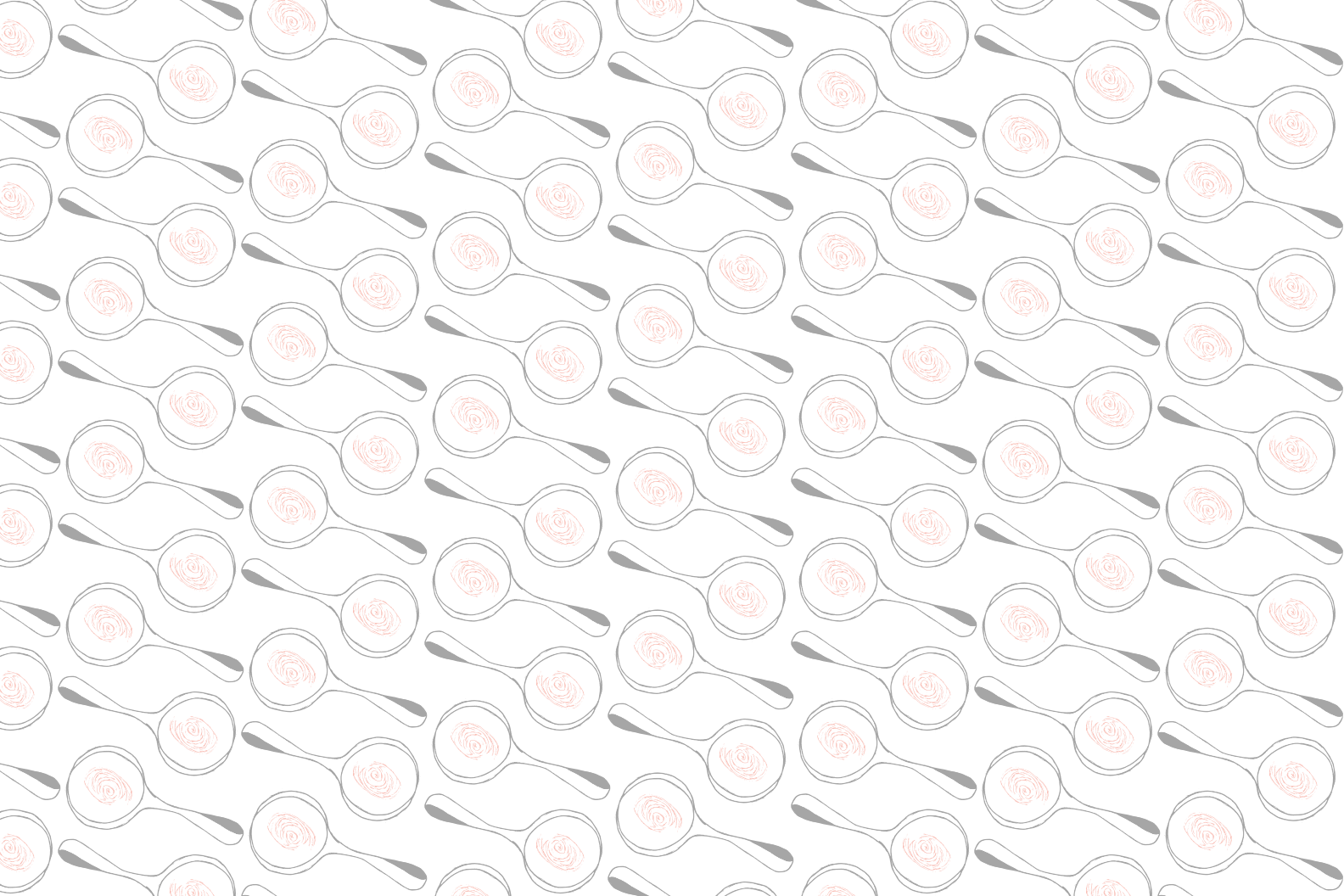


# BIBLIOMYSTERIES



BOUND BY CRIME



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## BOUND BY CRIME

— Curated by Penny White —

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## INTRODUCTION

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One of the most widely read and collected genres in fiction, the mystery novel encompasses a wide range of popular sub-genres like the whodunit and the police procedural. *Bibliomysteries: Bound by Crime* introduces readers to a lesser-known mystery sub-genre called the bibliomystery.

Exactly what constitutes a bibliomystery depends largely on the collector. A sub-genre traditionally bound with elements of bookish skulduggery, the bibliomystery typically indicates that a book or manuscript is essential to the plot. As they grew in popularity, however, the bibliomystery began to feature libraries and bookstores as the setting, as well as the bibliophile as sleuth or suspect. While the earliest-known publications date back to the late 19th century, the bibliomystery remained a relatively unknown mystery sub-genre until its surge in popularity in the 1970's.

Bibliomysteries are a dangerously different mystery sub-genre where bibliophiles and books can cause all sorts of trouble. The following are only a few titles available through Kent State University's Department of Special Collections and Archives. Ask a Special Collections staff member about additional titles, or view our website for more details.

I would like to thank Liz Traina for her outstanding production and design skills, bringing to life my thoughts and illustrations for this exhibit.

Penny White, *Curator*  
Graduate Assistant  
Special Collections and Archives  
Fall 2012



## THE BOOK AS THE CAUSE OF THE CRIME

Of the many different themes within the bibliomystery sub-genre, the most common storylines feature the book as the cause of the crime. Often, these murderous plots revolve around the theft of a rare manuscript or the publication of a controversial memoir. Others reveal that the book itself is the murder weapon, boring its reader to death or cursing all those who touch it.

1. Allingham, Margery. **FLOWERS FOR THE JUDGE**. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., 1942.

Murder leads to an unpublished manuscript and a twenty year-old mystery.

2. Barnard, Robert. **THE CASE OF THE MISSING BRONTË**. New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc., 1984.

To any scholar, an unpublished Brontë would be the discovery of a lifetime. To a thief, it could be a powerful motive for murder.

3. Blake, Nicholas. **END OF CHAPTER**. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957.

A major publishing house finds itself facing a libel suit when mysterious changes are made to one of its manuscripts.

4. Daly, Elizabeth. **THE BOOK OF THE CRIME**. New York: Mercury Publications, Inc., 1951.

Rena's husband goes from cool and uninterested to raving lunatic in a matter of seconds when he discovers the title of the book she is reading.



5. Goodspeed, Edgar J. **THE CURSE IN THE COLOPHON**. Chicago: Willett, Clarke & Company, 1935.

Trouble arises when people who come in contact with this discovery of a lifetime begin to die.

6. Harriss, Will. **THE BAY PSALM BOOK MURDER**. New York: Pinnacle Books, 1985.

A Special Collections librarian is found dead in the university library. Assumed to be a robbery gone wrong, police are perplexed by the very rare and valuable volume still clutched in his hands.

7. Morley, Christopher. **THE HAUNTED BOOKSHOP**. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Page & Company, 1919. *Inscribed and Signed Copy*.

When things start disappearing and reappearing on the shelves of The Haunted Bookshop, advertising man Gilbert suspects that the bookshop and a suspicious pharmacist are up to no good.

8. Muller, Marcia and Bill Pronzini (Ed). **CHAPTER AND HEARSE: SUSPENSE STORIES ABOUT THE WORLD OF BOOKS**. New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1985. *First Edition*.

In this collection of “bookish” short stories, mystery writers write about rare books, pulp magazines and best sellers.

9. Riddell, John. **THE JOHN RIDDELL MURDER CASE**. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930.

Famous literary parodist and book reviewer John Riddle is found dead in his home library surrounded by last year's bestsellers.





10. Rosenbach, A.S.W. **THE UNPUBLISHABLE MEMOIRS**. New York: Mitchell Kennerley, 1917.  
*Inscribed and Signed Copy.*

This collection of short stories follows book collector turned con man Robert Hooker as he encounters the wealthy, booksellers and others on his mission for rare and valuable items.

11. Starrett, Vincent. "The Unique Hamlet." **THE MISADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES**. Ed. Ellery Queen. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1944. p 48-65. *Signed Copy.*

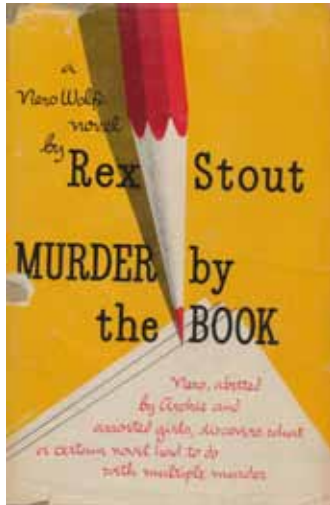
Unanimously considered to be one of the best pastiches of Sherlock Holmes ever written, this short story finds the great detective searching for a 1604 edition of Shakespeare's play, signed by the master himself.

12. Stout, Rex. **PLOT IT YOURSELF**. New York: Bantam Books, 1960.

Nero Wolfe, detective extraordinaire, is hired by a group of plagiarists who claim that popular authors are plagiarizing them. A mysterious manuscript turns up at each crime scene, but how did it get there?

13. Stout, Rex. **MURDER BY THE BOOK**. New York: The Viking Press, 1951.

A dangerous manuscript makes its way to hardboiled detective Nero Wolfe, leaving a trail of bodies behind it.



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## THE BOOK AS THE CRIME SOLVER

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The theme of the book as the crime solver involves the protagonist's use of a book, manuscript, and even letters to research a crime, decipher a code or unravel a riddle. Sometimes, the book itself is the clue needed to solve the case.

14. Carvalho, Clair and Boyden Sparkes. **CRIME IN INK**. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929.

A history of ink and its role in solving crime, this book relays the escapades of handwriting analyst David Carvalho.

15. Daly, Elizabeth. **MURDERS IN VOLUME 2**. New York: Berkley Medallion Books, 1941.

The key to unlocking a family legend and uncovering a murderer lies in a missing copy of Byron's poems.

16. DeMille, James. **A STRANGE MANUSCRIPT FOUND IN A COPPER CYLINDER**. New York: Harper & Brothers, 1888.

Concealed within a copper cylinder, four boatmen find the account of Adam More, a British sailor who has stumbled upon a lost world inhabited with prehistoric animals, plants and people who prefer death and darkness to life and light.

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## THE BIBLIOPHILE AS THE SLEUTH

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The bibliophile — a person with a great love for books — also plays an important role in the bibliomystery sub-genre. These individuals can be librarians, rare book dealers, bookstore owners, professors, authors and even encyclopedia salesmen. In these plots, the bibliophile recovers ancient manuscripts, decodes ciphers and uses his or her literary knowledge to solve crimes and save lives.

1. Bollingbroke, Johnson, W. **THE WIDENING STAIN**. Ithaca, NY: The Cornell University Library Associates, 1976.

English Professor Parry has a fondness for inserting limericks into every conversation. When his colleague, a professor of French, is found dead in the college library, Parry trades humor for detection in order to find the culprit.

2. Dexter, Colin. **THE WENCH IS DEAD**. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990. *First U.S. Edition*.

While recovering from an ulcer in Oxford's Radcliffe Hospital, cranky Inspector Morse enlists the services of Christine Greenaway, an attractive librarian, in order to correct the outcome of a murder case from 1859.

3. Dobson, Joanne. **THE MALTESE MANUSCRIPT**. Scottsdale, AZ: Poisoned Pen Press, 2003. *First Edition. Signed Copy.*

English Professor Karen Pelletier finds herself in the middle of a mystery when an armload of treasures goes missing from the Enfield Library.

17. Dexter, Colin. **THE WAY THROUGH THE WOODS**. New York: Crown Publishers, Inc., 1992. *First Edition*.

Inspector Morse must solve a riddle left in a poem in order to find a missing girl and stop the current body count from rising.

18. Graeme, Bruce. **EPILOGUE**. London: Hutchinson & Co., Ltd., 1933.

*The Murder of Edwin Drood*, left incomplete by Charles Dickens, is solved by Scotland Yard Superintendent Stevens.

19. Grave, Andrew. **THE GALLOWAY CASE**. New York: Harper Brothers Publishers, 1958. *First Edition*.

The mysterious death of a young writer is solved when a detailed study of a manuscript reveals plagiarism and murder.

20. Meyer, Lynn. **PAPERBACK THRILLER**. New York: Random House, 1975.

While reading a cheap paperback thriller she picked up at the airport, Dr. Chayse becomes unnerved by a very familiar setting described in the book...her office.





4. Dunning, John. **BOOKED TO DIE**. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1992.

Homicide Detective and book lover Cliff Janeway is on the case, once again trying to put flashy businessman Jackie Newton behind bars.

5. Grierson, Edward. **A CRIME OF ONE'S OWN**. London: Chatto & Windus, 1967.

James Bond enthusiast Donald Maitland is convinced a spy ring is operating out of his bookshop. Everyone thinks he's nuts, but the spies are concerned.

6. Gruber, Frank. "Death on Eagle's Crag." **THE HARDBOILED DICKS**. Ed. Ron Goulart. Los Angeles: Sherbourne Press, Inc., 1965. p 167-196. *First Edition*.

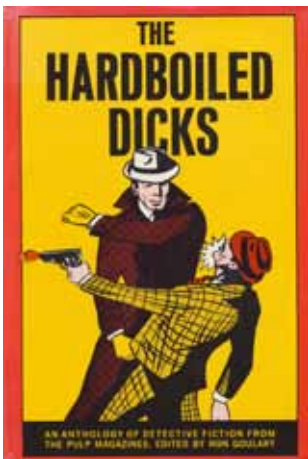
Encyclopedia salesman Oliver Quade finds himself in a bind when he and other guests are held hostage. Quade uses his encyclopedic knowledge to outwit the thugs holding him captive.

7. Kelly, Mary. **MARCH TO THE GALLOWS**. New York: Rinehart and Wilson, 1965. *First Edition*.

A young librarian, devastated by the death of her lover, follows dangerous leads to recover what was stolen from her.

8. Lockridge, Frances and Richard Lockridge. **MURDER WITHIN MURDER**. New York: Dell Publishing Company, 1946.

Writer Amelia Gibson's world is turned upside-down when she finds a fellow researcher murdered. Turning to her publishers for help, Gibson may be getting in too deep herself.



9. Page, Marco. **FAST COMPANY**. New York: Pocket Books Inc., 1943.

When the market bottomed out and the big shots stopped buying, book dealer Joel Glass turned his attention to sleuthing.

10. Sims, George. **REX MUNDI**. London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1978. *Signed Copy*.

Middle-aged antiquarian book dealer Harry Gilmour stumbles upon a scrap of paper that leads him on a journey across Europe in search of treasure and murder.

11. Valin, Jonathan. **FINAL NOTICE**. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company, 1980.

Tough guy private eye Harry Stoner teams up with a group of little old librarians to hunt down a psychopath who has been cutting images of female anatomy out of the art books in a Cincinnati public library.

12. Woolrich, Cornell. "The Book that Squealed." **ANGELS OF DARKNESS**. New York: The Mysterious Press, 1978. *First Edition. Inscribed Copy*.

Missing pages in a book lead a spinster librarian down a dangerous path to uncover love and a secret code.



## THE BIBLIOPHILE AS THE SUSPECT

A love for books, however, can turn into a deadly obsession when the bibliophile persists, doing anything to add a rare edition to his or her collection, even if it means murder.

1. Blackstock, Charity. **DEWEY DEATH**. New York: Ballantine Books, 1958.

Mrs. Warren is an all-around bully and no one would be too upset if she left the Inter-Library Dispatch for good. Now everyone is wondering which one of her colleagues sent her packing inside a bag of books.

2. Block, Lawrence. **THE BURGLAR IN THE LIBRARY**. New York: Dutton, 1997.

Bernie Rhodenbarr, New York bookseller and burglar extraordinaire, is leaving his big city life for a weekend away at Cuttleford House where he hopes to pick up a very valuable first edition.

3. Chandler, Raymond. **THE BIG SLEEP**. New York: Vintage Books, 1976.

Philip Marlowe is hired by elderly General Stanwood to deal with a bookseller attempting to blackmail his daughter.

4. Flaubert, Gustav. **BIBLIOMANIA: A TALE**. London: The Rodale Press, 1954.

Giacomo, a young Spanish bookseller, has an almost obsessive love for books. When a volume more rare and unique than any he possesses becomes known, Giacomo will do anything to get his hands on it.

5. Havinghurst, Marion D. **MURDER IN THE STACKS**. Oxford, OH: Miami University, 1989.

Assistant Librarian Crawford is dead, his body found hidden behind a row of books. Could one of his colleagues have murdered him?

6. Parker, Robert B. **THE GODWOLF MANUSCRIPT**. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1973.

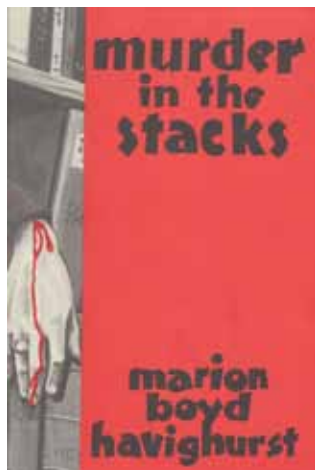
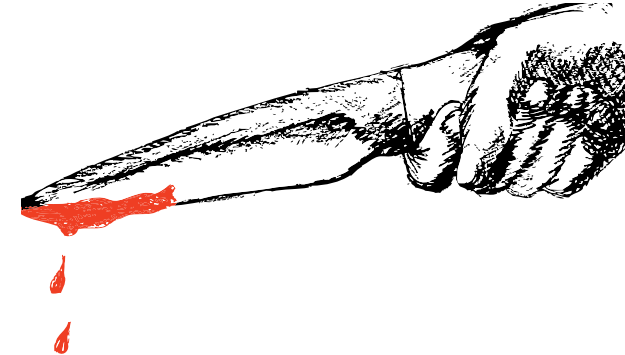
English professor Hayden goes to extraordinarily despicable lengths to support a student anarchist group that he is reputedly a member of.

7. Upfield, Arthur William. **AN AUTHOR BITES THE DUST**. New York: Collier Books, 1987.

Famous author and critic Mervyn Black has just been found murdered in his writing room. Is his death the result of natural causes, or does the true culprit lie within his literary clique?

8. Van Gulik, Robert. **POETS AND MURDER**. London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1968.

A distinguished group of literati, including a beautiful poetess, turn what should have been a festive day for Judge Dee into one of mystery and murder.



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## RELATED ARTIFACTS

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**1. Maltese Falcon**

From the Borowitz Crime-Related Artifacts collection, this Plaster of Paris sculpture painted black was constructed from the same mold that produced the statue used in the 1941 film by John Huston.

**2. Book and Rat Paper weight and Ink Well**

From the collection of David Borowitz 1906-1988, these items add an air of crime and mystery to the exhibit.

