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Elements in Crime Narratives

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FORENSIC CRIME FICTION

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Forensic Crime Fiction

Elements in Crime Narratives

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Abstract: This study of forensic crime fiction from the US and the UK examines the prominent roles that women play in many of these novels, arguing that there are historical continuities with earlier forms of contact with the dead body. Refuting claims that the female forensic examiner exhibits traits of typically masculine behaviour, it suggests that the female gaze humanises the victims of crime and alters their representations. Utilising the views of a world-famous forensic scientist interviewed for this Element, this study also explores the role and treatment of science in forensic crime fiction, shedding light on this area of the genre. Finally, there is consideration of killers in forensic crime novels, proposing that the relationship between killer and investigator is different from that of the classic crime novel. There are also two appendices containing interviews with Professor Niamh Nic Daeid and with Val McDermid.

Keywords: forensic crime fiction, crime novel, detective fiction, science and literature, Patricia Cornwell

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