty. Everywhere in these five finely wrought tales, riddles