

Crime Fiction: Early and Cosy School Styles.

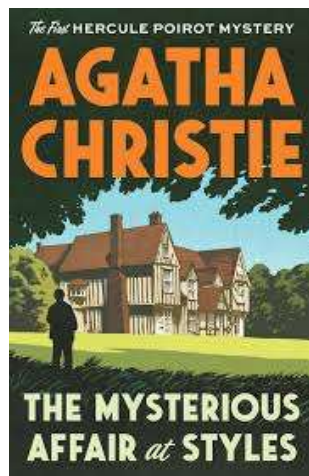
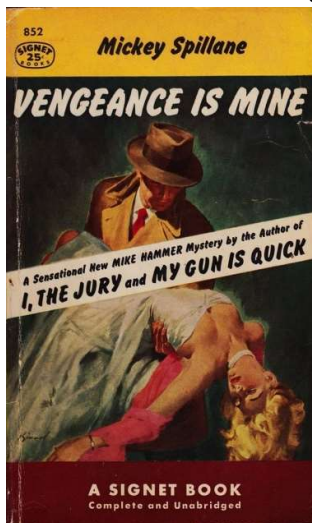
In Term One a small group of crime fiction lovers gathered to explore this popular style of writing in greater depth. Though we all read widely, this wasn't a book club with a reading list, more a sharing of what we'd read and what we thought about it.



We looked at the unlikely origins of crime texts, beginning with Edgar Allan Poe's *Murder in the Rue Morgue* before moving to other Locked Room or Impossible mysteries, and then Sherlock Holmes. We were astonished by how bloodthirsty the early texts could be: obviously we're more sensitive than we realised!

In looking at Cosy School, our main focus was on Agatha Christie who really made Crime Fiction a popular form, though we did consider how other writers built on her successes and added their own twists. We discussed the legacy of her style of writing as it influences more modern cosy texts such as historical crime fiction texts like *Brother Cadfael* and television series like *Midsomer Murders*.

To consider another angle we explored the Hardboiled genre which developed at a similar time to Cosy School but in a completely different way.



Reading Raymond Chandler and Mickey Spillane certainly proved that America in the era of Prohibition and the Depression was a very different place from rural England's green and pleasant land!

Our reading and discussion let us draw conclusions about the writing rules for crime texts, the nature of detectives and the ways that clues can be incorporated. It also encouraged us to understand more of the worlds and attitudes that supported them.

Our meetings were relaxed conversations over coffee and occasional biscuits. Yes, we had a focus, but sometimes relevant side issues proved enticing.

If you're thinking that you would have enjoyed this course, then it isn't too late to sign up for the second part. Modern Crime Fiction and True Crime Texts will run in Term Four on Monday afternoons at 2 o'clock. Come along, we'd love to meet you!