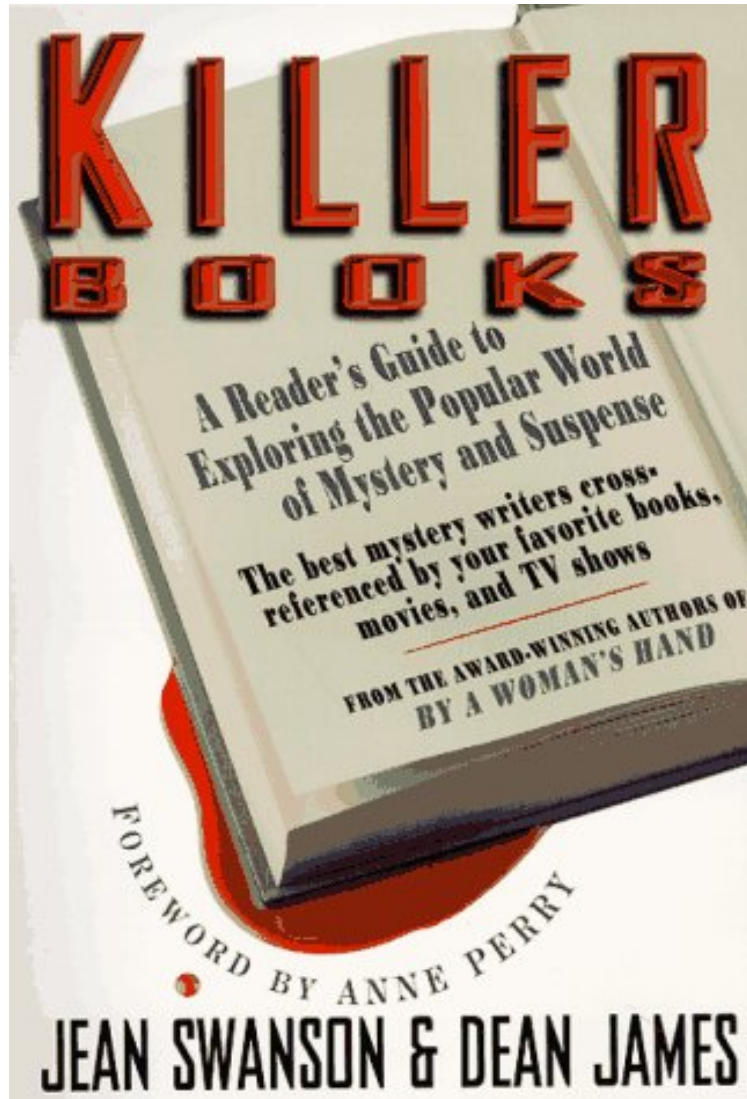


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good suspense choices. 5 stars, but no way is this on the level of 1001 Midnights, edited by Bill Pronzini. Still for a 2 person guide to the genre it is well done. It has subgenre guides by author to Police Procedurals, Psychological Suspense, Historical, PI's, Legal, Romantic Suspense, Capers Criminals, Reporters, Amateur sleuths, and Science Fiction-Horror-Fantasy mysteries. Arrangement is by author within each subgenre and it does not list the author's choices for the best of the best within each genre. 9 of 10 people found the following review helpful. Great reference and interesting as well. By A Customer. Jean Swanson and Dean James have created a reference book that needs to be placed in a handy location for the true mystery aficionado. Each chapter is divided into categories: suspense/psychological, historical mysteries, legal thrillers, etc. At the beginning of each chapter is a brief essay about the chapter. This includes TV shows that are representative of each sub-genre. Authors, by sub-genre, are also listed in alphabetical order, with an overview of each writer and his/her special series described in comprehensive detail. As the editors gracefully point out, this the reference book is no means totally inclusive or intended to be so. However, the variety, description, and detail allow readers to choose the type of books, by a wide selection of authors that they would like to try next. Like the editors who seem to have enjoyed this labor of love, this reviewer found the work to be scholarly but interesting, far from a dry non-fiction read. Harriet Klausner

Winner of the Agatha Award for Best Mystery Nonfiction, *By a Woman's Hand* was "a tour de force of a reference source on contemporary women mystery writers" (Nancy Pickard). Now Jean Swanson and Dean James have written a mystery guide with even broader appeal by reflecting current trends in film, television, and mainstream fiction. *Killer Books* is the perfect guide for discovering favorite mystery writers based upon readers' personal preferences. For instance: If you liked the movies *The Silence of the Lambs* or *The Usual Suspects*, or TV's "The X-Files" or "Murder, She Wrote," this cross-referenced sourcebook will guide you to the types of writers and books you'd most enjoy. Brilliantly organized and indexed, with complete descriptions, author profiles and awards, *Killer Books* is the mystery guide that lets you navigate the maze of mystery and find the books that you'll like best. Includes special sections on: cops private eyes legal thrillers psychological suspense historical mysteries romantic suspense capers and criminals amateur sleuths reporters, writers, filmmakers sci-fi/horror mysteries and more.

.com More like a chatty, knowledgeable, and opinionated friend than a fact-packed encyclopedia, *Killer Books* is the perfect place to start a newcomer to the genre on the road to addiction. If they like history, they can turn to a section called "Historical Mysteries" and find recommendations for dozens of authors--from Bruce Alexander's books about Sir John Fielding to Robert Van Gulik's Judge Dee series--as well as side trips to films (*The Name of the Rose*) and television shows (*Sherlock Holmes Mysteries*). Other sections on everything from "Suspense/Psychological" to "Amateur Sleuths" contain hundreds of similar links. From School Library Journal Grade 9 Up? The authors of *By a Woman's Hand: A Guide to Mystery Fiction* (Berkley, 1996) have produced another guide to mysteries that is sure to send teens to libraries and bookstores with a long list of books they just have to read. Each chapter covers a different subgenre: private eyes, historical mysteries, etc., and includes a wide variety of authors with a fairly detailed description of their writing style, series, and character(s). For each subgenre, there are overviews, books for further reading, and a list of films and television shows. Scattered throughout are asides, e.g., mysteries with musical themes or a listing of authors of detectives who like to fish. Titles are indexed by character, geographic location, and author. Libraries that own Willetta L. Heising's *Detecting Women* (1994), *Detecting Women 2* (1996), and *Detecting Men* (1997, all Purple Moon) will find that *Killer Books* complements but does not replace those titles. A fun-to-read introduction to mysteries, this can be enjoyed on its own or used as a readers' advisory tool. Peggy Bercher, Fairfax County Public Library, VA Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.