
Poe's Important Contributions to Detective Fictions:

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The world's first true detective story that is the first story which centered exclusively on the process of solving a crime was Edgar Allan Poe's *The murders in the Rue Morgue*, which appeared in Graham's magazine in April 1841. This is the first locked –room mystery by E.A Poe. The world first ever detective is his chevalier August Dupin, the ratiocinating and amateur detective. His second work *The Mystery of Marie Roget* appeared in 1841, which is his second detective story and is the earliest instance of 'armchair' detection and also for the first time an actual crime is detective. Edgar Allan Poe solves the mystery by his detective Dupin, he uses random evidence gleaned from newspaper cuttings and he brought scientific method into the genre. Concealment in the open is the novel technique that Poe used in *The Proloined letter* which is his third story appeared in 1845. Here he takes into account the working of the mind of the criminals besides evident facts. Poe's delights in the supernatural and mysterious and creates mysteries and puzzle. His *The Golden Bug* is a puzzle story with a cryptogram. In *The Cask of Amentillado* and *The tell tale Heart* Poe concerns himself with remorseless and ruthless murders.

THE RAISE OF THE CRIME STORIES:

The intellectualization of the crime story raised it from the shambles of disrepute, raised its status and widened its reading public. The pleasure of reading a detective story is analogous to that of attempting a crossword puzzle or solving a chess problem. Hitherto as a fiction writer Poe being omniscient, was wielding power over his readers excluding his participation in the unfolding of events. The new form took the reader in to confidence, offered him a challenge giving him a sense of triumph at the end of the book, if his guess happened to be correct.

THE IMITATORS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE:

Charles Dickens wrote a detective story *Bleak House* in 1853. He also wrote a number of detective stories *The mystery of Edwin Drood* (1870). *The Recollection of a police officer* (1856) by William Russell (pen name Water) appeared somewhat mid way between Poe and Conan Doyle and during the later part of 'Dickens' and 'Collins' literary career. Russell claimed to be a London Metropolitan police officer. Many cheap yellow Backs complimented his works by imitation. Wilkie Collins's contribution to the genre was commendable. It commenced with his *The Woman in White* 1860. T.S.Eliot was fascinated by Wilkie Collins's subsequent creation sergeant Cuff in *The Moon Stone* (1868). He applauded that work as The first, the longest, the best of English detective novels. "In France, the new development in crime fiction was taken up by Emile Gaborian, who wrote "L' affaire Lerouge" in 1863 which

made him famous and his reputation. In New Zealand Fergus Hume wrote the bestselling novel *Mystery of the Hansom Cab* in 1887. At this point it is very clear that the works of Edgar Allan Poe show significant change in public as well as the other writer like Dickens, Collins and Hume.

A new way swept the whole field of the detective story in 1888. Sir Arthur Conan Doyle transformed the prospects of the detective story overnight. His Sherlock Holmes remains the yet unconquered king of detective stories. Women writers took giant strides in this field. Agatha Christie competently continued the tradition, reigning supreme as the *Queen of crime* as she popularly known. Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple are the realistic and arresting characters of Christie. Dorothy Leigh Sayers an elder contemporary of Agatha Christie, tried to give a religious twist to the genre. Her *Lord Peter Views the Body* (1928), *Hangman's Holiday* (1933) are best examples of the detective short stories.

The concerned readership is not an aristocratic minority but a growing multitude which might on occasion include the minority. Today in the west the percentage of literacy is very high and detective fiction is demanded by everyone who knows to read and who has the curiosity to know what happened next. The credentials of society and taste and artistic values are becoming democratic. The whole credit should be beyond Edgar Allan Poe for intruding of a new genre detective and crime fiction. So he can be proudly called as the father of Modern Detective Fiction.

WORK CITED

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