



Islands of Crime: The Island as a Setting in Crime Fiction

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Abstract. The article explores how the traditional notions of islandness such as boundedness, isolation, and remoteness are validated or subverted in mystery novels by Philip R. Craig, Robert Harris, P.D. James, Peter May, and Cynthia Riggs that have an island setting and a detective who is an insider or an outsider.

This article explores the island setting in contemporary crime fiction, referring to crime novels from both the British and American cultural contexts that are set on islands situated within the boundaries of Great Britain and the United States: P.D. James's *The Lighthouse*, Peter May's *The Blackhouse*, Robert Harris's *The Ghost*, Philip R. Craig's *A Beautiful Place to Die*, and Cynthia Riggs's *Deadly Nightshade*. The late British novelist P.D. James, the author of the well-known Adam Dalgliesh series (published between 1962 and 2008), is already considered a classic of British mystery writing. Her novel *The Lighthouse* (2005), the penultimate book of the series, is set on the fictive island of Combe off the British shore. The Scottish writer Peter May had been known as a TV dramatist until his breakthrough with the Lewis trilogy set on the Isle of Lewis, of which *The Blackhouse* (2011) is the first part. British journalist Robert Harris's political crime thriller *The Ghost* appeared in 2007 and is set on Martha's Vineyard. The same setting is depicted in the late Philip R. Craig's novels and Cynthia Riggs's fiction. Craig was an American author of Martha's Vineyard mysteries, a series of 19 novels published

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