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The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of how fictional female detectives have been portrayed between 1960 and the present in American series novels. Three novels were chosen to represent each of the decades between 1960 and 2006. Each of the fifteen novels was the debut novel in a series. A content analysis was performed based on a list of frequently occurring characteristics. The frequency of these characteristics was charted in order to determine trends that developed during the time period represented. Findings indicate that after the proliferation of the professional detective character in the 1980s and 1990s, the 2000s represent a return to a depiction of amateur detectives in addition to increasing autonomy in the primary occupations of these sleuths.

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AN ANALYSIS OF THE PORTRAYAL OF THE FEMALE DETECTIVE IN AMERICAN SERIES NOVELS FROM THE 1960S THROUGH THE PRESENT

by
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INTRODUCTION

Although literary accounts of murder and mystery have existed since the Old Testament with its account of the slaying of Abel by his brother Cain, Edgar Allan Poe is considered the "Father of the Detective Story" as the creator of The Murders in the Rue Morgue in 1841. According to most detective fiction historians, Mrs. Metta Victoria Fuller Victor, writing under the pseudonym Seeley Register, was the first American woman to pen a full-length murder mystery with The Dead Letter in 1866 (Champlin 5). In 1878, Anna Katharine Green wrote The Leavenworth Case which quickly sold a million copies. Her tremendous success and the subsequent longevity of her career often lead to Green being considered the first despite the fact that her book was published twelve years after Victor's (Champlin 5).

Ms. Green went on to create the first American female detective Amelia Butterworth in That Affair Next Door which was published in 1897. The first British female detective appeared nearly 35 years prior in 1861 when W.S. Hayward anonymously published The Revelations of a Lady Detective featuring Mrs. Paschal (Craig and Cadogan 15). The early American female detectives took their cues from the British and were often portrayed as middle- or upper-class widows or spinsters who used "feminine psychology" to solve their cases. These cases rarely included murder and almost never put the sleuths in any potentially fatal danger (DellaCava and Engel, Female Detectives 4).

Fictional American female sleuths followed a relatively well-defined path from the 1890s through the late 1950s and were all primarily from the same mold. Often known by the derogatory term "knitting detectives", these women operated in a very small domestic sphere confined by the conventions dictated by the society of the time. At that time, an upper- or middle- class woman would not be free to travel about town asking questions and searching for clues. Due to their higher status in society, many of these women were independently wealthy. Those who did have jobs were employed as nurses, schoolteachers, shopkeepers or in other positions that were deemed appropriately feminine (DellaCava and Engel, Female Detectives 5).

A number of these genteel spinster sleuths succeeded at detection because of their ability to pick up gossip and glean sensitive information from others of their social class who preferred not to share intimate secrets with the police. The investigators involved in some of the cases tolerated their interference because of their ability to extract this type of information from their social circle. Also, these unassuming, proper ladies presented no threat to the official male investigators. Some of these early single sleuths such as Anna Katharine Green's Violet Strange even acknowledged the impropriety of their detecting and worried that it would pose problems with their romantic lives (Klein, Woman Detective 2nd ed. 78). According to Klein, still others such as Arthur Stringer's Baddie Pretlow and Balmy Rymal used detecting as a way to "prove themselves responsible members of society and become reinstated as members of the middle class" and once they had done so, they were more than happy to give it up when an opportunity for marriage presented itself (Woman Detective 2nd ed. 78).

Between 1917 and 1941, several detectives who DellaCava and Engel call "semi-professional" detectives appeared (Female Detectives 4). These women, starting with Jeanette Lee's Millicent Newberry, owned their own agencies. However, many acquired their agencies through inheritance. Their cases generally included missing persons and other innocuous investigations. Although they received payment for their services, they were largely untrained, hence DellaCava and Engel's designation (Female Detectives 4).

As a possible response to the hard-boiled male detectives created by Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler in the 1920s, 1939 and 1945 produced the distinctly unfeminine characters Bertha Cool and Amy Brewster, respectively. Erle Stanley Gardner, writing under the pseudonym A.A. Fair, created Cool who was a chain-smoking, foul-mouthed, two-hundred pound widow who owned her own detective agency and consistently bullied her meeker partner, Donald Lam. Amy Brewster, created by Sam Merwin, Jr., was a cigar-smoker who tipped the scales at 300 pounds. DellaCava and Engel comment that "This extreme portrayal may suggest that mystery readers were not ready for a 'real' female private investigator" (Female Detectives 5).

In 1947, Will Oursler and Margaret Scott, writing under the same name as their heroine, created Gale Gallagher. A single woman in her thirties, Gallagher owned her own agency where her main business was skip tracing. She may very well have been the first female professional who was licensed to carry a gun. According to The Thrilling Detective, "Gallagher is arguably the missing link between the good girl sleuths of the past and the tougher modern female P.I.s of the present" ("Gale Gallagher").

Two sexy sleuths made their debuts in the 1950s. Carter Brown created Mavis Seidlitz in 1955. Mavis's ample measurements were often a topic of discussion in her

adventures and she has been described as a "blond bombshell with the IQ of a gerbil" (Kelley 23). Honey West, created by Forrest and Gloria Fickling (writing as G.G. Fickling), was developed as a "novelty heroine" in 1957. Skilled in judo, the single Honey could hold her own in a fight but still displayed an element of sexual vulnerability. According to Mizejewski, "Honey West is the ultimate female dick, the woman as a man, the phallic woman" (55). While the typical masculine hard-boiled topics of "adventure, sex and detection" (presumably in that order) still dictated the contents of a Honey West novel (Klein, Woman Detective 2nd ed. 134), she was a ground-breaker on behalf of female sleuths because she was the first licensed female private investigator (DellaCava and Engel, Female Detectives 5).

This condensed history shows that the female detective evolved from the amateur "knitting detectives" of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, interspersed with a few untrained "semi-professionals," to the decidedly unfeminine caricatures of hard-boiled detectives in the late thirties and forties (DellaCava and Engel, Female Detectives 4-5). Of course it is important to mention that throughout this latter time period, a few throwbacks to the "knitting detectives" such as Cortland Fitzsimmons' Ethel Thomas were still being produced (DellaCava and Engel, Female Detectives 62). Next, the hard-boiled caricatures were left behind for one of the first professional and independent, yet typically feminine, gun-toting sleuths. The final noteworthy detective "types" created prior to the 1960s were the brainless sex symbol and the "phallic woman" detectives of the late 1950s (Mizejewski 55).

Since the 1960s, the number of fictional female detectives in the United States has burgeoned. According to Walton and Jones, the number of series novels featuring a

female professional investigator has increased from only four between 1961 and 1965 to 366 between 1991 and 1995 (29). If one assumes the increase in amateur detectives during this time period is similar, it can only serve to enhance the value of understanding the characteristics and importance of the contemporary female detective.

Klein also cites the explosion in the number of female detectives in recent decades by explaining that while there were only 71 women detectives created between the 1860's and 1987, between 1987 and 1994 alone, 67 more appeared on the scene (Woman Detective 2nd ed. 230). All but 17 of the above-mentioned 67 contemporary detectives are American (Woman Detective 2nd ed. 230).

The types of female detectives featured in contemporary mysteries reflect the time in which they were created. The last fifty years has been an era where a variety of events have lead to greater independence for women. The publication of The Feminine Mystique by Betty Friedan in 1963 "galvanize[d] the modern women's rights movement" (Imbornoni). The passing of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act which prohibits discrimination in hiring and employment based on sex (among other things) and the establishment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission were primary factors that contributed to better opportunities for women in the workforce. Increasing independence and changing occupations will have had an effect on the characterization of female detectives.

This paper will look at the evolution of female detectives in American series novels between 1960 and the present and will track the trends in portraying female detectives through the last half-century. Since these novels were written during and after these years in which this great social change was taking place, it will be interesting to see

how the character portrayals will evolve throughout the subsequent decades. I believe Jackson summarized the importance of such studies when she wrote, “Because the [detective fiction] genre reflects and in turn shapes our culture, it deserves to be better understood” (2).

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Carolyn Heilbrun who writes feminist detective stories under the pseudonym Amanda Cross, "it is remarkable that [the contemporary female detective's] unique destiny has been largely unnoticed and even more rarely commented upon" despite the ferocity with which she eschews the customary feminine values and the traditional place of women in society (419). While the body of literature dealing with the female detective might not be substantial, the works that do exist take one of the following forms: ready reference sources, histories and/or analyses of fictional female detectives, feminist critiques of the female detective within the detective fiction genre, discussions of female writers of detective fiction or some combination of the four. The following review will concentrate on the histories and/or analyses and the feminist critiques as they are most pertinent to the scope of this paper.

A number of ready reference tools were extremely useful in the early stages of this study for researching individual female detective character and author information. These sources provide a wonderful chronology of the publishing histories of a variety of authors and individual series. Among these sources are Victoria Nichols and Susan Thompson's Silk Stalkings: When Women Write of Murder and Silk Stalkings: More Women Write of Murder and Willetta L. Heising's Detecting Women: A Reader's Guide and Checklist for Mystery Series Written by Women. The well-organized appendices of Detecting Women include lists of award-winning authors and were particularly useful in locating the debut dates of a variety of series featuring female detective characters. It

should be noted that these three sources are restricted to women writers of mysteries but include male characters.

Frances A. DellaCava and Madeline H. Engel are the authors of what appears to be the most exhaustive analysis of female detectives from their inception through 2002. The first edition of their analysis was published in 1993 and includes an overview of 161 American female sleuths (Female Detectives x). This analysis is broken into four distinct eras of female detectives "each reflecting some change in the genre": "Nineteenth Century," "Early Twentieth Century–Mid-1960's," "Mid-1960s–1979," and "1980–Present" (DellaCava and Engel, Female Detectives x). The follow-up to this analysis was published in 2002 and includes a survey of 522 characters, which is more than triple the number included in the original, illustrating the explosion of female detective series characters onto the market in less than ten years (DellaCava and Engel, Sleuths in Skirts viii).

In Sleuths in Skirts, DellaCava and Engel's overview illustrates the changes that have occurred in the portrayal of the female detective by commenting on characteristics such as occupation, age, race, marital status, religion, health, changing gender roles, social networks and social issues. They focus on how the contemporary female detective is more likely than the early female detective to mirror the real world and their analysis is aptly titled "The Magnifying Glass Becomes the Mirror". Nevertheless, they acknowledge that overall, "the fictional women are younger, more likely to be employed, widowed, and white" than most women in contemporary society (DellaCava and Engel, Sleuths in Skirts 99).

Although contemporary female detectives have primarily been portrayed as white and heterosexual, lesbian detectives have joined the mix, as well as African Americans, Latinas, Native Americans and Asian Americans (DellaCava and Engel, Sleuths in Skirts 8, 20). Interestingly, Heilbrun writes that heterosexual women detectives often refuse to commit to the ties of a relationship while lesbian women detectives are often portrayed in lasting relationships or as having recently lost a long-term partner (425). On the other hand, DellaCava and Engel report that the proportion of married or widowed heterosexual women is much greater than that of lesbian detectives involved in long-term partnerships (Sleuths in Skirts 9).

There are several other histories and/or analyses of the female detective that were useful in gaining an understanding of the history and development of the character. Patricia Craig and Mary Cadogan's The Lady Investigates: Women Detectives and Spies in Fiction which was published in 1981 provides a detailed history of early female detectives and spies including English detectives and girl sleuths. Busybodies, Meddlers, and Snoops: The Female Hero in Contemporary Women's Mysteries by Kimberly J. Dilley provides an interesting overview of the mass-market appeal of contemporary female detectives followed by descriptions and analyses of female sleuths broken down by type such as private eye, police officer and amateur.

The strength and independence of these contemporary female characters has been attributed to a variety of reasons dealing with the feminist movement. Both Klein and Mizejewski propose that proponents of two different theories explain the presence of the female detective characters of the late 1970s through the early 1990s in relationship to the women's movement of the 1960s and early 1970s: One camp argues that this political

and social movement is the reason that women characters functioning as detectives are possible and accepted, while the other camp is part of the subsequent feminist backlash believing that these characters are "proof that women can succeed without the help of a cause or politics" (Woman Detective 2nd ed. 231; 23-4). Mizejewski adds that "both sides can claim this strong female character as their own" (23).

Despite the addition of these types of female detectives, Lee Horsley points out that the inherent 'maleness' of the detective genre has led to widespread discussion of how a female detective character can persist in such a male-infused tradition and wonders if a 'regendering' of the genre is truly possible (246). In solving crimes, the male detective is restoring order to a patriarchal society and "the potency (in every sense) of this image has led some feminist critics of detective fiction to see the genre as so *unavoidably* male that the whole project of feminist transformation seems a lost cause" (Horsley 246).

According to one such feminist critic, Kathleen Gregory Klein, since the detective genre is an inherently male genre, the detective is always male while the murdered body is always female, "despite biology" (qtd. in Horsley 247). She argues that for structural reasons such as this, which are ingrained in the narrative of the detective story, that feminist detective fiction is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve (Klein, "Habeas Corpus" 171-5). She explains that detective fiction is characterized by such binary relationships as the male detective/ female body, detective/criminal and criminal/victim where there is always a male superior in the relationship (Klein, "Habeas Corpus" 173-4). However, she concedes that in lesbian detective fiction when a third option which she terms a "not-Woman" is added to the mix, the formula can be effective (Klein, "Habeas

Corpus" 174-5). The lesbian character is termed "not-Woman" based on the assignment of the terms Man and Woman in relation to "sex functions," and by virtue of shunning heterosexuality, she has removed her body from the male power structure and is therefore free to operate outside of the binary (Klein, "Habeas Corpus" 174-5).

According to Mizejewski, "Female detective fiction is highly conscious of the body switch that's occurred in the story, in the investigation business, and even in the word *detective*, which is itself pictured and sexed by its slang term, *dick*" (14). Horsley explains that by merely imitating the formula and by inserting a woman into a man's part, the character is not "challenging male power structures" and therefore "must be perceived as a drag performance" (246).

Along the same lines, both Klein and Shuker-Haines and Umphrey refer to the term "woman detective" as an oxymoron ("Habeas Corpus" 174; 71). In 1988, Klein published a feminist critique of women detectives in fiction and determined that little progress had been made toward creating truly feminist detective fiction and that one should not be surprised because of the inherent maleness of the genre (Woman Detective 223-224). Klein stresses that 'regendering' the genre is simply not possible by "imitation without reconsideration" (qtd. in Munt 191). Sally R. Munt expresses her disagreement with Klein's assessment citing the fact that Klein used books featuring women detectives published primarily by mainstream presses (200).

Despite Klein's previously mentioned positive hopes for lesbian detectives leading the way toward feminist detective fiction, she advocates a "break with the history of the genre" in order to establish truly feminist detectives (qtd. in Dilley 137). Dilley stands in direct opposition to this urging, insisting that doing so "would continue the very

common pattern of silencing women's contributions" (137). However, Dilley made this statement in 1998 based on comments that Klein made in 1988 (Dilley 137). Klein has since published a later (1995) edition of the study in which she advocated the break and has conceded that the recent flourishing of female detective novels has included a large number that "meet what might be called liberal feminist criteria" (Woman Detective 2nd ed. 230).

Klein goes on to list a variety of the positive changes that have occurred since 1987 to move the female detective story towards a feminist detective story. First of all, she explains that despite their independence, these contemporary women detectives are not loners and they boast strong support systems (Klein, Woman Detective 2nd ed. 232). Also, while male detectives have often aligned themselves with the criminal in an attempt to catch him by becoming like him, female detectives tend to align themselves with the victim allowing them to avenge the victim (Klein, Woman Detective 2nd ed. 232-3). These new women are also putting down their guns, hence ridding themselves of the ties to a phallic symbol (Klein, Woman Detective 2nd ed. 233). Finally, while the typical ending to a male detective story pictures the lone hero who succeeds by adhering to his code, the endings to female detective stories show the heroine as part of a community that flourishes because of her "concern for how [her] actions and decisions will affect the other people in the scenario" (Klein, Woman Detective 2nd ed. 235).

Heilbrun summarizes the new tradition of the female detective by explaining that not only do they "inherit the detective novel's traditions, but combine their elements into a new form" (420). These elements are those of the loner American hard-boiled private investigator and the genteel English sleuth who restores order for society's downtrodden.

"Combining American self-employment with English sensitivity and moral passion, these new fictional woman detectives move in a world they partially created, of which they are the first inhabitants" (Heilbrun 420).

In addition to her own extensive feminist critique entitled The Woman Detective: Gender & Genre, Kathleen Gregory Klein has written an essay that is included in Feminism in Women's Detective Fiction ("Habeas Corpus" 171-189). Edited by Glenwood Irons, this resource provides a variety of critical essays on female detectives from Amelia Butterworth to Nancy Drew. Priscilla L. Walton and Manina Jones' Detective Agency: Women Rewriting the Hard-Boiled Tradition was extremely useful for their discussion of the publishing history of the female detective novel in addition to their feminist critique of the hard-boiled female detective. Despite its primary focus on mysteries featuring male detectives, Michael Cohen's Murder Most Fair: The Appeal of Mystery Fiction provides an excellent summary of the arguments presented by feminist critics of the genre including Klein and Munt (170-172).

Finally, several sources that discussed the women authors of detective fiction were helpful in establishing a history of the genre and gaining insight into what motivates the women creators of female detectives. These sources include Deadly Women: The Woman Mystery Reader's Indispensable Companion, edited by Jan Grape, Dean James and Ellen Nehr, which contains interviews with Elizabeth Peters, Janet Evanovich and Marcia Muller, who are all authors whose characters will be discussed in this paper. Martha Hailey DuBose's Women of Mystery: The Lives and Works of Notable Women Crime Novelists provided background on writers of the past such as Anna Katharine Green and Mary Roberts Rinehart.

Based on the continued growth in the number of contemporary female detective characters, an increase in critical attention is likely to follow. Two of the sources discussed in this review—DellaCava and Engel's Female Detectives in American Serial Novels: A Bibliography and Analysis of Serialized Female Sleuths and Klein's The Woman Detective: Gender & Genre—have already been released in second editions or updated versions in response to this growth. Hopefully it is just a matter of time before more scholars recognize fictional female detectives as "the miracle they are" and produce critical literature accordingly (Heilbrun 419).

METHODOLOGY

This study was designed to answer the following research question: How have female detectives in American series novels been portrayed between 1960 and the present and what trends in this portrayal have changed during this time period?

In order to gather data on the research question, I conducted a content analysis of fifteen American novels featuring a female detective. I developed a list of frequently occurring characteristics and charted the instances of these characteristics in the books selected. The books analyzed were the debut novels of the individual detective in each series. Three novels from each decade from the 1960s through the present were studied. In many cases, the series in which an individual character appeared spanned multiple decades. As only the first novel in each series was reviewed, each character was placed in the decade in which the first novel featuring that character appeared.

Prior to selecting the novels, I established a set of criteria for inclusion/exclusion within the study. Each of the characters and novels met the following criteria:

- The novels must feature an American detective' although the detective may travel to other countries for particular cases.
- The female detective must appear as the main character in at least three novels.
- The detective may be either an amateur or a professional.
- The character may have a male associate with whom she frequently consults but detectives who are part of a crime-solving duo are excluded (e.g. Sarah Kelling is excluded because of her partnership with Max Bittersohn).

- The female detective must be an adult.
- The creator of the character may be either male or female.
- Historical novels are excluded.
- The setting for the novel must be on Earth; novels which take place on imaginary colonies or other planets are excluded.
- Novels with an extraterrestrial or supernatural focus are excluded meaning that the detectives must be human females dealing with human criminals; novels with vampire or alien characters are excluded.

Selection

The novels used in this analysis were selected using the fiction database NoveList. I conducted five Guided Boolean Searches – one for each decade of the study. The form for a Guided Boolean Search can be reached through a link under the "Search Our Database" tab. The two subjects used in the search were: women detectives and mystery stories, American. The limiters were the adult level, all formats and the publication dates changed for each decade: 1960-1969, 1970-1979, 1980-1989, 1990-1999, and 2000-2006. Once the results were generated, I sorted them by popularity. Of the sorted results, the first three novels that were the debut novels in a series and met each of the above-mentioned criteria were selected for each decade.

The novels for the 1960s had to be selected by another method because none of the results from the Guided Boolean Search for 1960-1969 were applicable. The results from this search either did not meet the specified criteria or the first novel in the series was published prior to 1960. In order to obtain three novels for this time period that met my criteria, I began by listing all of the female detectives whose first appearances were

made in the 1960s (and who met my established criteria) according to the bibliography in Female Detectives in American Novels: A Bibliography and Analysis of Serialized Female Sleuths by Frances A. DellaCava and Madeline H. Engel and the Series Character Chronology in Silk Stalkings: When Women Write of Murder by Victoria Nichols and Susan Thompson (443-76). This list included only four names: Kate Fansler, Mrs. Pollifax, Christie Opara, and Grace Severance.

After compiling this list, I went back to NoveList and searched each of the authors' names who created these characters to see why their novels had not appeared in the results of my initial query. The first novels in three of the four series were included in NoveList but they were cataloged according to reprint dates instead of their original publication dates. The first novel in the fourth series was not included in NoveList at all. As NoveList was the universe for my sample selection, I eliminated the character from the fourth series which was not included in the database. More publication information about the detectives and their respective series that were selected for the sample is located in Appendix A. The fifteen detectives selected for the sample are listed in the following Table 1.

Table 1
Detectives Selected for the Sample

Decade of Debut Novel	Detective	Author
1960s	Kate Fansler	Amanda Cross
	Mrs. Pollifax	Dorothy Gilman
	Christie Opara	Dorothy Uhnak
1970s	Norah Mulcahaney	Lillian O'Donnell
	Vicky Bliss	Elizabeth Peters
	Sharon McCone	Marcia Muller
1980s	Kinsey Millhone	Sue Grafton
	V.I. Warshawski	Sara Paretsky
	Claire Malloy	Joan Hess
1990s	Gertrude "Goldy" Bear	Diane Mott Davidson
	Stephanie Plum	Janet Evanovich
	Sunny Randall	Robert B. Parker
2000s	"Sister" Jane Arnold	Rita Mae Brown
	Hannah Swensen	Joanne Fluke
	Molly Blume	Rochelle Krich

Descriptions of each individual detective can be found in Appendix B.

Characters were selected based on popularity in order to ensure the relative ease of obtaining the novels in which they appear. Each of the novels was obtained via local public and university libraries or Amazon.com. The choice to use the most popular novels rather than a random sample was also based on the assumption that the novels' mass appeal indicates the public's acceptance of the portrayal of the detectives as either accurate or acceptable.

While lesbian detectives were not specifically excluded, the sample does not include any. Although male creators of women detectives were included, only one appears in the sample.

Analysis

Each of the fifteen characters and the first novels in which they appear were analyzed based on the criteria below:

- Amateur or professional detective status: Any of the characters who were paid for their investigative skills are considered professional.
- Occupation
- Age
- Marital Status
- Familial Status: presence or absence of children, ages of any children (if known).
- Existence of a pet or other substitute for a child
- Sexual Encounters: This includes overt sexual acts and references to sexual acts (excluding kissing) occurring during the course of the novel only; references to past acts are excluded.
- Does she drink? This includes overt references to alcohol consumption. References to ordering a drink but not actually consuming it and references to drinks that could be assumed to be alcohol but are not explicitly described as such are excluded.
- Does she smoke? This includes any use of cigarettes or cigars.
- Does she use profane or obscene language?
- Does she carry a gun? Does she know how to use a gun regardless of whether or not she carries one? Has she shot someone?
- Involvement in physical confrontation with a criminal: This includes being held at gunpoint even if no bodily contact ensues.

- Does she subdue a criminal during her investigation?
- Religion
- References to appearance, diet, and exercise
- Point of view from which the story is told
- Pressure to date or get married: Only repeated pressure is included; isolated suggestions are excluded. This includes pressure from friends and family, not individual men who are attempting to date or marry the detective.
- Pressure to give up the investigation at hand or to quit detecting entirely: This pressure may come from family, significant others or competing investigators. Pressure to quit an investigation by the criminal being investigated is excluded.
- Motivation: Why is she pursuing the investigation?

Each of the fifteen novels was read and examined for incidences of the above listed characteristics. A chart for each of the characteristics was made in order to clearly display their occurrence in each of the decades that comprise the study. The results from the charting of the characteristics were used to describe how the contemporary female detective is portrayed and to determine trends that appeared or changed during the established timeframe.

RESULTS

The fifteen female detectives in the novels selected for analysis represent a large variety in terms of age, occupation, experience, appearance, behavior, and relationships. The detectives are divided almost evenly between amateurs and professionals with eight amateur detectives and seven professionals. The occupations of the amateurs vary from professors to business owners and even a journalist. Four of the detectives are widowed, six are divorced and five are single. Five of the women have children and four have pets including cats, dogs and a hamster. Four of them are in their twenties, six are in their thirties and two are over fifty. The remaining three whose ages are unknown are most likely in their thirties. The characteristics of these detectives will be discussed more in-depth in the following section.

Professional Status

While female detectives in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century reflected the limited opportunities for women in society as a whole and were amateurs, contemporary women have greater freedom in terms of employment and can become police officers or federal agents. It was also much more common for a woman to obtain a private investigator's license in the latter portion of the twentieth century. Table 2 illustrates the number of amateur and professional detectives among the sample of female detective characters from each decade in the study.

Table 2
Amateur vs. Professional

Decade of Publication	Amateurs	Professionals
1960s	2*	1
1970s	1	2
1980s	1	2
1990s	1	2
2000s	3	0
Totals	8	7

* For the purposes of this study, Mrs. Pollifax is considered an amateur because she was paid to be a CIA courier only. Extenuating circumstances led to her adventures as a spy.

The proportion of professional detectives increased from the 1960s to the 1970s. With the introduction of the hard-boiled female detective who is primarily a private investigator in the 1970s and the continuing popularity of this type of character in the 1980s and 1990s, it is no surprise that the increase continues steadily through the next two decades. However, there has been a conspicuous drop of professional detectives in the series novel since 2000.

Occupation

Increased opportunities in the workforce not only allowed women detectives to move from the amateur sphere to the professional, it also provided for variation in the occupations of the amateurs. In addition to the "appropriately feminine" occupations open to women in the first half of the twentieth century, contemporary women amateur detectives are also business owners, college professors and journalists. The professional detectives also represent a variety of occupations including police detectives and private investigators. Many of the professional detectives previously pursued other careers in different areas of law enforcement. Table 3 demonstrates the variety of occupations represented by each of the detectives in the sample.

Table 3

Occupation

Decade of Publication	Private Investigators	Academics	Police	CIA Employees	Business Owners	Journalists	Other
1960s	0	1	1	1	0	0	0
1970s	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
1980s	2	0	0	0	1	0	0
1990s	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
2000s	0	0	0	0	1	1	1
Totals	4	2	2	1	3	1	2

Private investigators outnumber all of the other occupations followed closely by business owners. The business owners in the sample include a bookseller, a baker and a caterer. The detectives in the "Other" category include one professional detective who is a bounty hunter and one amateur who is a Master of Foxhounds and retired teacher.

The occupations of both the professional and amateur detectives increase in their level of autonomy between the 1970s and all future decades. For example, the private investigators move from being employed by organizations to being self-employed. The amateur detectives also move from employment by large hierarchical organizations such as universities and the government in the 1960s and 1970s to individually owned and run businesses in later decades. Those who are not self-employed such as the bounty hunter and the journalist still work on a contract or freelance basis which allows for increased independence over traditional full-time, permanent positions.

Ages

In continuing with presenting demographic information on the female detectives included in the sample, Table 4 displays the ages of the fifteen detectives:

Table 4
Ages

Decade of Publication	Twenties	Thirties	Forties	Over Fifty	Unknown
1960s	1	0	0	1	1
1970s	2	0	0	0	1
1980s	0	3	0	0	0
1990s	0	2	0	0	1
2000s	1	1	0	1	0
Totals	4	6	0	2	3

The ages of the detectives in the sample range from 26 through 70. The 1960s and 2000s have the greatest difference in age while the greatest concentration of similar age is in the 1980s where the range is approximately 32 through 38. There is not a great deal of variety in age from the 1970s through the 1990s where the majority of the characters are in their late twenties or thirties. The professional detectives are much more similar in age than the amateurs. The policewomen range from 26 to 28 while the private investigators range from their late twenties through their late thirties. All of the detectives except for two are in their twenties or thirties. The remaining two are Mrs. Pollifax who is in her sixties and Jane Arnold who is 70.

Marital and Familial Status

As investigating is often a time-consuming and dangerous activity that sometimes requires one to be working at odd hours, the independence that it requires is often not conducive to maintaining a long-term relationship or a family. Table 5 indicates the number of detectives from each decade who are married, widowed, divorced or single. Table 6 indicates the number of detectives in the sample who have children. If a detective does have children, the number and ages of the children are also included.

Table 5
Marital Status

Decade of Publication	Marital Status			
	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Single
1960s	0	2	0	1
1970s	0	0	0	3
1980s	0	1	2	0
1990s	0	0	3	0
2000s	0	1	1	1
Totals	0	4	6	5

Table 6
Familial Status

Decade of Publication	Have Children	Description of Children (if applicable)
1960s	2	• 1 son – approximately 5 years old • 1 daughter, 1 son – both grown
1970s	0	
1980s	1	• 1 daughter – age 14
1990s	1	• 1 son – age 11
2000s	1	• 1 son – died at age 14
Total	5	

None of the detectives in the sample are married. They are relatively evenly distributed throughout the other three categories with four widows, six divorcées and five single women. Divorced women are more common in the 1980s and 1990s. The detectives in the 2000s sample are evenly distributed among widows, divorced women and single women.

Although one-third of the women in the sample have children, only three of those women currently have children living with them. All three of those women are divorced. Four of the five women who have children have only one child. Only one of the women who has a child is a professional detective. She is a widow and appears in the 1960s

category. None of the single women in any of the decades have children. Only the children of the women in the 1980s and 1990s have any involvement in the cases their mothers are investigating.

Existence of Pets or Other Child Substitutes

While the majority of the detectives in the sample do not have children, a number of them demonstrate an affection or responsibility toward a vulnerable being. For some, this characteristic is evident in an interaction with a child that needs protection during their investigations and for others, it is with their own pets. Of course taking care of a pet is not nearly as intensive or time-consuming as raising a child and when these detectives care for children involved in a case, it is only on a temporary basis, unlike raising one's own child. However, it is important to note these demonstrations of a need for some type of companionship because it contradicts the popular assumption that many detectives are loners. Table 7 details the number of detectives from each decade who have a pet or child substitute for whom they demonstrate affection or responsibility.

Table 7
Existence of Pet or Child Substitute

Decade of Publication	Pet or Child Substitute	Description (if applicable)
1960s	0	
1970s	0	
1980s	1	• Teenage child requires protection during investigation
1990s	2	• Teenage child requires protection during investigation • Dog • Hamster
2000s	2	• Cat • Dog & Cat
Total	5	

Five of the fifteen detectives have either a pet or a substitute child which is the same number who have their own children. There is one detective who falls in both categories, and she is also the one whose own child has died. None of the detectives in the 1960s through the 1980s have a pet. The popularity of pets appears to have begun in the later decades. There is no consistency as to the marital status of the women who have pets; one is single, one is divorced and one is a widow. The existence of the substitute child occurs only in the 1980s and 1990s. Both of the detectives to which this applies are private investigators who are divorced and in their mid to late thirties.

Vices

One of the hallmarks of hard-boiled detective stories featuring male detectives is their fondness for vices including sex, drugs, smoking and using profanities or obscene language. Some of the women detectives, regardless of whether or not they are considered hard-boiled, also display these same vices. However, those who do partake, generally do so in moderation unlike their male counterparts. Also, the sexual encounters for the women tend to be acts that demonstrate caring rather than an animalistic desire. Table 8 details the number of detectives within each decade who engage in a sexual encounter. Table 9 includes the number of detectives who smoke, drink and/or use profane language.

Table 8
Sexual Encounters

Decade of Publication	Sexual Encounter
1960s	0
1970s	0
1980s	2
1990s	1
2000s	0
Total	3

Table 9
Vices – Drinking, Smoking & Use of Profanity

Decade of Publication	Drinks	Smokes	Uses Profanity
1960s	1	2	2
1970s	2	1	2
1980s	3	0	2
1990s	3	1	3
2000s	1	1	2
Totals	10	5	11

NOTE: Multiple categories may apply for individual detectives.

All except three of the detectives in the sample are chaste in the first novels of their respective series. In keeping with their male counterparts, all of the women who have a sexual encounter are characters in novels that are considered to belong to the hard-boiled school of mysteries. Kinsey Millhone, one of the characters in the 1980s, had sex with a man who was eventually revealed as the murderer she was investigating, and Sunny Randall, a detective in the 1990s, had sex with two different men during the course of the novel.

There was a marked increase in the detectives' indulgence in other vices. At least one detective in every decade consumes alcohol. In fact, all three detectives in both the 1980s and 1990s drink, as do two in the 1970s. Interestingly, these are the decades in

which all of the hard-boiled detectives appear. The highest incidence of smoking appears in the 1960s. The remainder of the decades, except the 1980s, are represented by one smoker each; none of the detectives in the sample in the 1980s smoke. At least two-thirds of the detectives in each of the decades represented use some type of profanity or obscene language, and in fact, all of the detectives in the 1990s sample have been known to color their language with a few expletives.

Gun Use

It would certainly seem logical to think of guns as essential tools of the detecting trade as the job often brings a detective into contact with unsavory characters from whom she may need to protect herself. However, it turns out that this is not necessarily the case. Many of the detectives choose to operate unarmed, and those who do own guns do not carry them at all times, even when they are conducting investigative business. The detectives in the sample who do own guns generally only resort to carrying them in times where they suspect acute danger. Also, there are some detectives who do not carry guns but know how to use them when the situation calls for it. Table 10 outlines the number of detectives who own guns, know how to use guns, and shoot someone during their investigation.

Table 10
Gun Use

Decade of Publication	Own a Gun	Can Use a Gun	Shoots Someone
1960s	1	2	1
1970s	2	2	0
1980s	2	2	2
1990s	2	2	2
2000s	1	1	0
Totals	8	9	5

NOTE: Multiple categories may apply for individual detectives.

Eight of the fifteen detectives in the sample own a gun. All but one of these eight detectives own the guns for use involved with their duties as detectives. Jane Arnold, one of the detectives in the 2000s, owns her guns solely for use in her duties as a Master of Foxhounds. The distribution of gun owners is equal across the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. Only one woman in the 1960s owns a gun and none of the women in the 2000s own a gun for use in investigative activities. For the most part, gun ownership corresponds directly to the detectives' professional status. All of the professional detectives own guns, and the sole amateur detective who owns a gun is Jane Arnold who, as noted previously, does so for reasons unrelated to investigating.

In addition to the women who own a gun, one other woman in the 1960s knows how to use a gun and in fact, did so in order to protect herself during the course of her investigation. None of the women in the 1970s and 2000s are forced to shoot anyone during the course of their investigations while two women in both the 1980s and 1990s do shoot someone.

Physical Confrontations

Both amateur and professional detectives whether armed or unarmed often find themselves in situations where they are involved in a physical confrontation with a criminal. Some are attacked physically and struck while others are held at gun or knifepoint. These scenarios can take place at a number of points during the investigation. Sometimes a detective is attacked in an attempt to scare her away from the investigation when she is getting close to a solution and sometimes it occurs at the end of the investigation when she comes face-to-face with the known murderer in a final showdown.

Table 11 illustrates the number of detectives who are involved in a confrontation regardless of the point in the investigation in which it occurs. Table 12 demonstrates the number of detectives who subdue a criminal during their investigation. This includes any criminal during the course of the investigation regardless of whether or not he or she is the primary offender. Any form of capture is also included whether it is shooting the offender, tying the offender up or holding him or her at gunpoint until the police arrive.

Table 11
Involvement in Physical Confrontation with Criminals

Decade of Publication	Physical Confrontation
1960s	2
1970s	3
1980s	3
1990s	3
2000s	2
Total	13

Table 12
Subduing Criminals

Decade of Publication	Subdues Criminal
1960s	1
1970s	1
1980s	2
1990s	2
2000s	2
Total	8

Thirteen of the fifteen detectives in the sample are involved in some form of physical confrontation. The only two who are not involved appear in the 1960s and 2000s and both are amateur detectives. A significantly lower proportion actually subdues a criminal. This proportion increases steadily until the 1980s where it remains the same

throughout the later decades in the sample. All of the professional detectives and three of the amateur detectives subdue a criminal at some point in their investigation. Two of the three amateurs who subdue a criminal appear in the 2000s.

Religion

The addition of Christian and Jewish subgenres to the mystery genre indicates reader interest in the religion of detective characters. Table 13 describes any mention of religious beliefs or religious affiliations for any of the detectives in the sample.

Table 13
Religion

Decade of Publication	Religious Beliefs or Affiliation	
	Number	**Description**
1960s	0	• None
1970s	0	• None
1980s	0	• None
1990s	1	• Detective formerly taught Sunday school
2000s	2	• Self-described Modern Orthodox Jewish • Refers to belief in God's creation
Total	3	

Only one of the detectives in the sample, Molly Blume, who appears in the 2000s, indicates any affiliation to a specific organized religion. In addition to Molly, another detective, Jane Arnold, also in the 2000s, indicates a spiritual belief but does not reference a particular organized religion. One detective in the 1990s, Gertrude "Goldy" Bear, mentions that she formerly taught Sunday school which implies that she believes (or formerly believed) in some form of Christianity. None of the detectives in the earlier decades of the sample make any reference to religion.

Appearance

Body image, weight issues and the pressure to meet a certain standard of beauty are concerns that many women face. Women detective characters are no exception. A number of the detectives in the sample make mention of the fact that they wish that they were more petite, more or less voluptuous, or weighed less. Some of course are naturally thin and eat a lot of junk food without worrying too much about gaining weight. Others make sure that they can eat what they want without gaining weight by exercising while still others like to stay fit for professional reasons. Table 14 indicates the number of detectives who mention imperfections in their appearance, eat junk food with little regard for the effects on their appearance, demonstrate concerns with weight and/or exercise regularly.

Table 14
Appearance Issues, Diet, Weight Concerns and Exercise Habits

Decade of Publication	Appearance Issues	Eats Junk Food	Weight Concerns	Exercises Regularly
1960s	1	0	1	0
1970s	2	1	0	0
1980s	0	1	1	2
1990s	0	1	2	1
2000s	1	0	1	1
Totals	4	3	5	4

NOTE: Multiple categories may apply for individual detectives.

Only four of the fifteen detectives mention issues with their appearance and only five of the fifteen mention concerns with weight. While the detectives who are concerned with their appearance are concentrated in the earlier decades of the sample, those who have weight concerns and perhaps consequently, those who exercise regularly, are concentrated in the later decades of the sample. The highest incidence of appearance issues occurs in the 1970s while the highest incidence of weight concerns appears in the

1990s. The detectives in the 1980s are more likely to exercise regularly. Regular exercise may have a relationship to professional status as three of the four detectives who exercise are professionals. The junk food eaters are spread evenly across the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s.

Point of View

The telling of a story from a first-person point of view was one of the biggest innovations brought about by the hard-boiled detective story (Collins). While only four of the books in this sample are considered hard-boiled, all were written after this particular novelty was introduced and many cozy mysteries have also adopted this story-telling vantage point. Table 15 illustrates the point of view of the narrator in each of the novels analyzed.

Table 15
Point of View

Decade of Publication	First Person	Third Person
1960s	0	3
1970s	2	1
1980s	3	0
1990s	3	0
2000s	1	2
Totals	9	6

Nearly two-thirds of the novels are told from the first person point of view which includes all four of the novels belonging to the hard-boiled school and five additional novels that do not. While the narrator in a novel told in first person is not necessarily the main character, the narrator in each of the novels in the sample is the female detective. All of the novels published in the 1960s are told in the third person but the majority in each decade after the 1960s has a first person narrator. In fact, all of the novels in the

1980s and 1990s are told in the first person. In the 2000s, the majority of the novels revert back to a third person narrator. Interestingly, the two decades in which the majority of the novels are told in the third person are also the only two decades which do not include a hard-boiled detective novel.

Pressure to Date or Get Married

As a consequence to the potential for romance allowed by the single, divorced or widowed status of all the detectives in the sample, many of these detectives have meddling family members and/or friends who insist that the detective needs to date or get married. Table 16 illustrates the number of detectives in the sample who are subjected to these pressures.

Table 16
Pressure to Date/Get Married

Decade of Publication	Pressured
1960s	0
1970s	1
1980s	0
1990s	1
2000s	2
Total	4

The highest concentration of detectives who are pressured to date or get married exists in the later decades in the sample with two detectives in the 2000s and one in the 1990s. Only one other detective appearing in the 1970s is pressured. Half of the women who are pressured into dating or getting married are single while the other half are divorced.

Pressure to Quit Investigating

Relationships are not the only thing about which the women detectives are pressured. Pressure to quit investigating is common both from well-meaning friends and family members in addition to competing investigators who do not want the women detectives interfering in their cases. Table 17 indicates the different sources of this pressure and the number of detectives to which each source applies.

Table 17
Sources of Pressure to Quit Investigating

Decade of Publication	Friends/ Boyfriends	Family	Competing Investigator	None
1960s	1	0	0	2
1970s	0	1	2	0
1980s	1	0	2	1
1990s	1	2	0	0
2000s	0	2	0	0
Totals	3	5	4	3

NOTE: Multiple categories may apply for individual detectives.

Only three detectives of the fifteen do not receive pressure from any source to cease their investigating. Families are the most common source of pressure with a heavy concentration in the 1990s and 2000s. While fathers and siblings also apply the pressure, it is most often the mother who nags at her daughter to quit. Four detectives in the 1970s and 1980s are pressured to quit by competing investigators. Friends and boyfriends attempt to convince three of the detectives to give up their calling. The pressure to quit is more common in the later decades while only one detective in the 1960s is pressured.

Detective's Motivation

The reasons that detectives investigate crimes are as varied as the crimes themselves. The professional detectives often investigate because of their professional responsibility; however, additional reasons often develop based on the people they meet

who are affected by the crimes. Amateur detectives often become involved in an investigation when they or a loved one are accused of a crime, they lack confidence in the skills of the official investigators, or when they know the victim and feel a responsibility to them. Table 18 demonstrates the variety of motives for investigating and the number of times each motive is attributed to a detective in the sample.

Table 18
Detective's Motivation

Decade of Publication	Boredom/ Curiosity	Protecting Self or Others	Guilt	Responsibility to Victim	Competition	Reward/Money	Professional Duty	Lack of Confidence in Police
1960s	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
1970s	0	1	0	1	1	1	2	0
1980s	0	2	0	1	0	0	2	1
1990s	0	2	0	1	0	1	1	1
2000s	1	0	0	3	0	0	0	0
Totals	2	6	1	7	1	2	6	3

NOTE: Multiple categories may apply for individual detectives.

The most common motivation attributed to the detectives is a responsibility for the victim followed closely by professional responsibility and protecting self or others. The most variety in motives occurred in the 1970s with five different motivating factors cited. Professional duty as motive occurs most often in the 1970s and 1980s while protecting self or others is most common in the 1980s and 1990s. Responsibility for the victim is the overwhelming motivation for the detectives in the 2000s which is also the decade in which the greatest number of amateur detectives appears.

CONCLUSIONS

If there is one theme that is immediately evident upon examining the detectives included in the sample, it is variety. For this reason, it is much more difficult to describe a consistent model of the female detective from the 1960s through present than it was in previous eras such as that of the "knitting detective" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, there are several discernable trends that have been established and have also begun to change during this time period.

Whether or not she is an amateur or professional detective, the contemporary female detective is most likely employed. This is standard throughout the timeframe of the study; however, as previously mentioned, the occupations of the detectives increase in autonomy over time. It is not surprising that a number of the earlier detectives in the sample were police officers or academics as these were occupations in which women could obtain a modicum of power as a detective or professor during this time. As opportunities in other spheres increased, the detectives in the sample moved away from these hierarchical, traditionally patriarchal organizations. In fact, after the 1970s, not one of the detectives is a police officer or an academic. From the 1980s on, the majority of the detectives is either self-employed or employed on a freelance or contract basis allowing them a great deal of autonomy in their work choices.

The average age of the female detective has remained consistent throughout the sample with nearly all falling in the late twenties through late thirties range. Detectives over the age of forty are unusual and those in the sample appeared only at the very

beginning and end of the timeframe. It is quite possible that Mrs. Pollifax, the detective in her sixties, who appeared in 1966, is a throwback to the elderly female detective of the Golden Age. She appears unassuming and inept but surprises everyone by being quite capable when an investigation arises, which was how many pre-1950 elderly female detectives were portrayed. It is also possible that the appearance of seventy year-old Jane Arnold in 2000 could be the beginning of more variety in the ages of female detectives. Today's older detective is portrayed much differently than those of the past as Jane is described as well-respected and highly competent.

The contemporary female detective is also most likely to be unmarried whether she is widowed, divorced or single. Widowed detectives are more common in the early portion of the timeframe while divorced detectives are more common in the 1980s and beyond. This might be attributed to fiction following reality as the divorce rate in the United States has increased by approximately 40% since 1970 according to Ahlburg and DeVita (qtd. in Gallagher 5). The pattern of marital status throughout the timeframe begins with either single or widowed women in the 1960s and 1970s moving to nearly all divorced women in the 1980s and 1990s to finally exhibiting the largest variety in the 2000s in which all three categories exist.

Female detectives who have children are not the norm. In the early portion of the sample, this might be attributed to the fact that working women at that time were often forced to make a choice between having a career or children. As it is increasingly possible for contemporary woman to raise families and have successful careers, one might assume that the frequency of detectives who have children would increase. However, as this does not appear to be the case. I would argue that the age of many of

the detectives and the tendency for women to have children later in life could be a contributing factor to the lack of children among the detectives in the later decades of the sample.

While few of the detectives have children, an increasing number have pets on which they lavish quite a bit of attention. Two detectives in both the 1990s and 2000s have pets. This seems to imply a turn away from the detective of the late 1970s and 1980s who fiercely guarded her independence and refused to be tied down to anything or anyone who required caretaking. While the detectives of the later decades are also independent, they demonstrate a need for steady companionship and seem to enjoy taking care of someone in addition to themselves.

The detectives in the later decades also seem to be less conscious of, or at least less concerned with types of behavior that are considered "typically feminine." Kate Fansler, Mrs. Pollifax and Vicky Bliss all make comments regarding their horror or embarrassment at what they consider girlish behavior. Kate finds herself "simpering" over an attractive man while Mrs. Pollifax comments that she "nearly fluttered [her] eyelashes" at her captors in order to get them to bring her an item she needed (Cross 56; Gilman 118). Vicky cries over the injured figure of her male colleague and is later ashamed that she "behaved like the worst stereotype of the feeble female" (Peters 123). The detectives in the later decades rarely comment on stereotypically feminine behavior and if they do, they do not scold themselves or feel ashamed about it. In fact, when attempting to get information about a case, Sunny thinks, "I gave him my most enticing smile. Nothing wrong with feminine wiles. Maybe I should bat my eyes" (Parker 215).

While the proportion of amateur and professional detectives is nearly equal for the entire sample, five of the six detectives in the 1990s and 2000s are amateurs. This change in the later portion of the timeframe could be in response to the introduction of the hard-boiled professional private investigator in the 1970s and the subsequent proliferation of that type of character in the 1980s. The fictional female private investigator during this time had to thrust herself into what had been previously a men-only arena. Because the field was so heavily dominated by men, these women had to work doubly hard at proving their toughness, independence and investigative skills. After the popularity of these detective characters who were almost direct opposites of the "knitting detectives" was established, authors may have felt pressure to create newer female detective characters who were less extreme. Once it was shown that female detectives could be as tough and independent as their male counterparts, authors were able to return to a middle ground in which the capable "soft-boiled" amateur could thrive.

As the first person narrator is often tied to the professional detective, the return to an abundance of amateur detectives in the 2000s is accompanied by a return to the third person narrator. This shift from the domination of professional detectives in the 1980s and 1990s to more amateurs in the 2000s also includes a move towards fewer female detectives carrying guns. As a gun can be considered a substitute phallus, this may imply that the authors who created the female detectives of the 2000s feel the presence of female detectives is so firmly established that their characters no longer need to emulate men.

After the dominance of the professional detective in the 1980s and 1990s for whom drinking and sexual encounters were the norm, the number of detectives who drink

and have sexual encounters has decreased in the 2000s. This move away from guns, alcohol and sex might suggest that readers are ready for strong, capable female detective characters who approach investigating in their own unique way without feeling the need to adopt traditionally masculine behavior.

As the use of guns increased in the 1980s, so did the number of female detectives who subdued a criminal. While the majority of detectives in the 1960s and 1970s have to be rescued from their physical confrontations with criminals, two-thirds of the detectives in the later three decades subdue the criminals on their own. When Stephanie Plum expresses trepidation at using her gun, a male cop tells her to do it the 'ladies' way' which involves spraying the fugitive with defense spray to stop him and then placing handcuffs on him (Evanovich 184). With gun use on the decline in the 2000s, the two detectives in that decade who subdue the subjects of their investigations do so without the use of a gun. In fact, they both use household items. Hannah Swensen scalds the murderer with hot tea and Molly Blume hits the murderer with a blender container (Fluke 299; Krich 325-6). Clearly the ladies' way gets results.

In the 1970s and 1980s, professional duty was a strong motivator for the women detectives. This motivator decreased in later years while protecting herself or others became a strong motivator. In the 2000s, the detectives' motivation was overwhelmingly a responsibility to the victim. This change in priorities might indicate that the newer female detectives feel less of a need to prove their professional capabilities and focus more on compassion since they are not professional detectives themselves.

In addition, the detectives that were created in the 2000s may be less of a response to society's expectations and opportunities for women and more of a response to the

publishing market. It is important to note that all except for three (Christie Opara, Norah Mulcahaney, and Vicky Bliss) of the fifteen series studied in this paper have continued into the 2000s. In fact, ten of these series have had their most recent installments published since 2005 and five of these series are ones featuring professional detectives. The proliferation of newly created amateur detectives in the 2000s could merely be an attempt by the authors to carve a niche for themselves in the publishing market rather than attempt to compete against already successfully established series featuring professional investigators.

Amateur detective series have played a large part in establishing an increasing number of subgenres within the mystery genre including culinary, knitting and other craft mysteries. The proliferation of the culinary mysteries could certainly just be clever authors and publishers recognizing a niche in the market solidified by the popularity of food-related entertainment in other media such as cable television's Food Network which debuted in 1993. Likewise, the knitting subgenre may have been spurred by the popularity of non-fiction works such as those in the Stitch 'n Bitch series which were first published in 2000.

It is also quite possible that the return to a majority of amateur detectives in the 2000s who engage in activities such as cooking demonstrates that women have reclaimed areas that were once considered solely feminine and turned them into spheres of power. For example, while Goldy Bear and Hannah Swensen spend a great deal of time in the kitchen, they do it because they run successful food-related businesses which allow them to be financially independent, not because they are dutiful housewives cooking dinner for

their husbands. In addition, Hannah Swensen and Molly Blume demonstrate that kitchen items are particularly effective weapons in subduing armed criminals.

Finally, while the female professional detectives of the 1980s and 1990s pursue their careers at the cost of all other aspect of their lives including relationships, the amateur detectives of the 2000s seem to have a much better a balance in their lives. Not only are they successful at their primary occupations but they also make time for solving the occasional crime. In addition, despite previous bad experiences with romantic relationships, they seem willing to work at overcoming their trust issues with men in order to pursue healthy romantic relationships as long as the men in their lives do not attempt to stifle their investigating activities.

Based on all of the aforementioned trends, I would describe the 1960s and 1970s as the decades of the emerging professional female detective who is operating under rules of detection established by the men who preceded them. The 1980s and 1990s are the decades of the extreme professional female detective who in her attempt to emulate men has allowed her work to usurp all other aspects of her life. Finally, the 2000s demonstrate the return of the amateur and a move towards a 'kinder, gentler' yet strong and independent female detective. Although these summations are too simplistic to truly represent the variety of female detectives that have been created during this time period, they do provide a capsule way of looking at the changes that have taken place in the nearly half-century of female detectives studied here.

Appendix A

Publication Information for the Detectives Selected for the Sample

Decade of Debut Novel	Detective	Author	Year of First Publication	Number in Series*	Year of Most Recent Publication**	Genre
1960s	Kate Fansler	Amanda Cross	1964	14	2002	Academic
	Mrs. Pollifax	Dorothy Gilman	1966	14	2000	Spy/Senior Sleuth
	Christie Opara	Dorothy Uhnak	1968	3	1970	Police Procedural
1970s	Norah Mulcahaney	Lillian O'Donnell	1972	17	1998	Police Procedural
	Vicky Bliss	Elizabeth Peters	1973	5	1994	Academic
	Sharon McCone	Marcia Muller	1977	23	2006	Hard-Boiled
1980s	Kinsey Millhone	Sue Grafton	1982	19	2005	Hard-Boiled
	V.I. Warshawski	Sara Paretsky	1982	12	2005	Hard-Boiled
	Claire Malloy	Joan Hess	1986	16	2007	Cozy
1990s	Gertrude "Goldy" Bear	Diane Mott Davidson	1990	13	2006	Cozy/Culinary
	Stephanie Plum	Janet Evanovich	1994	13	2007	Caper
	Sunny Randall	Robert B. Parker	1999	5	2006	Hard-Boiled
2000s	"Sister" Jane Arnold	Rita Mae Brown	2000	5	2005	Cozy/Senior Sleuth
	Hannah Swensen	Joanne Fluke	2000	9	2007	Cozy/Culinary
	Molly Blume	Rochelle Krich	2002	4	2005	Suspense/Jewish Detective

*Count does not include short stories.

**Refers to last or most recent (if series is ongoing) year in which a novel in the series was or will be published.

Appendix B

Descriptions of Individual Detectives Selected for the Sample

The 1960s

Kate Fansler

In the Last Analysis by Amanda Cross, originally published in 1964

Kate Fansler, who is single and has no children, is an English Professor at a Manhattan university. Based on information given about the ages of her brothers and her older brother's child, Kate's references to the youthfulness of her college students, and the fact that her niece's 21 year-old fiancé considers her middle-aged, one can assume that Kate is in her late thirties or early forties (Cross 85). No physical description of Kate appears anywhere in the first novel of the series. Kate has three older brothers and hails from a well-off New York City family who was upset when "she turned her back on society and became, not only an 'intellectual,' but a Ph.D." (Cross 59).

She becomes involved in her first case when a former student is murdered in the office of her psychiatrist Emanuel who also happens to be a friend and former lover of Kate's. As the student sought out this particular psychiatrist at Kate's suggestion, she feels a responsibility to help find the true killer when Emanuel becomes a suspect in the murder. Kate also appears to be motivated by a lack of trust in the ability of the police about whom she remarks:

> The police are very conscientious, in their unimaginative way. Perhaps I am prejudiced; probably I am. But they have such a nice suspect, they are so certain

> that no one else *could* have done it, that their searches in other directions are bound to be somewhat lacking in vigor, or so it seems to me. (Cross 61)

Mrs. Emily Pollifax

The Unexpected Mrs. Pollifax by Dorothy Gilman, originally published in 1966

A resident of New Brunswick, New Jersey, Mrs. Emily Pollifax who often introduces herself as Mrs. Virgil Pollifax, is a widow with two grown children and three grandchildren who all live out-of-state. Her husband had been a lawyer and as no career is mentioned for her, one can assume that she is a retired housewife. Described as being in her sixties, Mrs. Pollifax sees herself as a "small, feminine, somewhat cushiony figure, hair nearly white, eyes blue, a nice little woman unsuited for almost everything practical" (Gilman 11).

A restrictively safe, sensible suburban life has left Mrs. Pollifax depressed. She does a great deal of volunteer work with the Garden Club, the Art Association and the Woman's Hospital Auxiliary but finds it stifling and impersonal because of all of the restrictions and remarks to her doctor, "Actually, I suppose I loathe it," during her annual physical (Gilman 6). Her doctor's suggestion to find something more fulfilling to keep her occupied along with her historically "odd bent" that her husband never understood lead her to seek an appointment with the CIA in order to inquire about becoming a spy (Gilman 7). A case of mistaken identity and her unassuming appearance result in her being hired as a CIA courier who must pose as a tourist.

Christie Opara

The Bait by Dorothy Uhnak, originally published in 1968

Christie Opara is a twenty-six year old widow who joined the New York City Police Department because of her and her husband's desire to do preventative work with juvenile delinquents (Uhnak 13). At the time of the first book in the series, her husband had been dead for nearly five years. He was killed in the line of duty before their son was born. Christie and her son Mickey now live with her mother-in-law Nora. In addition to having lost her husband through a violent act, her mother was killed in a car collision forcing Christie to be delivered three weeks early. Her father was killed two years ago in a construction accident. She is Greek and Swedish with green eyes and dark blond, thick, short hair and is described as a tomboy "with her slight, flat-chested, long-legged and almost hipless body and still freckled face" (Uhnak 10). Christie is a second-grade detective and the only woman of 16 members in the District Attorney's Special Investigations Squad.

The 1970s

Norah Mulcahaney

The Phone Calls by Lillian O'Donnell, originally published in 1972

A 28 year-old rookie policewoman, Norah Mulcahaney is single with no children and lives with her father on Riverside Drive in New York City. Her mother died when she was twelve and both of her older brothers have families and live out-of-state. She had intended to go to college but her father was injured in a crane accident so she stayed home to take care of him. Now that he is recovered and Norah is working full-time, he occupies himself by trying to find Norah a husband. Norah is Irish with blue-gray eyes

and dark brown hair. She is described as "tall, for a girl, built on fine, bold lines" and like her father, she is "strong, self-reliant, to the point of stubbornness sometimes" (O'Donnell 21). A year out of the police academy, Norah is frustrated because she is still on the women's force and has been passed up for a transfer to an individual precinct. After a harrowing incident where she puts her life in danger to solve a case at the end of the first novel, she is promoted to detective.

Vicky Bliss

Borrower of the Night by Elizabeth Peters, originally published in 1973

At six-feet tall with measurements that rival a *Playboy* Bunny's and an extremely high IQ, Vicky Bliss frequently expresses consternation at her predicament claiming, "If there is anything worse than being a tall girl, it is being a tall *smart* girl" (Peters 1-2). Her father's Scandinavian roots resulted in her growing up to be what she describes as "a big, blond, blue-eyed cow" (Peters 2). Single with no children, she has multiple degrees and is a history professor at a small college in Ohio when the first novel begins. Despite Vicky's frustration at her appearance and her distaste for the concept of marriage, she is considered quite beautiful and frequently turns men's heads especially that of one of her colleagues named Tony. In fact, her antagonistic relationship with him is what leads her to become involved in her first adventure. Based on Tony's challenge that her "tough exterior is a defense" and that deep down she wants a man to prove his superior intellect to her (Peters 7), they set off to Germany to search for a shrine that has been missing since the sixteenth century in a romantic battle of the sexes.

Sharon McCone

Edwin of the Iron Shoes by Marcia Muller, originally published in 1977

Sharon McCone is a staff investigator for the All Souls Cooperative, a legal services plan in San Francisco. In her late twenties, she is 5'6" and has long black hair with a premature gray streak. She is single and has no children but comes from a large family. She is mostly Scotch-Irish but has a dark complexion due to her one-eighth Shoshone blood. Sharon originally worked in department store security but left to go to college. She had difficulty obtaining a job with her sociology degree so she ended up back in security at a large firm where she mostly investigated cheating spouses. They moved her up to detective but she was subsequently fired "for refusing to jump at a special assignment that would have humiliated [her] and set up an innocent man for a very messy and expensive divorce" (Muller 25-6). Most of her work at All Souls involves interviewing witnesses and collecting evidence for lawsuits so, although it is not her first, she is very excited to take on the murder case that comes her way in the first novel where her strong will and independence initially put her at odds with a police lieutenant.

The 1980's

Kinsey Millhone

"A" is for Alibi by Sue Grafton, originally published in 1982

At 32, Kinsey Millhone is a former cop who did not like the politics of being on the force and "working with a leash around [her] neck" (Grafton 15). She also used to work for the California Fidelity Insurance Company but now she conducts a few investigations for them in exchange for the rent on her own private investigation office

within their office suite in downtown Santa Teresa, California. She has been divorced twice, has no children and likes "living in a cramped space" (Grafton 1). Kinsey was raised by her aunt because her parents were killed in an accident where a boulder crushed their car. A five year-old Kinsey had to be pried from the wreckage. She drives a '68 Volkswagen, doesn't cook and likes junk food. She is "a real hard-ass when it comes to men" and doesn't get romantically involved often (Grafton 61-62). Kinsey prides herself on being self-sufficient, doesn't hold back when it comes to cursing and jogs not to keep in shape but because "there's something about running that satisfies a masochistic streak" in her (Grafton 60).

V.I. Warshawski

Indemnity Only by Sara Paretsky, originally published in 1982

A native of Chicago and a huge Cubs fan, Victoria Iphigenia Warshawski started her career as an attorney with the Public Defender's office before she became a private investigator. She is Italian on her mother's side and has her olive coloring and is Polish on her father's side. Her mother died when she was fifteen and her father, who had been a policeman, died ten years ago. V.I. or Vic, as she allows her friends to refer to her, is in her mid to late thirties and is divorced with no children. Vic goes by V.I. professionally because during her days as an attorney, "… [she] found it was harder for male colleagues and opponents to patronize [her] if they didn't know [her] first name" (Paretsky 241-2). A big fan of Johnnie Walker Black, Vic enjoys eating well but constantly worries about her weight and makes it a habit to run four times a week so that she can continue to be undisciplined in her eating habits (Paretsky 13). Vic's cases usually deal with industrial espionage and her case in the first novel is the first time that she comes face-to-face with

a murderer (Paretsky 184). Neither of her parents would have been pleased at her career choice. Her mother wanted her to be a singer and she can often be found whistling songs from operas as she searches a crime scene.

Claire Malloy

Strangled Prose by Joan Hess, originally published in 1986

Claire Malloy lives with her 14 year-old daughter Caron in Farberville, home to Farber College where her husband was a professor in the English department before he was killed in a car accident eight years ago. She is 38 and has coppery red hair streaked with gray, dark green eyes and freckles. In addition to a fondness for Scotch, Claire loves books and is the owner and proprietor of a small bookstore called The Book Depot. She is described by one of her friends as "strong, self-sufficient, resilient" (Hess 30). The recent publication of a book in which the fact that Claire's husband was having an affair when he died was disclosed results in the murder of the book's author. Subsequently, Claire becomes a murder suspect and her daughter becomes a suspect in a burglary. Throughout the case, Claire's constant interference, refusal to cooperate, and acerbic challenges of "Figure it out yourself, Sherlock—that's what you get paid for!" antagonize the Lieutenant in charge of the investigation (Hess 117).

The 1990s

Gertrude "Goldy" Bear

Catering to Nobody by Diane Mott Davidson, originally published in 1990

Goldy Bear is the owner of Goldilocks' Catering, Where Everything Is Just Right! in Aspen Meadow, Colorado. Goldy has blond curly hair, brown eyes and freckles. At 120 pounds, she describes herself as "only slightly pudgy" from her good cooking and is

a bit touchy about references to the fact that she is short (Davidson 6, 161). She is a single mother of an 11 year-old boy named Arch who gets picked on at school because he is little and studious-looking. Arch escapes from reality by obsessively participating in role-playing games.

Goldy and Arch's father, John Richard Korman have been divorced for three years putting an end to an eight-year marriage. She married him because she was desperate for a family but he turned out to be physically abusive. He once broke her thumb with a hammer and on another occasion, he pushed her causing her to fall into an open dishwasher containing a knife that sliced her shoulder. John Richard and his father have a successful ob-gyn practice but he still neglects to send her the proper amount of child support. Goldy finished her degree in psychology when Arch was in first grade but finds that the catering business is more practical for paying the bills (Davidson 25). She is determined to be financially independent and gets involved with her first case when the police shut down her catering business to investigate a poisoning that occurred at a function she catered.

Stephanie Plum

One for the Money by Janet Evanovich, originally published in 1994

Stephanie Plum is an out-of-work discount lingerie buyer who lives in Trenton, New Jersey. Part Hungarian, she is thirty years-old, 5'7" and 130 pounds with blue eyes and shoulder length brown hair. Stephanie lives alone with her pet hamster Rex after divorcing her cheating ex-husband and is routinely subjected to her mother's matchmaking efforts and constant nagging to "catch a nice man" (Evanovich 10). After her Miata is repossessed due to her dire financial straits, she confesses to her parents that

she was laid off and her mother suggests she go see her cousin Vinnie about a filing job. When Vinnie's secretary informs Stephanie that the filing job has been filled, she suggests that Stephanie do some skip tracing. Stephanie is tempted by the money but admits that she is really a coward (Evanovich 16). However, despite her initial cowardice, she quickly obtains a gun, some defense spray and various other tools of the fugitive apprehension or bounty hunter trade. After a crash course on shooting from Ranger, formerly Special Forces and current bounty hunter, Stephanie becomes involved in tracking down an FTA (failure to appear) who also happens to be the guy to whom she lost her virginity in high school.

Sunny Randall

Family Honor by Robert B. Parker, originally published in 1999

A former cop turned private eye, Sunny Randall is recently divorced from her husband of nine years and lives in a South Boston loft with her black-and-white bull terrier Rosie. Sunny, born Sonya Joan, is 35 years-old, 5'6" and 115 pounds and describes herself as a "small blond cutie" when she is holding a "big ugly pimp" at gunpoint (Parker 78). She has a B.A. in social work and had been pursuing an MFA in painting at night for at least six years. Sunny's father was a policeman and her mother is a feminist who has never supported herself. She has one sister, Elizabeth, who is four years her senior and takes after her mother. While Elizabeth played with her dollhouse as a child, Sunny went to the pistol range with her dad and learned to shoot.

When asked about her career choice, Sunny explains, "I got out of college with a degree in social work, but I wanted to be a painter. My father got me a police job to support myself until I sold my paintings" (Parker 35). She was promoted to detective

second grade before she left the police force because she found it “too hierarchical” and reveals that even if she were to become extremely successful at either painting or private detecting, she probably wouldn’t give up either (Parker 36). Despite their divorce, she is still emotionally involved with her ex-husband Richie and continues to have a weekly date with him. Their relationship is particularly complicated because Richie comes from a mob family and Sunny’s dad had been trying to arrest Richie’s dad since she and Richie were kids.

The 2000s

Jane Arnold

Outfoxed by Rita Mae Brown, originally published in 2000

Seventy year-old Jane Arnold lives in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia. As the Master of Foxhounds (M.F.H.) for the Jefferson Hunt for the past forty years, she also maintains a stable of horses and a pack of hounds. Sister, as Jane is commonly known, is a widow, having lost her husband ten years prior to the opening of the first book in the series. Her only son Raymond Jr. died at the age of 14. Prior to Ray Jr.’s birth, Sister had been a geology teacher at Mary Baldwin College despite the fact that her degree was in English. Sister is particularly fond of nature and animals and owns a Doberman named Raleigh and a cat named Golliwog.

Despite her age and her arthritis, Sister is still spry enough to swing both feet over a jump out in the hunt field and could have vaulted it if she wanted (Brown 2).
Sister has silver hair and “even, delicate features” and a young doctor who recently joined the hunt describes her by saying, “She’s electrifying and on a horse she truly is the

goddess of the hunt" (Brown 37, 152). She becomes involved in her first case when one of the prominent members of the hunt is murdered during a hunt.

Hannah Swensen

Chocolate Chip Cookie Murder by Joanne Fluke, originally published in 2000

Twenty-nine year-old Hannah Swensen is the owner of The Cookie Jar, a bakery and coffee shop in Lake Eden, Minnesota. Despite her mother's incessant attempts to fix her up, she is single and lives in a condo with her 25-pound, orange tomcat Moishe. She had been pursuing a Ph.D. but came home when her father died to help take care of her mother and sisters. Hannah is tall, at least four inches taller than her petite sisters, with frizzy red curly hair and feels that she has been short-changed on "gorgeous genes" and is frequently made to "feel hopelessly frumpy and unsophisticated" by her glamorous sister Andrea (Fluke 77, 11). She is low-maintenance, rarely wearing makeup and often wearing old sneakers and a used bomber jacket. Hannah is determined to help Andrea's husband Bill, a deputy sheriff, solve the case when she finds a local man murdered in his delivery truck behind her bakery.

Molly Blume

Blues in the Night by Rochelle Krich, originally published in 2002

Thirty year-old freelance journalist and true crime writer Molly Blume lives in Los Angeles, CA. Molly is a self-described Modern Orthodox Jew with brown eyes and unruly blond hair. She is 5'5" and has been divorced from her cheating husband for two years. She received her journalism degree from UCLA and her love of mystery from her grandmother Bubbie G. Molly is one of six children in a very close-knit family. She drives a black Acura and is fond of shopping and designer shoes. She lives alone causing

one of her sister's to insist that she is "determined to prove [her] postdivorce self-reliance" (Krich 98). Molly points out that she is compulsive and an expert worrier.

Zach Abrams, an ex-boyfriend who dumped her twelve years ago, comes back into her life when he moves home to become the rabbi at a local shul. He is interested in rekindling things with Molly but she explains whey it would never work by saying, "I'm divorced, Zack. My skirts and sleeves are too short. My necklines are too low. I wear pants and use four-letter words…" (Krich 35). Molly's best friend Aggie Lasher was killed 5 years ago on the way to a recitation of psalms to which Molly was too lazy to go. Molly writes a regular crime activity piece called the *Crime Sheet* and she gets involved in her first case when a hit-and-run accident report strikes her curiosity.

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