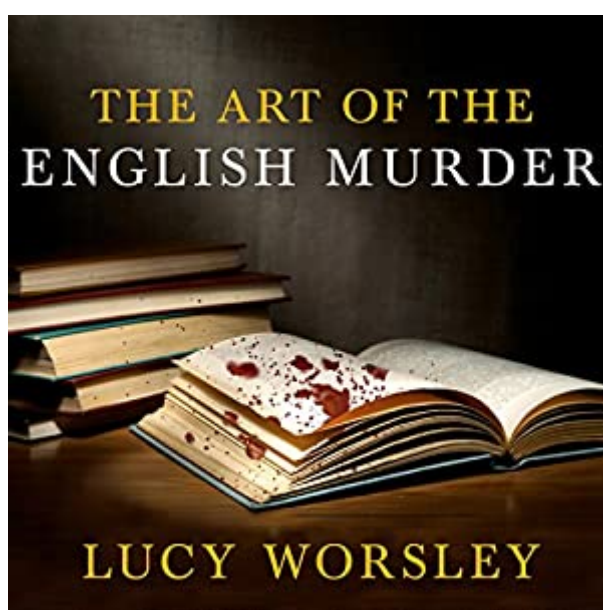


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# The Art Of The English Murder: From Jack The Ripper And Sherlock Holmes To Agatha Christie And Alfred Hitchcock



## Synopsis

Murder: a dark, shameful deed, the last resort of the desperate or a vile tool of the greedy - and a very strange, very English obsession. But where did this fixation develop? And what does it tell us about ourselves? In *The Art of the English Murder*, Lucy Worsley explores this phenomenon in forensic detail, revisiting notorious crimes like the Ratcliff Highway Murders, which caused a nationwide panic in the early 19th century, and the case of Frederick and Maria Manning, the suburban couple who were hanged after killing Maria's lover and burying him under their kitchen floor. Our fascination with crimes like these became a form of national entertainment, inspiring novels and plays, prose and paintings, poetry and true-crime journalism. *The Art of the English Murder* is a unique exploration of the art of crime - and a riveting investigation into the English criminal soul.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Besides rain, cricket, afternoon tea, and The Queen herself there is nothing considered more quintessentially English than a good murder mystery. Lucy Worsley, whose wit and sparkle enhance her intellect and solid scholarship, in *The Art Of The English Murder* examines the most famous English mystery writers and some of the most infamous of the murders which helped to inspire them. Murder, of course, has been a part of history as long as humans have, but the modern fascination with that particular crime dates from the beginnings of the nineteenth century. A newly literate population that was eager for entertainment, snatched up broadsides, newspapers, and pamphlets which carried the news of the day. No news was more intriguing than stories of dastardly

murders, the bloodier the better. Newly organized police forces in the burgeoning industrial cities strove to track down and bring to justice the murderers, and the reports of their investigations fascinated the reading public as well. Worsley starts her history here, examining famous murderers like William Palmer and Madeleine Smith, still unsolved mysteries like Jack the Ripper and the Rode House murder, Jack Whicher and other police investigators, and, of course, the writers and novelists who produced elaborate fictions based on the crimes that filled the popular press. These included Wilkie Collins, Charles Dickens, and J. Sheridan Le Fanu among many others. Worsley then goes on to examine the rise of the "middle class murderer" and the rise of forensic science in the late nineteenth century (the heyday of Conan Doyle) and then really hits her stride with the "Golden Age" of detective fiction: the interwar period during which Agatha Christie, Dorothy L. Sayers, Edgar Wallace, Ngaio Marsh and many others filled bookshops and libraries with their ingenious tales. Eventually, with the rise of the thriller and the psychological mystery, the straight detective story focussing on the mechanics of crime solving fell out of favor, although murder mysteries produced by Alfred Hitchcock and others still found an audience. Readers who enjoy *The Art Of The English Murder* will also find Judith Flanders' *The Invention Of Murder*, *The Suspicions Of Mr. Whicher* by Kate Summerscale, *The Poisoner* by Stephen Bates, and Sandra Hempel's *The Inheritance Powder*, among many other recent works, of interest.

First of all, I love the history shows from BBC that Lucy Worsley has done. That is the reason I purchased this book. It goes through the history of the development of Mystery writing, including details of many early murders and the development of police. Later develops the amateur sleuth from 19th century into the 20th. I was enjoying the read and the information, but was unhappy with the ending where the "Golden Age" British authors are discounted as passe and no longer relevant in modern society. As a great fan of that genre, I cannot agree with her conclusions. It is a good read and if you don't know the history, this is good source for that information.

I really enjoyed this book! It's the history of London and the police force, notable murders that took place. I liked it so much I purchased 2 more of Ms. Worsley's books; *If Walls Could Talk* and *Tea Fit for a Queen*...she has a way of making history come to life in her well researched books. *Tea Fit for a Queen* has some great recipes in it and *If Walls Could Talk* takes you through the English Castle/Manor/house room by room which sounds boring but really was fascinating.

Great book - please be aware that there is another book called *A very British murder* - it's the same

book. Whilst in England a few months ago, I saw the film version of this with Lucy Worsley as commentator. Very interesting, especially if you are a big fan of the mystery genre. I was also glad to get such a great deal on a hardback.

I watched Lucy Worsley's program on television and was intrigued. I picked this book up for that very reason. I finished the book in a day and couldn't have been more pleased with my purchase.

I have always been fascinated by English murder stories so this was a good read. The author did a great job of research for the book.

Very Good!

I love this book and how it explains the way people view murder from Jack the Ripper to Sherlock . This book is really interesting!

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