

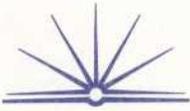
Module A - Crime fiction.

Q4.

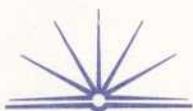
Conventions are an integral part of crime fiction - whether they limit or support the composer's intention + vision.

Examination of prescribed texts Snow Falling On Cedars (SFC) Skull Beneath the Skin (SBS) ~~Snow~~ and The Big Sleep (BS) as well as Devil's Waltz by Jonathan Kellerman (DW) and ~~Night Boat~~ A Touch of Frost by RD Wingfield (TF) all substantiate this notion. The texts comment on society - its good but more importantly bad aspects, and have been used in promoting ~~the~~ actors + actresses.

• ~~then~~ James Guterson's text is a clever novel in that he uses traditional conventions of crime, suspects + motives to portray a Bigger crime. The supposed 'murder' of Carl Henrie ~~is~~ ~~was~~ was a red herring. Did that mean there was



no crime? Certainly not. The crime was the injustice ~~of~~ + treatment of the Japanese, which is strongly shown in the end with the red herring, and the non-linear non chronological plot. Cruterson's ~~novel~~ ~~the~~ purpose ~~is~~ was not to impose his morals on readers but rather to present them with a situation ~~in~~ and pose moral questions for reflection. Through the setting and the lyric quality of the novel (not necessarily conventional prose but integral to any text) he showed how beautiful, outwardly America was (with the snow smell of cedar) but that underneath that facade the people were riddled with ~~a~~ resentment and prejudice. He also uses Ishmael, the detective, a major convention - with his dark, damaged character to display the devastating effects of war on individuals

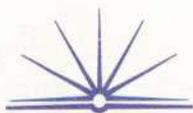


and society, which really makes the reader appreciate how stabilising and how precious peace is. Ishmael is used as the representation of good, of justice, who did the correct thing by revealing the truth even if that sacrificed his own selfish desires + let Hatsue go. He is the embodiment of integrity and honesty, who has not been deceived by power and lustful desires.

Skull Beneath the Skin 's .

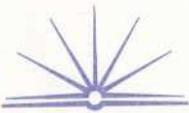
author PD James also ~~to~~ makes various comments on society, however unlike SFOC the detective does not play a major part in the detection of the crime + the revelation of truth.

Condemna is ~~the~~ used as the yardstick for innocence and honesty, amongst a group of people who have ambition, power, revenge + self gratification on their own agendas. However, she



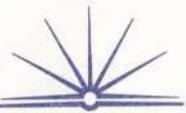
is not commended or rewarded for that pursuit and instead must return to the failing detective agency where the main stay is searching for lost pets. James, in this way - comments on contemporary society and how it differs slightly from older traditional texts. The 'murderer' Simon Lessing is found + brought to justice; however Ambrose is not and it leaves the reader feeling unsatisfied with the 'resolution'. By the same token, a sense of justice is felt when Clauvia is murdered - ~~she was~~ her actions almost justified her brutal death.

The solving of the crime is also very ~~un~~ unconventional and limits the author's vision. Cordelia has no real contacts in the outside world and no means of uncovering the truth without Ambrose's confession.

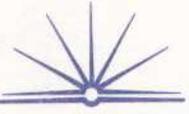


The setting plays a large part in that it is a 'locked room' murder - ~~at~~ the murder must be amongst the house guests. It also conveys a sense of beauty in the physical sense - the description is vivid and the castle magical. But underneath its facade it has a very disturbing and dark past. The convention is ~~to not play a part~~ play a part in the author's message of a corrupted society and also incorporates sex to display infidelity in marriages (Clairissa, and Roma's love). Another aspect of contemporary society + changing attitudes. But the want for justice is still there, even if it is not done.

The Big Sleep is extremely interesting in that the intention of the directors (especially the 1946 version)



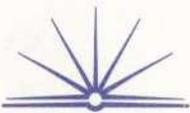
was used as a 'star vehicle' promoting Lauren Bacall + Humphrey Bogart but particularly the former. + their chemistry, as a means of getting \$\$\$! The plot, crime, motives, suspects and red herrings, all seem like a moot point when compared to sex and violence. However this is not entirely true. The BS also demonstrate ~~society~~ American society's values + attitudes - their longing for a wholesome, family orientated society, the reason why many things were suppressed or numbed down by the Hayes Commission and only inferred rather than publicly show. Despite ~~Despite~~ attempts by those to show that about America we still see them gambling (at the casino) and involved in illegal practices (murder, pornography). Even



Phillip Marlowe the detective was a hard drinking + smoking character. He, like Ishmael was also a little damaged but used as the epitome of integrity and honesty. He was the true gentleman who refused ladies advances and did not take advantage of their vulnerability. The crimes in the BS show how jaded society was. One unconventional but essential aspect was its historical value - ~~it~~ it displayed women playing an active part in the workforce and being the breadwinners while the men were at war. This is a reflection of the period.

Other than that, the conventions + genre ~~are just~~ were just a means for promotion.

Posters showing the movie had the stars name greater than the film's



title and it certainly did achieve its purpose. The BS was a tremendous success despite lacking one ~~conv~~ large convention - plot. ~~It is~~ It is convoluted and difficult to follow.

Devil's Waltz is a text which mirrors ~~it~~ and is set in contemporary society however unlike SBS ~~it~~ utilises the conventions to bring justice. It displays traditional crime, with a spin - Munchausen by proxy. It uses scientific jargon and technology while maintaining + achieving the author's purpose of commenting on modern society and triumph of good over evil. The motive supports this - revenge by the husband on the mother by poisoning her child as a measure for her extra-marital affairs while outwards displaying

CONT in next booklet.



Cont. Q4:

fatherly love ~~rather~~ and affection.

The detective plays a part in realising the truth and has close contacts because of his profession (psychologist) even though he is not usually a detective by trade. Devil's Waltz has a spin on the end in the Resolution ~~but~~ which is probably more typical - all in all the comments support Kellerman's vision.

A Touch of Frost by RO Whisfield utilises comments to portray a society riddled by crime + corruption, including the detective Jack Frost. He himself is guilty of sexual perversion (in an aging old man innuendo way), foul language + degradation of women. His attempts to solve crimes and failures are red herrings and unlike traditional



Criminal fiction novels, the 'crimes' are unrelated and each separate. -

Wingfield incorporates humour to show bad relations in the workplace and achieves the aim of making the book interesting - an intrinsic value - ~~but also~~ coupled with comments on society (crimes of child abuse + prostitution) to make it an enjoyable read of a contemporary book of the genre.

All the authors make use of commentaries which heighten their vision - some the pursuit of success and, ~~more~~ others more likely to present their own vision of a ~~good~~ truthful and good society + longing for justice.