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Dictionary of Literary Biography: British Mystery and Thriller Writers

Bernard Benstock

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The period since 1940 has seen a backlash against the traditional British genteel-puzzle mystery. It's characterized by the serial detective-Holmes, Poirot, Wimsey-who dominates through force of personality or even idiosyncrasy. Suspense novels, crime novels, psychological thrillers and spy stories have increasingly displaced the 'pure' detective novel. This volume offers career biographies of 25 of the best British mystery and thriller writers since 1940. 25 entries include: Desmond Bagley, Edmund Crispin, Len Deighton, Ian Fleming, Ken Follett, Frederick Forsyth, Dick Francis, P.D. James, John le Carre, Peter Lovesey, Helen MacInnes, Ruth Rendell.