



Is the Bible a Crime Novel?

In his new book, *The Rough Guide to Crime Fiction*, author Barry Forshaw argues that ‘with a little ingenuity’ the Bible could be seen as a literary antecedent to the modern crime novel, as could Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* and some of Shakespeare’s darker works.

Forshaw admits to a little ‘shoehorning’ to fit them in as progenitors of crime fiction. But it makes a point. One of his major aims with this guide is to show that crime writing is no longer a niche ‘whodunnit’ genre, but a major literary form.

“*It is rare to read a modern novel in which crime does not play a prominent part,*” says Forshaw.

The reasons why crime fiction proves so alluring to the novelist are explored by Ian Rankin’s foreword to the Rough Guide: “*People are interested in Crime Fiction because they are fascinated by the margins of the world, those places where society’s rules break down.*”

The crime novel is, Rankin finds, “*the perfect vehicle for a discussion of contemporary issues*” and “*good at articulating the fears that society has harboured at all moments of history*”.

As Forshaw points out: “*Crime is, however unfortunately, an endemic aspect of the human condition. Thus, as long as literature continues to be produced, crime will inevitably form a central aspect of it.*”

The Rough Guide to Crime Fiction, foreword by Ian Rankin, recommends over 200 classic crime novels and mystery authors from masterminds Raymond Chandler and Patricia Highsmith to modern hotshots James Elroy and Patricia Cornwell. You’ll investigate gumshoes, spies, spooks, serial killers, forensic females and prying priests from past, present, and future. This opinionated but unstuffy reference tool, is the ultimate crime buyer’s shopping list.

For further information or to order a review copy please contact the Rough Guides Press Office on 0207 010 3701 or press@roughguides.com

Notes to Editors

The Rough Guide to Crime Fiction
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Barry Forshaw is the author of *Italian Cinema* and has contributed to *The Rough Guide to Film Noir*. He has written on crime and literary fiction for *The Independent*, *The Express* and *The Times*. He edits the fiction review *Crime Time*.

Rough Guides publish over 300 travel titles, maps and phrasebooks and over 60 reference titles covering subjects ranging from music and film to computing and popular culture, from *The Rough Guide to Conspiracy Theories* to *The Rough Guide to Shakespeare*.

Crime Fiction and the Pseudonym

There can be few genres of fiction that have such an interesting relationship with the literary pseudonym. Nicci French is well known to be a writing partnership between Nicci Gerrard and Sean French but it is the 2001 title *Candyland* that possibly has the most bizarre credit with two authors on the cover - Ed McBain and Evan Hunter - both of which are pseudonyms of the same person, Salvatore Albert Lombino.