



The Crime fiction genre experiences enduring popularity around the world. Not only does crime fiction present a mystery to be solved but the crime fiction genre can be used to explore and comment on the society and world it depicts. In doing so crime fiction does more than just tell a crime story, it makes a social comment on societies construct and will also send a message to its responder. Another appeal of crime fiction are the many sub genres which it ~~uses~~ incorporates, each taking on new ~~and original~~ conventions of their own which are ^{adaptations} ~~subversions~~ of the traditional crime fiction conventions. Howard Hawks "The Big Sleep", Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle", David Guterson's "Snow



"Falling on Cedars", Curtis Hanson's "LA Confidential" and Agatha Christie's "The Mousetrap" are all acclaimed and highly regarded crime fiction texts which are testimony to the fact that crime fiction is not only popular because of the crime element.

Howard Hawks' "The Big Sleep" ~~was~~ (TBS) was a huge success upon its release. The text can be placed within the hard boiled sub genre of ~~the~~ crime fiction, and uses this sub genre to lure in the audience in order to entertain.

"TBS" also uses the crime of fiction genre to make a comment on the society it is portraying.

"TBS" is set in 1946 Los Angeles.



The grimy, invariably urban, gritty backdrop of Los Angeles greatly influences the crimes portrayed in "TBS". Los Angeles appears to be a city driven by money and power. Los Angeles has fallen into the detrimental trap of priding itself on an image created by money and power. The crimes of blackmail, murder and pornography in "TBS" are all motivated by ^{the quest for} money and power. The crimes portrayed in "TBS" are used to highlight the values of the 1940's American society. ~~To~~

To a modern day responder this insight into another unfamiliar past society adds to the entertainment value of this crime fiction text.



The fact that "TBS" is contextually apt and is a product of its time adds to the intrigue of the crime.

Hawkes uses the conventional private detective to comment on the way society views the perfect ~~man~~ man. Marlowe encompasses both brains and brawn, he is logical and rational with a distinct sexuality and attractiveness about him. This male protagonist hero is both purposeful for the plot, as well as entertaining for a responder. The love story included in "The Big Sleep" also allows for another audience to be lived in, apart from the crime fiction fanatics. The love



story between Vivien and Marlowe is a marketing ploy to draw in all those who were fans of the Bogart-Bacall pairing. From this ~~the~~ a responder can deduce that a crime fiction text can do more than just tell a crime story.

Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Adventure of The Blue Carbuncle" ("Blue") was one of the many Sherlock Holmes short stories published in the popular 1890s magazine The Strand.

~~At~~ "Blue" is also a contextually apt fiction story which struck a great chord with London responders. The fact that the stories are extremely credible

added to their great appeal.

"Blue" is set in the busy London streets where "you have four million people all jostling each other in the space of a few square miles." This setting is by no means conventional, as a conventional setting would have been isolated. Instead, Doyle has subverted the convention of an isolated setting to suit the society he is depicting. The setting is a direct response to the onset of the Industrial Revolution which has been taking place in Doyle's time of writing. The Industrial Revolution brought about great rapid social and economical changes which caused an influx in



crime, and a change in the nature of crime. To the audience of "Blue" Doyle did more than just tell a crime story, he commented on their society and even sent a message of how people should live in this society, "I suppose I am committing felony, but it is just possible I am saving a soul. Besides it is the season of forgiveness." This comment made by Holmes upon not reporting the criminal to the authorities is a subliminal message of Christian values and the need for human compassion.

The relationship between ~~Watson~~ Holmes and his protégé, Watson

also sends a message of companionship. Along with this Doyle uses ~~that~~ the character of Watson to allow for greater exploration of Holmes' character. No longer is a mere fiction detective just the means by which the crime is solved but a three dimensional character who tells a story of his own.

David Guterson "Snow Falling On Cedars" ("Snow") uses the crime fiction genre to both order and drive his plot to send a message about racial prejudice and the future of inter-racial relationships

David Guterson uses crime fiction

and its popularity as a hook to lure in audiences. As a responder of "Snow" it becomes apparent that crime fiction can be used to send a message to its audience that is by no means focussed on mystery or crime.

Cruterson uses the perceived crime in "Snow" to comment on the difference between the law and justice as well as morality, "You haven't done anything illegal ... Wrong is a different matter" This comment made by Kabuo is used to highlight the difference between being law abiding and being moral. It makes a huge social comment about the way the ~~capitalist~~ capitalist legal system



works, not accounting for morality, and accepting prejudice.

The conventional isolated setting is used to highlight the theme of insularity and ignorance in "Snow." San Pedro is a microcosm of the wider world and Guttererson uses the Kabuo Miyamoto case to comment on the prejudice nature of society and its detrimental effects.

The sub genre of courtroom drama is used in "Snow" as well as the incorporation of the war genre and romance genre. The fact that a crime fiction text is so malleable and open to other influences of other genres makes it extremely popular with a

wide range of audiences.

Curtis Hanson's film gris, "LA Confidential" ("LA") is another hard boiled crime fiction text which was able to appeal to a modern audience despite its 1950's setting.

The mean streets of Los Angeles we used ~~to~~ in "LA" and the social construct of this society has meant that almost anyone ~~can~~ can be the perpetrator or victim of crime. Crime is inherent to the corrupt 1950's society and infiltrates almost every aspect of life. Microcosmically the LAPD can be used as a setting for "LA" as like the streets of Los Angeles it is also haunted by



Corruption and entangled in a web of lies and ~~there~~ deceit. "LA" uses the crime fiction genre to make a bold statement about the society and world it depicts.

"LA" shows the 1950s society to be extremely image conscious and trying desperately to hide any imperfections, Sid Hudgeons comments "There's trouble in Paradise"

Violence is shown in "LA" both by criminals and the law enforcers. From this a responder is able to deduce that there are blurred boundaries between the law and crime. Exley and White are able to use

violence as "a necessary adjunct to the job" and bend and break the rules in order to get results. Hanson uses the crime fiction genre to portray the values of success and image in the society he depicts.

"LA" also incorporates a love story between White and prostitute Lynne Bracken, without taking the focus of the crime and mystery element of "LA". Crime fiction's ability to tell more than one story, whilst maintain focus on the crime genre means that it is able to appeal to more than one demographic or type of audience.



Agatha Christie's "The Mousetrap" was, and still remains, well received by audiences. "The Mousetrap" falls under the cosy school genre of crime fiction. It depicts the comfortable conservative middle class society who are threatened with chaos by when the crime of murder is committed.

"The Mousetrap" makes a great social comment on the values of a post World War II society. A responder is able to see their bourgeois values and insularity. In "Mousetrap" this is shown greatly through suspects. Mr Paravicini is suspect because he is a foreigner who is believed to



"wears make-up on his face"
and is extremely flamboyant. Miss
~~Case~~ Casewell is also a
suspect based on her "deep
and manly voice". These people
who appear to be different are
cast aside as suspects
because they threaten the order
and values of the conservative
middle class citizen involved
in the crime.

"The Mousetrap" is a product of its
times and therefore presents the
reader with the values of the
times of its composing. The
fact that a crime fiction text
will almost always be contextually
apt makes it an interesting
read for an audience of
a different time or society.



"The Mousetrap" is extremely conventional and concise. Its concise nature and intriguingly simple mystery appeals to a reader. ~~As a result, it is~~

There are many views on what the appeal of the crime fiction genre is. Crime fiction is enduringly popular because of ability to comment and explore the world it depicts through crime. It is also popular as a result of its adaptability and flexibility which has ~~also~~ resulted in the formation of many sub genres. This flexibility also allows for other genres to be explored in a crime fiction text, apart from just that of crime. Crime fiction continues to be enduringly popular as it has the great ability to do more than just set up a puzzle to be solved.