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Historians Examine the Debt Detective Films Owe to the South
*LSU Press to publish *Detecting the South in October**

Baton Rouge, LA— *Detecting the South in Fiction, Film, and Television*, edited by Deborah E. Barker and Theresa Starkey, examines the often-overlooked and undervalued impact of the U.S. South on the origins and development of the detective genre and film noir. This wide-ranging collection engages with ongoing discussions about genre, gender, social justice, critical race theory, popular culture, cinema, and mass media. Focusing on the South, these essays uncover three frequently interrelated themes: the acknowledgment of race as it relates to slavery, segregation, and discrimination; the role of land as a source of income, an ecologically threatened space, or a place of seclusion for both crimes and criminals; and the continued presence of the southern gothic in recurring elements such as dilapidated plantation houses, swamps, family secrets, and the occult. Twenty-two critical essays probe how southern detective narratives intersect with popular genre forms such as neo-noir, hard-boiled fiction, the dark thriller, suburban noir, amateur sleuths, journalist detectives, and television police procedurals.

Alongside essays by scholars, *Detecting the South in Fiction, Film, and Television* presents pieces by authors of detective and crime fiction, including Megan Abbott and Ace Atkins, who address the extent to which the South and its artistic traditions influenced their own works. By considering the diversity of texts and characters associated with the genre, this vital collection provides an overdue critical study of the historical, political, and aesthetic contexts out of which the southern detective narrative emerged and continues to evolve.

Deborah E. Barker, professor of English at the University of Mississippi, is the author of *Reconstructing Violence: The Southern Rape Complex in Film and Literature* and *Aesthetics and Gender in American Literature: Portraits of the Woman Artist*. She coedited, with Kathryn B. McKee, *American Cinema and the Southern Imaginary*.

Theresa Starkey is associate director of the Sarah Isom Center for Women and Gender Studies at the University of Mississippi. Her scholarship and creative work have appeared in the *Oxford American*, the *Mississippi Review*, and elsewhere.

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Mystery Literary Criticism / Crime Film

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