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1
Introduction: Narratology and Deviance

Aims, material and method

I aim to explore the *poetics of deviance* in the context of contemporary crime fiction. I use the term *poetics*, since it etymologically suggests a study concerned with the art or theory of 'making'. Though, as Wales (2001: 305) argues, the term since classical times has been linked with the art of *poetry*, its etymological definition suggests that it is concerned with the art of any genre, hence Aristotle's *Poetics* (1996), which discusses the art of drama and epic, but not specifically poetry.

The theme that connects my three types of analyses is that of *deviation*. Deviation is a term that means different things for different disciplines, and I want to explore the linguistic, generic and social manifestations of deviation in the genre. I take 'deviation' to refer to the difference between what we take to be normal or acceptable and that which is not. Although some writers (for example, Leech and Short, 1981) have tried to make a distinction between deviance and deviation (preferring *deviance* for divergence in frequency from a *norm*), I am using the terms synonymously.

In linguistics, deviance refers to special language usage, which in turn becomes prominent and stands out in some way (Leech and Short, 1981: 48). In terms of genre, deviance could be taken to refer to divergence from generic rules as to writing within a specific genre. Questions that arise include: How much variation or deviation is allowed in the context of a specific genre? How deviant does a crime novel need to be in order for it to develop into a new genre or subgenre of its own? Finally, in sociology (see, for example, Price, 1978), deviance refers to abnormality in behaviour, and in the context of the genre at hand, it is manifested in criminality. It is in fact rather

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conventional to view criminals as deviant (see Foucault, 1979), but I challenge this social notion in the context of my analysis.

Since few linguists and stylisticians have been attracted to the genre (see, for example, Bönnemark, 1997; Emmott, 1999), the study provides new research in a previously under-researched area by analysing some of the linguistic features typical of the genre at hand. The study would additionally be of relevance to literary theorists working on reader response, as both our interests lie in the significance which *inferences* have to the overall interpretation of literary work. This book also has relevant applications in education, as it 'operationalises' the genre; educationalists could use linguistic information about this dynamic subgenre of popular narratives to develop techniques for teaching reading. Furthermore, it would be of interest to crime fiction and other genre analysts, as it investigates the contemporary crime fiction form and explores the flexibility of its generic boundaries. Finally, it has applications in criminology, since it aims to state that there is a specific set of criminal character types evident in the genre, which affects the way in which devoted readers view criminality overall.

I limit myself to three American novelists from the 2002 bestsellers chart: James Patterson, Michael Connelly, and Patricia Cornwell. I felt that these three writers' work fitted my definition of what constitutes a crime novel at its best; the genre that I have so far referred to as *crime fiction* is taken to only include 'detective' stories, the sort of stories that have to do with the detection of a criminal, who often happens to be a serial killer, not to mention that such novels are very often part of a series. Finally, despite the similarities that the chosen novels exhibit, they exhibit simultaneously a range of interesting differences, the main one of which is to do with the novelists' choice of 'detective'.

The protagonist of the James Patterson series is Alex Cross, a black homicide detective with a PhD in psychology, who lives and works in the ghettos of D.C. along with his grandmother and children. He is a good family man whose wife Maria was killed in a drive-by shooting, her killer never having been caught. He works for the force as a profiler, and as a liaison between the FBI and D.C. police.

Michael Connelly's protagonist, Hieronymus (Harry) Bosch, is a detective on the robbery and homicide table of the Hollywood branch of the L.A. police department. Since Bosch is infamous for not fitting in, for disobeying rules and regulations, he often comes across as a contemporary reincarnation of the classic private eye detective. It is hence argued that Connelly's police procedural could be recast as a series of private-eye novels.

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Finally, the protagonist of the Patricia Cornwell series is Dr Kay Scarpetta, the chief Medical Examiner of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Scarpetta is a high-ranking professional (the novels are often read in terms of feminism; see, for instance Bertens and D'haen, 2001: 160–74) who makes use of recent advances in forensic science in her investigation into horrific murders.

James Patterson likes to read novels by Patricia Cornwell and Michael Connelly. Another interesting fact involves a survey carried out via the MichaelConnelly.com mailing list. Over 4,100 mailing list members responded to the survey, and according to the Results (published at http://www.michaelconnelly.com/Survey/survey.html, as on 9 November 2003), in answer to the question 'Excluding Michael Connelly, who are three of your favourite authors?', the top three authors mentioned were Robert Crais (whose Elvis Cole series is classified under contemporary private eye novels, much like Connelly's), James Patterson and Patricia Cornwell. Overall, I was pleasantly surprised to find that not only are readers of Connelly fond of the works of Patterson and Cornwell, but also that James Patterson himself enjoys reading the works of the other two.

When exploring *linguistic deviance*, I used Patterson as a case study since he employs deviant language when allowing readers access to the criminal's consciousness in a way that the other two authors do not. Even though works from Cornwell and Connelly are also analysed in the relevant chapter, since it is Patterson who uses language to evoke the criminal mind, the relevant section comes to focus on the figurative language used within the context of the Patterson criminals' conceptualisation of experiences.

When exploring *social deviance*, I used Connelly as a case study mostly due to the eccentricity of his protagonist. Since the section deals with definitions of normal and abnormal behaviour, an analysis of the Bosch series will help illustrate how such a distinction is not easy to make. One of the Bosch novels is analysed in depth, since in fact it questions whether the detective himself has turned into a serial killer. In discussing the types of criminal character evident in the genre, I draw on the work of all three: Connelly, Patterson, and Cornwell, as well as some other contemporary crime writers.

Finally, when exploring *generic deviance*, I used Cornwell as a case study. Her Dr Kay Scarpetta series stretches the boundaries of the genre itself, and that is why Cornwell has been specifically chosen for this type of analysis. It is in the same section that I look into the Kathy Reichs series featuring Dr Temperance Brennan, another

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female medical examiner, whose series shares similarities with the Cornwellian generic form. I also draw on comparative analyses of Paul Auster's 'City of Glass' (*The New York Trilogy*, 1988) and Philip Kerr's *A Philosophical Investigation* (1992) in the same chapter, since both works constitute deviations or variations of the crime writing form, and hence defamiliarise our perception of the genre.

Narratology and deviance

The structure of narratives

Narratives, like sentences, are codings of experience and constructions of reality. They can be said to have an internal structure similar to that of sentences, while the notion of 'well-formedness' is nearly as reasonable of stories as it is for sentences. Some, such as Fowler (1977: 24), have gone as far as to argue that sentences and stories share the same constructional principles and, seeing that the former – though brief – are no less complete narratively or conceptually than stories, simple sentences might be thought of as *mini narratives*.

Theorists and analysts have, at the same time, made it clear that there is some higher level of organisation taking place in stories, one that does not take place in unconnected strings of sentences. As Rumelhart (1975: 213) has suggested, the structure of stories is ordinarily more than pairwise relationships among sentences. He instead argues that strings of sentences combine into psychological wholes, and further points out that connected discourse such as that of narratives differs from an unrelated string of sentences in that it is possible to pick out what is important in connected discourse and summarise it without seriously altering the meaning of the discourse. Rumelhart (1975: 226) claims that the same is not true of strings of unrelated sentences. Such strings lack structure and do not make meaningful wholes; they cannot be summarised at all.

Literary texts such as narratives are 'commonly regarded as objects, things, artefacts, having a similar objective status to the organic and inorganic entities which fill our world' (Fowler, 1977: 26). According to Fowler, it is due to this 'abstract' status of the literary work that we seem to be in need of a 'model' to represent its features to ourselves, to think about its elements in terms of some other, and yet relevant object which we know better or can conceive of more directly. If, for instance, literature is to be seen as an imitation, or rather a representation of the world, then its parts need to correspond to the various major elements which the human body recognises in its intuitive

engagement with the world. Theorists such as Culler (1975: 189), have argued that narratives may well serve as 'the model by which society conceives of itself, the discourse in and through which it articulates the world', for the basic convention governing such literary forms (and which also governs those which set out to violate it) is our expectation that the narrative is to produce a world.

Additionally there can be said to be a need for the narrator to master the world, so as to tell a civilised company of listeners about a series of events which are to be named and composed. Hence, the text is to be ordered as the *discourse* of an explicit or implicit narrator who tells us about events in a world. It is for this reason that analysts have consistently persisted in making a distinction between *plot* and *discourse* (see, for instance, Simpson and Montgomery, 1995: 141). In short, *plot* is the crude storyline material which the writer moulds into an artistic narrative design, the *discourse*. The Russian Formalists (notably Shklovsky, 1925) introduced the alternative pair of terms, *fabula* and *sjužet*, in the 1920s. Similarly to 'plot and discourse', fabula refers to the logical ordering possible of the events, whereas sjužet describes the actual sequence of events as narrated: deep versus surface structure, so to speak. In simple narratives, fabula and sjužet will normally coincide. These terms were in turn aligned with the French terms *histoire* and *discours* of Benveniste (1966), but because the latter term is itself ambiguous, the term *récit* is sometimes used to render *sjužet* (Wales, 2001: 301).

It is in Chapter 2 that I introduce the argument that, in the course of a crime novel, the criminal produces the sjužet, whereas the detective the fabula. Since the fabula refers to the mere chronology of narrative events, it is attributed to the detective's pole of what is normally a chronologically-ordered investigation. Also, it is the detective who comes to reconstruct events so as to bring us back to the very beginning of the story. Since the sjužet is the story as shaped and edited by the teller, it is hence attributed to the criminal, who in turn embodies the literary pole of the story.

However, as Culler has pointed out, for a sequence to count as plot, one must be able to isolate not just the actions which contribute to a thematic modification. As Culler (1975: 213) himself put it, '[t]hose aspects of the movement from the initial situation to the final situation which help to produce a contrast between a problem and its resolution are the components of the plot'. Every narrative may, therefore, be said to integrate a succession of events of human interest oriented toward a goal. It is on the same trail of thought that Brémond's (1966:

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62–3) classification of 'narrative cycle' lies, according to which narrative events can be classified into two categories of elementary sequences: amelioration and degradation, referring correspondingly to states that either favour or oppose a human project. At the beginning of a narrative, either a deficient or a satisfactory state exists. The narrative goes through at least one cycle, ending either with a satisfactory state or a state of deficiency, while the maintenance of the possibly acquired state of prosperity depends on the observation of certain conditions or rules. Culler (1975: 212) seems to follow this line of thought, as he seems to agree that it is in fact problems or enigmas that lead to a structuring of the text; 'only when a problem is maintained does it become a structuring force, making the reader organise the text in relation to it and read sequences in the light of the question which he is attempting to answer'.

Specifically, in the reading of a crime novel the initial satisfactory state is interrupted by a state of deficiency whereby an event of murder takes place. Such narratives go through at least one cycle, where the state of prosperity is reinstated by the resolution, whereby the murderer is discovered and brought to justice. Hence it is the enigma of 'who did it?' that forms a structuring force. The readers are invited, therefore, to organise the text in the light of this question, so that they are eventually able to answer it by the time they reach the end of the novel.

Moreover, what needs to be pointed out is that overall narratives are produced so as to accomplish certain communicative aims or, as Polanyi (1985: 21) puts it, to 'make a point, to transmit a message [...], often to bring about some sort of moral evaluation or implied critical judgement about the world'. And it is at this point that the narrative function that has come to be referred to as *evaluation* becomes clear. This device allows the story recipients to build up a model of the relevant information in the text which matches the teller's intention. In other words, the burden, of making the relevance of the telling clear, lies upon evaluation.

This narrative device forms part of a widely employed analytical model developed by Labov (1972) in his study of the Black English Vernacular (BEV) narrative form. Labov was prompted to attempt a structural description of his BEV informants' oral narratives of personal experience, since, despite their cultural differences, the narratives shared great structural similarities. As Labov and his collaborator Waletzky (Labov and Waletzky, 1967) claim to be primarily concerned with the characteristics of the narrative itself rather than with the

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syntax and semantics of English below the sentence level, their work is simultaneously made applicable to written narratives' analysis, not to mention narratives produced in languages other than English. At the same time, their analysis was claimed to be *functional* in that it distinguished two functions of narrative: the *referential* and the *evaluative*.

Labov defines *narrative* as

> [o]ne method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events which (it is inferred) actually occurred [...] With[in] this conception of narrative, we can define a *minimal narrative* as a sequence of two clauses which are *temporarily ordered*: that is, a change in their order will result in a change in the temporal sequence of the original semantic interpretation.
>
> Labov (1972: 359–60)

He defined narrative clauses as those with a simple preterite verb or, in some styles, a verb in the simple present, and suggested that a fully-formed narrative is made up of the following sections;

1. Abstract.
2. Orientation.
3. Complicating action.
4. Evaluation.
5. Result or resolution.
6. Coda.

Labov (1972: 363)

Even though many storytellers dispense with one or more of these ingredients, according to this model, a well-formed narrative would not. In addition, each of these categories could overlap with anything from a single sentence to a stretch of several clauses.

Toolan (2001: 143) suggested that the Labovian model is a structural one; it is based on the perception of a bordered set of recurrent patterns and, setting aside what they take to be local differences, it is a model in the pursuit of deeper structural narrative similarities. This, in turn, suggests that the attraction of these principles lies in their clarity, replicability and their search for a basic pattern, from which more complex narratives might be derived (Toolan, 2001: 145).

This model has received widespread application within stylistics even though it was originally developed from 'social' stories told in

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casual conversation, and also elicited from black youths in New York City and hence most of the illustrative examples are consequently in BEV (Simpson, 1988: 7). In other words, it is intriguing that a spoken-discourse model generated for stories in a non-standard English variety could receive widespread application to written discourse in predominantly Standard English. Even though Labov's work on oral narratives may be one of the few bodies of data-based research dealing with aesthetically structured discourse, this discourse is not, by anybody's definition, literature. Pratt (1977) was one among those who applied the model with caution to literary written texts having made a number of adjustments mostly in as far as those narrative aspects dealing with the *abstract*, *orientation*, and *coda* sections are concerned.

More specifically, Pratt (1977: 60) suggested that the abstract of a novel may well be its title in that it is always taken by readers to be an important and relevant clue as to what the author considers to be the main point or theme of the narrative. Titles further function as invitations to people to commit themselves to the 'narrative audience' role, and also serve as devices for referring to works, much like abstracts do for natural narratives. Pratt (1977: 53) suggests that it is common for the orientation to be set apart by a paragraph or a space in fiction, or even to be made an independent textual unit such as a prologue, an opening chapter, or a preface. In any case, Pratt adds that the orientation of novels can vary widely in length as well as scope. Finally, Pratt (1977: 56) argues that novels do not need codas to signal the end of narratives 'since the end of the text visibly and palpably signals the end of the story'. Nevertheless, novels often have elaborate codas that, much like those of natural narratives, explain, revise, and evaluate the story's outcome, informing us of the ultimate consequences of the narrative (for an application of the refined model onto short written stories translated from Greek for example, see Gregoriou, 2002a).

Crime novels certainly lend themselves to Labovian analysis. To begin with, abstracts, like codas, constitute the margins or frames of crime narratives, abstracts being introductory concepts and codas being end ones. The abstracts of crime novels may well be their titles, these often specifying the nature of the story to be told, as well as the generic category that it may fall into. For instance, Cornwell's *Body of Evidence* (1991) and *Cruel and Unusual* (1993) certainly indicate, as titles, that they are to deal with brutal murders and the investigation into the identity of the relevant perpetrators. They further give some indication as to the nature of the investigation to be undertaken, here from the medical examiner's viewpoint, as opposed to that of a detec-

tive. In addition, the reader-orientating function of the abstract may also be realised in the presentation of authors and their works, the awards they have received, as well as in the account of their lives.

The openings of novels themselves additionally often function as reader-orientating devices, as these can often be taken to be declarations of what will follow:

> Nothing ever starts where we think it does. So of course this doesn't begin with the vicious and cowardly murder of an FBI agent and good friend of mine named Batsey Cavalliere. I only thought it did. My mistake, and a really big and painful one.
>
> Patterson (2001: 3)

In the case of this James Patterson novel, *Violets Are Blue* (2001), the opening offers orientating information, in that it describes the circumstances under which the narrative events will take place, while it additionally leads readers right into the middle of the story itself (in an '*in medias res*' type of way). Also note that it is through negation ('this doesn't begin') and presupposition (a murder has indeed occurred) that we are told of the circumstances, rather than directly.

As previously noted, the natural position of the orientation is as a preliminary before the complicating action starts, but it can also be presented later, or be scattered throughout a whole work of fiction. In crime series that focus on one or more particular characters, the readers are expected to know certain information. In any case, the action is usually summarised and brought up to date before the story proper begins:

> As we drove up in front of the Sojourner Truth School, I saw Christine Johnson welcoming kids and their parents as they arrived, reminding everyone that this was a community with good, caring people. She was certainly one of them.
>
> I remembered the first day we met. It was the previous fall and the circumstances couldn't have been any worse for either of us.
>
> We had been thrown together – *smashed* together someone said to me once – at the homicide scene of a sweet baby girl named Shanelle Green. Christine was the principal of the school that Shanelle attended, and where I was now delivering my own kids. Jannie was new to the Truth School this semester. Damon was a grizzled veteran, a fourth grader.
>
> Patterson (1997: 14)

In one of the opening chapters from this James Patterson novel, *Cat and Mouse* (1997), the personal life of Alex Cross, the detective at hand, is brought up to date even though his children and new girlfriend are well-known characters from previous novels in the series.

A great deal of the complicating action of crime novels is rendered directly (in the form of descriptive prose) while in other cases it is rendered in the form of dialogues. Often in dialogue or narration, a seemingly unnecessary summary is additionally given, since the reader is already aware of all the relevant facts that relate to the story line:

> An hour later I lay in bed, trying to sort and evaluate what I knew.
>
> Fact: My mysterious foot did not belong to Daniel Wahnetah. Possibility: The foot came from a corpse at the courtyard house. The ground contained volatile fatty acids. Something had decomposed there. Possibility: The foot came from Air TransSouth 228. Biohazard containers and other body parts had been recovered near the wreckage.
>
> Reichs (2002: 251)

In as far as evaluation is concerned, it often takes place in discussions among police officers, or in the detective's own thoughts:

> Primrose lying in a body bag.
>
> Why, dear God?
>
> Was she carefully chosen, researched, stalked, then overpowered as part of an elaborate plan? Or was she selected by chance? Some psycho's sick impulse. The first blue Honda. The fourth woman to exit the mall. The next black. Was death part of a plan, or did things go badly wrong, spinning out of control to one irreversible moment?
>
> Reichs (2002: 253)

In this extract cited from Kathy Reichs's *Fatal Voyage* (2002), the protagonist Dr Brennan attempts to reason with herself, engaging in a fake dialogue with her own thoughts, so as to account for the reasons underlying the death of her colleague. Not only are these evaluative extracts used to emphasise the relative importance of some narrative units compared to others, but also to represent time-outs from the bare bones of the storyline, bringing out suspense by suspending the progress of the action.

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The problem-resolution structuring is evident in all crime novels where, as mentioned, the commission of a murder is followed by the discovery of the murderer. In such novels, the resolution often takes the form of direct speech, whereby the detective discloses the identity of the perpetrator. In classic detective writing, this often takes place once the detective assembles all suspects and recounts the story from beginning to end, allowing the perpetrator to often give him/herself away (as in Agatha Christie's *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, 1924). It is additionally not uncommon to have evaluations particularly prevalent in the result/resolution sections of crime novels.

As far as codas are concerned, these often take the form of reflection from the viewpoint of the detective, while the readers are told what happened to the main characters after the story's result.

> Bosch left then, not turning around when the adjutant called after him for his name. He slipped through the double doors and headed down to the elevator. He felt good. He didn't know if anything would come of the illegal tapes he had given the police chief, but he felt that all decks were cleared. His show with the box earlier with Chastain would ensure that the word got back to Fitzgerald that this was exclusively Bosch's play. Billets and Rider should be safe from recriminations by the OCID chief. He could come after Bosch if he wanted, but Bosch felt safe now. Fitzgerald had nothing on him anymore. No one did.
>
> Connelly (1997b: 432)

Whereas there are novels where the account of answers to remaining questions is given directly, there are also novels where such accounts are hinted at, while it is not uncommon for a whole evaluative section to be set apart from the rest of the text in a special chapter or paragraph, in either the form of narration or dialogue. Finally, secondary themes, such as romance, can also be resolved in codas. In the same novel as above, Michael Connelly's *Trunk Music* (1997b), the final chapter is descriptive of a romantic scene between the detective Bosch and his estranged wife Eleanor, with whom he has been unexpectedly reunited.

To sum up this section's discussion, what a narrative analyst needs to focus on is necessarily the structure underlying the stories themselves. The analyst, however, needs to additionally consider the process by which prominence is assigned in the telling.

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Crime fiction as genre and as popular literature

In the context of literary theory there have existed, and still exist a variety of definitions of the term *genre*. By the term is generally meant a class, kind, type or family of literature, while genres are distinguished according to the type of plot, theme, characters, narrator(s) and intended audience, not to mention structure, technique, devices, style, and so on.

In linguistics, however, genre is usually seen as a network of expectations or codes, or a set of communicative events. According to this discipline, how a work of literature should be read is in fact indicated by its genre, which can also be seen as constituting a set of codes that give information about the reality the text purports to represent (Jauss, 1985: 620). These genres have been referred to as 'horizons of expectation' for readers and as 'models of writing' for authors (Todorov, 1990: 18), in that readers have expectations about texts, and authors write according to genre rules in order to satisfy or adhere to these expectations, if not surpass them. Bönnemark (1997: 8) describes this relationship between writers and readers as a 'contract', which is a metaphor that might help clarify the concept of genre in itself, while it is obvious that there is no way in which parties can be forced to honour the obligations of this 'contract'. In other words, though there are issues of responsibility when it comes to writing or reading under a certain genre, these rules can and indeed are often broken; besides, literary innovation has always balanced conformity.

Genre is sometimes pitted against the notion of *register*, though indeed some linguists have abandoned the latter term altogether. Register or 'functional language variation' (Swales, 1990: 40), is often seen as a contextual category correlating groupings of linguistic features with recurrent situational features, and is a category typically analysed in terms of three variables labelled *field* (indicating the type of activity in which the discourse operates), *tenor* (handles the status and role relations of the participants), and *mode* (concerned with the channel of communication, prototypically speech or writing) (see Halliday, 1985).

There is a major difficulty in distinguishing the uses of the two terms, but if a distinction between genre and register *can* be made, Wales (2001: 178) suggests that it is best to follow McCarthy and Carter (1994), who see genre at a 'higher level' than register; any group of texts which show similarity of register, or similarity to do with linguistic choices, can be said to belong to the same genre. Wales also

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suggests that another model is to see genre at a 'deeper' level, with register the 'surface' manifestation of genre.

Overall, the difficulty in establishing the difference between the two terms seems to derive from the fact that register is a central and well-established concept in linguistics, while genre is a recent appendage found to be necessary as a result of important studies of text structure (Swales, 1990: 41). In this study, genre is associated with complete works or texts (in accordance with Couture, 1986), whereas register is considered to be associated solely with linguistic choices. The rules and constraints of the genre of crime fiction are analysed in Chapter 2.

Fiction is differentiated from non-fiction in that the first genre *pretends* to be about real events, and the latter in fact *claims* to be so. As Wales (2001: 150) put it, fiction is more likely to be thought of as a genre, constituted of imaginative or imaginary prose narratives, chiefly novels, but also short stories: in other words, the essence of literature. What Wales also recognises, however, is that fictional literature is not all fiction (some novels may refer to 'real' events or non-fictitious characters, such as Truman Capote's *In Cold Blood: A True Account of a Multiple Murder and its Consequences*, 1966); not all literature is fiction (there is poetry and drama as well as the novel); nor is all literature fictional (we may study versions of the Bible as literature). Conversely, she adds, not all fiction is literature (fictional or imaginative discourse can be found in jokes, TV and radio advertising, and so on).

According to Priestman (1990: 181), crime, or detective fiction, has been submitted to 'ghettoisation' from 'serious' fiction. That is, the genre under analysis has been classified under the guise of *popular fiction*, which is defined and set apart from other types of fiction according to various criteria, such as the following offered by Boëthius (1995) and translated by Bönnemark (1997: 13):

1. its audience, as popular literature is supposed to be read by the masses,
2. the conditions of its production and distribution, as popular fiction is supposed to be geared to mass publication and distribution outside the ordinary channels of the book market,
3. its aims, which are supposed to be primarily entertainment and relaxation,
4. a particular type of reading; a reading of *plaisir* in contrast to a reading of *jouissance*,
5. its simplicity, of language as well of structure,

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6. its internal norms, as popular literature is inherently inferior, either aesthetically and/or morally, and
7. external norms (according to the sociology of taste, in Boëthius's terms), as popular literature is defined as having a large audience, and as being considered inferior by critics according to moral and/or aesthetic norms.

These criteria appear to be of two main types: those that pertain to internal textual factors (see criterion 5), and those that pertain to external factors of production and distribution (see criterion 7), while the large number of criteria offered make one's job of distinguishing popular literature from non-popular literature quite difficult.

Pepper (2000) agrees that the question of what actually constitutes something as 'popular', indeed how one should judge whether something is popular or not, is not at all clear. He argues for the need to distinguish between different types of popular culture and different ways of using it. He claims that crime writers 'inevitably steer their work into the realm of the "unpopular popular", and in doing so suggest that the appeal of certain kinds of popular culture relates to its utopian *and* distopian impulses' (Pepper, 2000: 17).

Bönnemark (1997: 13), on the other hand, draws on the distinction between *category literature* and *genre fiction* to resolve the problem. She defines 'category literature' as a prototype around which other less easily situated works situate themselves, as a literature that conforms to a particular format and answers to particular needs of the reader. It is written in a simple manner with little realism, psychological characterisation, complication and originality, is produced in long series at a low price, and is sold as other consumer goods. It is read by and large by a heterogeneous public, remains unreviewed by critics, its authors are often anonymous and low-paid, and aims primarily to please and entertain. She concludes that the prototypical detective (or crime) story does not belong to category literature, although some detective works do. She contrasts this category to the partly identical category of 'genre fiction', discussed by Talbot (1995: 36–40), a 'non-literature', subdivided into marketing categories (for example, science fiction, fantasy, romance, and so on), and defined in terms of particular narrative formulas, character and situation types, and target audience expectations. Bonnemark concludes that as detective fiction is formulaic, and in many ways adheres to reader expectations, it can be called a kind of 'genre fiction'. This distinction, however, seems rather unhelpful and the terms, as defined, appear not only vague, but also quite similar.

In as far as the external factors pertaining to popular fiction are concerned, she argues that

> [m]ost factors of production and distribution used to distinguish popular fiction from other fiction are not relevant to detective fiction: there are detective works that can be categorised as popular fiction and produced and sold under mass circumstances whereas other works are produced and sold as serious literature.
>
> Bönnemark (1997: 15)

Crime fiction's large readership constitutes the genre as 'popular' in a particular sense of the term. Some works, such as those of Poe and Chandler, however, have moved into the canon of classic literature.

Bönnemark adds, nevertheless, that even though popular fiction of this sort in general fulfils important needs of the readers (seen, for instance, as a possible escape from reality, where readers who feel unjustly treated by society find compensation, an outlet for their aggressions and protests, as well as a confirmation of their own ideals and evaluations), it is also seen as inviting a rather passive reading, in that it seduces or manipulates the readers in a reading lacking in actual analysis of the events and characters, or any such engagement with the material.

In as far as the internal factors pertaining to popular fiction are concerned, Bönnemark discusses issues of plot and schematisation. She argues that the formulaic nature of crime writing places the genre into popular fiction; it is the lack of originality in the characteristics of the generic plot that constitutes the genre as 'popular'. This seems to be in accordance with Todorov (1973: 6), who claims that only literary works that are original get a place in literary history, whereas other works pass automatically into another category, viz. 'popular' or 'mass' literature.

Since, however, I later argue (Chapter 5) that crime writing in fact often deviates from genre requirements, such an argument seems invalid. Regardless of the formulaic nature of crime fiction, works assigned under this generic category do in fact depart from the necessary conventions. Would this departure classify such works as 'non-popular'?

Another internal or textual factor pertaining to popular fiction is the issue of simplicity. Popular works are said to be characterised by simplistic language use, many clichés, trivial description, and lack of informativeness. Nash's (1990) investigation into the nature of popular

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fiction has been criticised by Talbot (1995: 40) for having introduced 'a cline of quality (with "pop fiction" at one end and "classics" at the other), but the treatment is to reinforce with a vengeance the mainstream genre distinction and the prejudices associated with it'. Other scholars have also used similar qualitative criteria to distinguish between literature, here seen as more of an art form (to be compared with music, painting and sculpture), and popular texts. Besides, literature is often discussed in terms of aesthetic value or effect (poetic texts are admired for their formal 'beauty', arising from their structural patterning, expressive and connotative qualities of meaning, and their imagery), whereas popular fiction is often characterised as aesthetically inferior to literature. The question of 'literariness' – though developed in distinguishing literature from non-literature – is therefore also of relevance here, in discussing whether crime fiction is a popular form or not.

Foregrounding, 'the "throwing into relief" of the linguistic sign against the background of the norms of ordinary language' (Wales, 2001: 157) is one of the effects often claimed to contribute to literature's aesthetic characterisation. Foregrounding is achieved by a variety of means, which have largely been grouped under two main types: *deviation* and *parallelism*. Whereas deviations are violations of linguistic norms, parallelism refers to unexpected repetition of such norms.

The early Russian Formalists saw literary language as a set of deviations from a norm, a kind of 'linguistic violence', while the idea that poetry specifically violates the norms of everyday language was much propounded by the Prague School (see, for instance, Mukařovský, 1970). Literature is, within such contexts, seen as a 'special' kind of language, in contrast to the 'ordinary' language we commonly use – though admittedly to spot a deviation implies being able to identify the norm from which it swerves. As Carter and Nash put it (1990: 31), their main theoretical position was that literary language was deviant language and, in accordance with this deviation theory, 'literariness or poeticality inheres in the degrees to which language use departs or deviates from expected configurations and normal patterns of language, and thus defamiliarises the reader'. In other words, language use in literature is said to differ because it makes strange, or disturbs our routinised normal view of things and thus generates new or renewed perceptions.

Another influential Formalist definition is associated with Roman Jakobson (1960), who articulated a theory of poetic language which stressed its *self-referentiality*. In his account, literariness results when

language draws attention to its own status and as a result there is a focus on the message for its own sake (see Carter and Nash, 1990: 32). This definition, in accordance with that of the Russian Formalists, again assumes a distinction between that language which is poetic and that which is not. As Carter and Nash add, not only do Jakobson's criteria as to the nature of literary discourse work better in respect of poetry than prose, but he supplies no clear criteria for determining degrees of poeticality in his examples. In addition, he stresses too much the production of effects, at the expense of the process, the recognition and reception of such effects.

As Carter and Nash (1990: 18) add, however, a main point to be made is that features of language use more normally associated with literary contexts are found in what are conventionally thought of as non-literary contexts, and therefore the term *literariness* is preferred to any term which suggests an absolute distinction between literary and non-literary. They instead suggest that literary language should be seen as a continuum, a cline, with some language uses being marked as more literary than others. The claim could be stretched to popular versus strictly literary contexts, in that writing classified as 'popular' isn't necessarily any less 'literary' than that which is classified under a strictly literary category. Therefore, complexity of language, as well as 'literariness' (attributing aesthetic value), cannot be considered important factors in defining crime writing as 'popular' or not. Since Carter and Nash (1990: 35) further argue that one crucial determinant in a text's literariness is whether the reader *chooses* to read the text in a literary way (as a literary text, as it were), then the extent to which crime writing is considered under the guise of popular literature or not should additionally be a matter of reader approach. There is a whole tradition of empirical reader-response analysis (see, for instance, Ingarden, 1973a, 1973b; Iser, 1974, 1978), but what is worth noting at this point is that though my analysis of crime fiction is readerly, it in fact primarily draws from the theory of stylistics, sociology and narratology (that is, it is a triangular approach) rather than psychology.

Finally here, I study *best-selling* fiction. Bloom (2002: 6), in theory, defines bestsellers as those works 'of fiction sold in the most units (books in a given price range) to the most people over a set period of time', though he does admit that 'units' are difficult to define, as is 'a set period of time'. McCracken (1998: 20) refers to bestsellers as the 'most familiar kind of popular fiction', as that sold in large numbers in supermarkets, train stations and motorway department stores, while adding that the term 'bestseller' usually means high sales in the short

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term rather than enduring popularity. He also notes that the world of bestsellers is more than economics alone; it instead involves a complex combination of cultural and political processes, a 'total system', imposing norms on a passive populace. He hence argues that popular culture cannot be understood in terms of individual texts alone – 'those texts must be read and interpreted in relation to the totality of production, distribution and consumption that organises the conditions of their reception' (McCracken, 1998: 24–5). As Bloom (1996: 35) also notes, newspapers, fiction and cinema have enjoyed a symbiotic relationship since the First World War while, during the 1950s, publishers also came to realise the power of television promotion, alongside book buying and library borrowing. The nature of this interconnected world of industry, politics and culture hence, need to be kept in mind.

Deviance

So far, I briefly defined deviance (as mentioned, a term used synonymously to deviation) in linguistic, social and generic contexts. I aim to illustrate that in addition to meaning different things for different disciplines, deviance remains difficult to define in the context of any one discipline as well. In this section, I introduce the models and theoretical frameworks relevant to the study of deviance, under the guise of the three different disciplines, before proceeding to apply the models to novels from the genre at hand, correspondingly in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 (for a brief reference to these types of analyses, see Gregoriou, 2003b).

Linguistic deviance

Even though stylistic analysis is often framed as a validation of reader intuition, the sort of insight that such an investigation can provide goes a lot further than that. Stylistics was, initially, born of a reaction to the subjectivity and imprecision of literary studies and, in short, attempted to put criticism on a scientific basis (see Short, 1982). That is, whereas the literary meaning of any one extract seems to derive from presumed assumptions to do with readership and offers no operable principles of analysis, stylistics offers *linguistic* operable principles and hence possesses a kind of objectivity that literary criticism seems to lack. Practical stylistics is, in other words, a process of literary text analysis, the basic principle of which is that without '*analytic* knowledge of the rules and conventions of normal linguistic communication' we cannot adequately validate the readers' intuitive interpretations (Carter, 1991: 5). Fish (1980: 28) similarly suggested

that what the method does is 'slow down the reading process' so that events one does not notice in normal time 'are brought before our analytical attentions'.

Short (1982: 61) has argued that the method's advantages are accuracy and clarity of presentation, along with that general characteristic of literary critical analysis of showing that superficially unconnected and previously unseen points can all be related in a particular overall analysis. He, however, also argued that we had better used linguistic stylistic analysis as a means of supporting a literary or interpretative thesis, and further added that the former analysis is likely to be of service to literary criticism if it follows its general aims and strategies. It is for this reason that stylistic analysis is often used to support initial impressions in various extracts' readings. Even though this might point to such analyses being those of *specific readings* and not analyses of *texts,* what needs to be kept in mind is that this is a method of analysis that takes into full account the reader as an actively mediating presence, and hence it is able to deseribe the reader's responses with some precision.

Though the procedures of stylistics do maintain certain defects (such as the absence of any constraint on the way in which one moves from description to interpretation, with the result that any interpretation one puts forward is arbitrary: Fish, 1980: 73), what needs to be emphasised is that it is a method that remains faithful to its principles as it is a process that talks about experience and focuses on effects (see Short, 1996: 349).

The stylistic models I have chosen to use in this book include the type of narration chosen, the viewpoint and mind style conveyed, and the figurative language employed. All these models are essential in one's analysis of the notion of *linguistic deviance*, as further discussed throughout Chapter 3.

A primary distinction to be made is that between first- and third-person narrators. The choice of a first-person narrator – where the 'I' is also a primary character in the story – is called *homodiegetic* narration (Genette, 1980). This is a type of narration that often 'convert[s] the reader to views he would not normally hold for the duration of the story' (Leech and Short, 1981: 265). If the narrator is not a character in the fictional world and hence reference to characters in this world involves the use of third-person pronouns, the sort of narration adopted is called *heterodiegetic* third-person narration (Genette, 1980). Such a narration further implies the merging of the author and the narrator though, as Short (1996: 258) argues, there is no *necessary*

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reason for this to be the case. It is in Chapter 3 that I draw on this distinction, when investigating the language of extracts from crime novels, in either the form of first- or third-person narration. Though most crime novels (for example, James Patterson's Alex Cross series) make use of third-person narration when addressing the criminal consciousness, the first-person narration is often preferred when addressing the detective's consciousness.

Short adds that the lack of a straightforward identity relation between a third-person narrator and the author requires us to interpose another layer of discourse structure between the author-reader and narrator-narratee levels, which would involve an *implied author* and an *implied reader*. Whereas the notion of implied author refers to that author implied by our understanding of the text, an implied reader is that reader which we have to become so as to read and react sensitively to the text or, as Leech and Short (1981: 259) put it, 'a hypothetical personage who shares with the author not just background knowledge but also a set of presuppositions, sympathies and standards of what is pleasant and unpleasant, good and bad, right and wrong'. Such a *mock* (Booth, 1961) or *implied reader* is therefore ostensibly guided toward particular judgements of characters and events. In the case of the reading of a crime series, the implied reader is that who shares background information as to the characters on which the series is based, as well as some awareness as to the generic nature of the series at hand. Expectations of this sort would guide the reader in making predictable judgements and reacting aptly to the information presented.

A further distinction that needs to be made is that between the *internal* and *external* narrative events, the former being those mediated through the subjective viewpoint of a particular character's consciousness, and the latter being those described *outside* the consciousness of any participating character (Simpson, 1993: 39). In the case where readers get information which they would not ordinarily have access to, namely, the thoughts and feelings of the characters, the relevant narrators are additionally described as *omniscient*, because they take on absolute knowledge and control of the narration of the events. Such narrations involve readers in a personal relationship with characters, manipulate sympathies, and cause bias. This is yet again another distinction I draw on in Chapter 3, when analysing the language of crime fiction extracts taken in either third-person internal or third-person external narration. The choice of one of these types of narration over another will prove to influence the reader's reaction and judgement over the events described.

The particular angle or perspective from which *fictional* worlds are presented, or the so-called *point of view*, 'concerns all features of orientation', including 'the position taken up by the speaker or author, that of the consciousness depicted by the text, and that implied for the reader or addressee' (Fowler, 1986: 9). By focusing on the stylistic choices that signify particular and distinctive outlooks of the world (see Short, 1996: 286), one can gain insight as to the nature of the character-character and the character-narrator relationships, as well as come to an understanding of how it is that the author manipulates the readers' sympathy toward the characters. The different viewpoint types are worth defining here, as the analysis will later come to focus on those extracts that allow access to the criminal viewpoint, whilst elaborating on the nature of that viewpoint.

Groups of indicators can be linked together interpretatively, namely in terms of *spatio-temporal, psychological* and *ideological viewpoint* (see Simpson, 1993: 11). Spatio-temporal viewpoint 'refers to the impression which a reader gains of events moving rapidly or slowly, in a continuous chain or isolated segments' (Fowler, 1986: 127). It is the viewing position – such as in the visual arts – which the readers feel themselves to occupy, the position from which their chain of perceptions seems to move. Psychological or perceptual viewpoint refers to the way in which narrative events are mediated through the consciousness of the 'teller' of the story. Finally, ideological viewpoint, or worldview, refers to the set of values, or belief system, communicated by the language of the text and shared by people from similar backgrounds to the speaker. In this case, viewpoint expresses 'a generalised mind-set or outlook on the world that a person, often as a representative of a *group* of people, might have' (Short, 1996: 227).

It is in Chapter 3 that I draw parallels between ideological viewpoint and the notion of *mind style*, developed by Fowler (1977: 76), to refer to 'cumulatively, consistent structural options, agreeing in cutting the presented world to one pattern or another', giving rise to 'an impression of a world-view'. Since mind style is a realisation of narrative viewpoint that *deviates* from a commonsense version of reality, it is a necessary notion to consider in an analysis of extracts allowing access to the criminal consciousness. It is where the fiction writer, though not compelled to take on a single character's viewpoint, voluntarily 'limits' his omniscience to those things which belong to a criminal's world view, that the notion needs to be considered. This limitation is often referred to as a form of *focalisation*, a term originating from the work of Genette (1980), and which Bal (1985: 100) adopted to refer to 'the

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relations between the elements presented and the vision through which they are presented'.

Stylisticians are additionally interested in the choices which authors have available to represent character speech and thought, and how these choices affect meaning and viewpoint. I do not wish to describe the speech and thought presentation categories in detail here, but will introduce that category referred to as *free indirect discourse,* which will prove relevant to my analysis in Chapter 3. Whereas *direct* presentations claim to contain the actual words and grammatical structures which the character used in the original utterance (whether speech or thought 'utterance'), *indirect* presentations refer to the propositional content of that utterance, but in the words of the narrator. *Free indirect* presentations, on the other hand, represent a 'semantic halfway house' (Short, 1994: 186) between the faithfulness claims of direct and indirect presentations and it is hence difficult, if not impossible, to work out whether the words and structures represented are those of the narrator or the character. It is for this reason that Short argues that the semantic indeterminacy opens up myriad possibilities for the manipulation of point of view. This mixing or merging of narratorial indirectness and characterological directness through *Free Indirect Discourse* (FID, in some of the stylistic literature, is used to refer to instances of both *free indirect speech* and *free indirect thought*, but I use it as synonymous to the latter term) has been endorsed as a powerful mode of representing characters in an (allegedly) authentic-cum-realist way. The effect achieved through the use of such a presentation is one whereby the readers feel that they are getting a more vivid and immediate representation of the character's thoughts as they happen, producing a sense of *irony* and *empathy* at the same time.

Another distinction that needs to be made, which I later claim is necessary for the construction of character mind styles in fiction, is that between *literal* and *figurative* language. Such a distinction would assist in clarifying the linguistic construction of the criminal consciousness in the genre at hand, especially in relation to those extracts focalised upon the criminals. The criminal viewpoint is established through their characteristic language choices, hence how they metaphorically configure the world, such as is the case for the James Patterson series, will prove to be a large part of this.

Figurative meaning, in semantics, describes 'a very common type of extension of meaning for a word (resulting in polysemy or multiple meaning), i.e. by metaphoric transfer of senses' (Wales, 2001: 151). *Dead metaphors* derive once the figurative meaning of a word becomes

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so common that the original, literal meaning is superseded. Such metaphors are also referred to as *faded* or *fossilised* (Saeed, 1998: 16), since they fade over time and become part of normal literal language: their metaphorical quality is no longer apparent to users. In fact, the English language consists of hundreds of words of classical origin in 'figurative' senses that we nowadays assume to be literal. It is the use of such dead metaphors in extracts allowing access to the criminal consciousness that I investigate, among others, in Chapter 3. Specifically, Patterson will prove to employ such apparent metaphors in their literal senses, so as to achieve specific effects.

Whereas seventeenth- and eighteenth-century scholars of the like of Thomas Sprat classified the figurative word meanings as 'deviations' from the 'true' meanings of words, deconstructionists would go as far as to deny any clear-cut distinction between literal and figurative word meaning (Wales, 2001: 152). Going further than deconstructionists, cognitive linguists such as Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Gibbs (1994) would argue 'not only for the fundamental importance of figurative "language", ubiquitous and non-deviant, but also of what they term *figuration*, for human thought' (Wales, 2001: 152). In other words, cognitive linguists see figurative language as an integral part of human categorisation, a basic way of organising our thoughts about the world. Unlike scholars in favour of the *literal language theory*, whereby metaphors and other non-literal uses of language require a different processing strategy than literal language, researchers such as Gibbs and Lakoff would argue that figurative language is not something extra, or different from, ordinary literal language.

Metaphor, according to the former, is seen as a departure from literal language, detected as anomalous by the receiver, who then has to employ some strategies to construct the producer's intended meaning. According to the latter, however, metaphor does not require a special form of interpretation from listeners or readers. It is a cognitive linguistic approach that I adopt in this study, since the use of figurative expressions in Patterson's criminal-focalised extracts will provide insight into the way in which the relevant characters organise their view of the world, and additionally offer some justification as to the crimes committed.

Metaphor has traditionally been viewed as the most important form of **figurative** language use, and is usually seen as reaching its most sophisticated forms in literary or poetic language (Saeed, 1998: 302). When words are used in *metaphoric* senses, one field or domain of reference is mapped onto or carried over another on the basis of some

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perceived similarity between the two fields (Wales, 2001: 250). The starting point or described concept is often called the *target* domain, while the comparison concept or the analogy is called the *source* domain. In Richards's (1936) terminology, the former is called the *tenor* and the latter, the *vehicle*.

Since most metaphors are patently false, that is, refer to impossible statements as to the nature of the world, they appear to flout the Gricean maxim of quality (see Grice, 1975). It is the motivation behind the analogies made and the particular features which bind the two domains together that are of interest to stylisticians, while the indeterminacy or ambiguity in determining both the connection and the motivation behind it that makes metaphor a powerful source of multiple meaning. In addition, metaphor, in its expression of the familiar by the unfamiliar, is a good example of *defamiliarisation*; metaphor reconceptualises experience. Finally, metaphors that work in even more extended ways across whole sections of text or indeed across novels are referred to as *sustained* metaphors or *megametaphors* (see Werth, 1999). In Chapter 3, I investigate the sustained metaphors employed in criminal-focalised extracts so as to arrive at the motivations behind the analogies made, and explain the connections established.

Metonymy describes a referential entity where a speaker refers to an entity by naming something associated with it. We can refer, for instance, to a book or books by the author's name and say sentences like '*Patterson is on the top shelf*'. As Wales (2001: 252) puts it, in semiotic terms, metonymy is an indexical sign in that there is a directly or logically contiguous relationship between the substituted word and its referent. Also, with metonymy, truth is maintained; there is no flouting of the 'quality' maxim. Moreover, whereas in the case of metonymy the meanings associated are in the same domain, with metaphor there is transfer of field of reference. Saeed (1998: 78) recognises some resemblance between metonymy and the semantic part-whole relation of *meronymy*, but indicates that whereas metonymy is a process used by speakers as part of their practice of referring, meronymy describes a classification scheme evidenced in the vocabulary.

Since the work of Jakobson (1956) on language disorders, and on the structural dichotomy between metaphor and metonymy and their formal similarities and differences, the two figures have often been discussed as a binary pair (Wales, 2001: 252). However, in the context of deconstruction theory as well as in cognitive linguistics, the opposition between metonymy and metaphor is erased, purely on the basis that

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many common metaphors indeed have a metonymic basis. Nevertheless, in the context of my linguistic analysis in Chapter 3, such metonymies are treated as separate to metaphors. The choice of metonymic expressions in the criminal-focalised extracts will again provide insight into the characters' state of mind and psychological state.

In the context of linguistics, *idiom* is used to refer to strings of words or phrases that are idiomatic or idiosyncratic, in that they are socially language-specific and in that their meaning is not easily determined from the meanings of their constitutive parts. Much like phrasal verbs, idioms are strings of words which correspond to a single semantic unit. Since idioms are instances of expressions where the individual words have ceased to have independent meaning, these are also a type of language fossilisation, a process under which they become fixed. Furthermore, idioms are commonly metaphorical, and whereas some are strictly lexical, others have grammatical peculiarities.

As to their usage, Wales (2001: 198) argues that idioms are associated with informal rather than formal settings (lexical idioms are associated with the vividness of *colloquial*, everyday speech), though it is hard to imagine any kind of discourse without some idioms occurring. Finally, Wales argues that idioms represent the poetic diction of everyday language, much like *proverbial phrases*, *clichés*, *similes* and *slang*. Slang is popularly used as an equivalent to jargon, but has a wide circulation in its more general sense and its association with social groups such as adolescents and dialect speakers; as Turner (1973) notes, it lacks the finer cognitive distinctions that usually motivates technical jargon.

It is in Chapter 3 that I analyse the idioms employed in the criminal-focalised extracts, and yet focus on those adopted idioms that are used literally, so as to achieve particular special effects. Though idioms are strings of words which have ceased to have independent meanings, the idiomatic expressions that Patterson employs in such extracts will prove to have been unidiomatised.

Social deviance

In fiction, the language of the criminal mind becomes noticeable not only because of the extent to which it differs or deviates from the language of, say, the detecting mind. It *becomes* deviant due to the fact that it is attached to individuals who readers *take* to be deviant and abnormal. *Abnormals* (that is, criminals) are expected to conceptualise the world *abnormally* and, in real-life, criminals' labelling as such may even contribute to their course of actions and behaviour. Readers tend

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to tolerate, for instance, the detective's social abnormalities only because these are attached to individuals we take to be *normal*. Therefore, in discussing deviance, it is necessary to consider the social manifestations of the term.

One of the concepts that are central to my analysis of the social deviance of contemporary crime fiction (in Chapter 4) is that of the Carnivalesque, a term in literary criticism popularised through the writing of the Russian theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (1984b) on Rabelais (for the controversy surrounding the authorship of texts published under the names V.N. Voloshinov, P.N. Medvedev and I. Kanaëv that might actually be attributable to Bakhtin himself, see Clark and Holquist, 1984: 146–67; Todorov, 1984: 3–13; Rzhevsky, 1994; Morson, 1991: 1072).

Bakhtin was responsible for shifting attention from the abstract system of *langue* to the concrete utterances of individuals in particular social contexts: Language was to be seen as inherently 'dialogic', in that it could be grasped only in terms of its inevitable orientation towards another. As Eagleton puts it,

> [t]he sign was to be seen less as a fixed unit (like a signal) than as an active component of speech, modified and transformed in meaning by the variable social tones, valuations and connotations it condensed within itself in specific social conditions. Since such valuations and connotations were constantly shifting, since the 'linguistic community' was in fact a *heterogeneous* society composed of many conflicting interests, the sign for Bakhtin was less a neutral element in a given structure than a focus of struggle and contradiction. It was not simply a matter of asking 'what the sign meant', but of investigating its varied history, as conflicting social groups, classes, individuals and discourses sought to appropriate and imbue it with their own meanings.
>
> Eagleton (1996: 101–2)

In short, Bakhtin insisted that there was no language which was not caught up in definite social relationships, which were in turn part of broader political, ideological and economic systems. His work has remote relations with *Speech-Act theory*, which began in the work of J.L. Austin (1962), a theory that is concerned with the linguistic acts made while speaking, and which have interpersonal purpose and pragmatic effect (Austin took note of the fact that not all of our language actually describes reality, and that some is 'performative').

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Based on Bakhtin's idea that every utterance has some kind of dialogic relationship with other utterances which have preceded it, *intertextuality* refers to the way in which a text may invoke other texts through the use of particular words, phrases or ideas, so the reader or listener's knowledge of that other text comes into play in their interpretation of what the current author is saying. Consequently, even within a single text there can be a continual 'dialogue' between the text given and other texts that exist outside it, whether literary or non-literary: either within the same period of composition, or in previous centuries (Wales, 2001: 220). In fact, in accordance to this theory, no text is 'free' of other texts or truly original.

Within this matrix of dialogic relationships, struggles for power between texts and between speakers take place, in the context of different kinds of institutions and different kinds of economic relationships. Bakhtin's theory (1981: 270–5) consists of a process of ongoing struggle between centralising and decentralising tendencies, within language between centripetal and centrifugal forces. Centripetal forces pull inwards towards a standard language, an authoritative canon and political and structural centralisation, while centrifugal forces push outwards towards variation, resistance and disunification. Taylor (1995: 17) suggests that whereas centripetal forces perpetuate the myth of a unitary language and thus contribute to the process of social and historical cohesion, centrifugal forces lay bare the full range and diversity of speech types.

Bakhtin's carnival(esque) is a term popularised 'to signal any demotic heteroglossic or "multi-voiced" counter-culture in comic or exuberant opposition to a hegemonic official culture: a kind of subversive anti-culture, often with its own anti-language' (Wales, 2001: 48). Bakhtin (1984a: 217–18) uses the term 'carnivalesque' to refer not only to carnival in its narrow sense (the specific festivals and feast days celebrated over the course of the year), but also to the whole range of popular, festive practices that developed during the Middle Ages. It is where the whole structure of society is, for a time, inverted, turned inside out, subject to ridicule.

According to his theory, carnivalesque imagery offers an alternative to official imagery, but by suspending and/or inverting social hierarchies carnival provides an alternative construction of social relations (Taylor, 1995: 20). Since carnival provides a dialogic response to the official structures of fear, intimidation and prohibition (Bakhtin views the legalisation of carnival not as a static state of affairs but as an ongoing process of negotiation), it can be said to be similar to his

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concept of heteroglossia (a term referring to the 'internal differentiation or stratification of language', Wales, 2001: 186–7); there are ongoing struggles in carnival, just like there are ongoing struggles at the level of language between centripetal and centrifugal forces.

Carnivalesque practices were imbued with images of the *grotesque body*, images of '[e]xaggeration, hyberbolism [... and] excessiveness' (Bakhtin, 1984a: 303). The grotesque body, which dominated carnivalesque imagery, simultaneously represented birth and death, feasting and defecation, and therefore represented an alternative to the symbolism and ideologism of officialdom. Such imagery celebrated the freedoms permitted during the period of festivities while, at another level, it contributed to the alternative construction of reality provided by carnival as a whole (Taylor, 1995: 21). Finally, grotesque imagery signified an 'alternative to the fear inspired by official imagery' (Taylor, 1995: 21); whereas official imagery traded on the cosmic threats of potential catastrophe, famine, drought, floods and disease to introduce a sense of fear (Bakhtin, 1984b: 335), grotesque imagery 'overcame this sense of fear by assimilating humans with the cosmic elements' (Taylor, 1995: 21).

The idea of carnival has proved to be one of the most productive critical themes in cultural theory in recent years, for approaching all kinds of social and material interactions and behaviours (see, for example, Fiske, 1987, 1989a, 1989b for applications of carnival to wrestling, game shows, MTV, and so on). In addition, Bakhtin's *Rabelais and His World* provides us with a ground-breaking analysis of the relationship between popular culture and literary forms.

It is my argument, in Chapter 4, that the reading of crime fiction can be thought of as a manifestation of the notion of carnival in itself. Much like the notion of carnival, crime novels provide a site where pleasures (such as the enjoyment of crime) can be exploited to the full, and where the enjoyment of such pleasures carries with it both a celebratory and a critical potential. While the reading of such novels celebrates the access to proscribed forms of pleasure, at the same time it enacts a critique of the structures which officially restricted such pleasures. The same argument can in fact be made of pornography; porn is a genre that is concerned with the body, profanes and degrades, insults political and religious authorities, as well as provides escape from social controls, and therefore may also be considered as a manifestation of the carnivalesque. Additionally it is indeed the case that both porn and crime fiction tend to eventually confirm social hierarchies rather than invert them; male dominance over women is reasserted in porn (see,

for instance, Dworkin, 1981) much like the detective's eventual supremacy over the criminal is reasserted in crime fiction.

One of the arguments that could be raised against these analogies is to do with *function*. If crime fiction and pornography are perceived as carnivalesque practices, then would such material be classified as cathartic – in that it deflects readers and viewers from killing and raping others – or does it in fact give readers and viewers the incentive to perform such acts? In other words, does such material safely discharge aggressive tendencies much as carnival discharges social tensions, or does it – for at least some people – inflame and incite such tendencies? In response to such a question, I would argue that discussing such a 'cause and effect' relationship between such material and the actual actions of murder and rape is neither necessary nor helpful. The cause is not 'in' such texts but in fact in the interaction between text and reader, for which the reader must bear responsibility; there can be no direct cause and effect relationship because the text is mediated by human consciousness, hence what one does with one's interaction with such material need necessarily be one's own responsibility (see Cameron and Frazer (1992), for a paper on pornography that tries to provide a corrective by getting beyond crude causal views). In other words, whilst not resolving the issue, my book is concerned with discussing mainly the reader's experience in their interaction with carnivalesque material, rather than referring to the nature of the fictional worlds portrayed in the crime novels.

Another point of concern relates to the overall usefulness of Bakhtin's model of the carnivalesque. Humphrey (2000: 166) suggested that though comparisons with historically-remote forms of culture can be illuminating, when engaged with this way of working, we can lose the sense of where a contemporary practice has developed from, and hence overlook the specific social and economic conditions that shaped its formation. In the context of this study, however, I draw on the *ideas* of carnival in both synchronic and diachronic terms, as opposed to discussing contemporary popular culture in conjunction with the relevant medieval festival. It is also my argument that whereas social deviance had, in the course of medieval carnivals, been more of an issue of time (it is recorded as a 'once a year' type of event), it is nowadays manifested as an issue of space and/or place. Perfect reincarnations of the carnival are evident, for instance, in Disneyland, in the visiting of certain art galleries, as well as in the reading of certain genres. In other words, carnivalesque practices are no longer a holiday, and contemporary manifestations of the notion

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are much more accessible than they had once been, not to mention evident in widely different shapes and forms.

When concentrating on the social deviance of the genre at hand, it is also necessary to consider the types of abnormal behaviour evident. I therefore bring in the work of Carl Jung on the notion of *archetypes* in order later to arrive at a classification of the type of criminals evident in the genre. 'Archetype', in the context of literary criticism, is particularly associated with the work of Northrop Frye (1957) who identified recurrent symbols of themes in literature. Wales (2001: 29) notes that archetypal criticism of this kind is additionally indebted to the work of anthropologist Sir James Frazer at the turn of the twentieth century, and to the psychiatrist Carl Gustav Jung (particularly the latter's theory of the 'collective unconscious').

Since archetypes are here used to refer to patterns of character behaviour, they can additionally be characterised as character-type *schemata*, hence parallels will later be drawn between the Jungian theory of archetypes and *schema theory*. The general term 'schema theory' covers a range of work, from early psychological experiments by Bartlett (1932) to recent cognitive psychology. Central to the schematisation of the theory is the work of Roger Schank (Schank and Abelson, 1977; Schank, 1982a, 1982b, 1984, 1986), while associated works that proceed along very similar lines includes Minsky (1975, 1986), Tannen (1984), Fillmore (1985), Sanford and Garrod (1981), Rumelhart (1975, 1980, 1984), Rumelhart and Norman (1978), Thorndyke (1977) and Thorndyke and Yekovich (1980). Finally, the framework has itself been set out clearly in Semino, 1997: 119–233; Culpeper, 2001: 63–86, 263–86, and Stockwell, 2002: 75–89. As Stockwell puts it,

> [e]ssentially, the context that someone needs to make sense of individual experiences, events, parts of situations or elements of language is stored in background memory as an associative network of knowledge. In the course of experiencing an event or making sense of a situation, a *schema* is dynamically produced, which can be modelled as a sort of script based on similar situations encountered previously. New experiences and new incoming information are understood by matching them to existing schematic knowledge.
>
> Stockwell (2003: 255)

Though Stockwell argues that there is a wealth of empirical evidence that suggests such a mechanism may be in operation, he adds that it is schema theory itself that has gone on to provide analytical detail

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to account for the workings of the process. Since the individual experiences that a reader brings to the reading can also be seen as a schema or set of schemas, then one's familiarity with the reading of crime fiction may be argued to involve a set of expectations as to certain character schemata. And it is the nature of the archetypal criminal schemata that I investigate in the Social Deviance section of this study.

Generic deviance

The character roles are part and parcel of the generic conventions that govern contemporary crime fiction, or any one genre for that matter. Therefore, in addition to considering the (criminal) character types that characterise the genre at hand, I find it necessary to analyse the wider generic conventions that govern it; hence social deviance is analysable alongside generic deviance.

So far I have defined *genre* both in the context of literary theory and linguistics, while the notion was pitted against *register* or *functional language variation*. It is in Chapter 5 that I consider *genre* in the context of folklore as well as literary studies, and define the notions of *genre evolution* and *generic convention*, both of which are vital in my analysis of contemporary crime fiction's generic deviance. I argue that generic 'rules' were not always slavishly followed, hence genres present a more dynamic and flexible aspect with, for instance, one genre developing out of another (for example, as will later be shown, how the *forensic* or *medical examiner*'s genre evolved out of the *detective* or *crime fiction* genre).

In this section, I offer some background on three concepts that are central to my discussion of generic deviance in Chapter 5: Wittgenstein's *Family Resemblance* theory, *prototype* and *defamiliarisation*.

Wittgenstein's (1953) *Family Resemblance* theory implies that members of a particular family share resemblances rather than defining characteristics, and that a family can be easily recognised, although all characteristics are not exhibited by any single individual member. In other words, novels that are classified under the same genre (for example, crime fiction) do not share any single characteristic, but are instead related to each other in a number of ways; they share family resemblances. Hence 'Wittgenstein's discussion of family resemblances and subsequent comment have given rise to a "prototype" or cluster category designed to account for our capacity to recognise instances of categories' (Swales, 1990: 51).

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Because of problems with the traditional approach of describing concepts using definitions, several more sophisticated theories of concepts have been proposed. One influential proposal is due to Eleanor Rosch and her co-workers (see Rosch, 1973, 1975; Rosch and Mervis, 1975; Rosch et al., 1976), who have suggested the notion of *prototypes*. According to Saeed (1998: 37), 'this is a model of concepts which views them as structured so that there are central or typical members of a category such as BIRD and FURNITURE, but then a shading off into less typical or peripheral members' (for instance, 'chair' is a more central member of the category FURNITURE than 'lamp').

In extension, the extent to which a certain novel will be considered under a certain genre will depend on its similarity with typical members of the generic category. For instance, if one considers an Agatha Christie detective novel such as *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (1924) as prototypical of crime literature, then the extent to which they classify other novels under the same generic category will depend on their similarities with the former novel.

A final notion to be defined here is that of *defamiliarisation* (also *de-automatisation*), used by the Russian Formalists and Prague School linguistics in discussions of literary (especially poetic), and non-literary language. As mentioned earlier, the notion has been raised in relation to the so-called automatising tendencies of everyday communication and its subsequent overfamiliarity. According to the theory, poetry by contrast de-automatises language itself while literary language from all genres, as Wales (2001: 94) puts it, not only highlights or *foregrounds*, but also alienates or creates estrangement (*ostranenie*), forcing readers to look afresh at what has become familiarised (see Shklovsky, 1965).

However, what critics acknowledge, is that what is novel or strange can itself become automatised; 'Literary language through the ages reveals successive reactions, revolutions, against equally successive tendencies to conventionalisation' (Wales, 2001: 94). Furthermore, defamiliarisation is a notion that Cook (1994) describes as literature's *schema-refreshing* property. A notion that forms part of *Schema Theory*, schema-refreshment refers to the disruption of our conventional ways of viewing the world. Cook stresses that schema-refreshment is reader-dependent and, similarly, it is in fact difficult to see how the concept of defamiliarisation can exclude the reader and refer to a quality of text rather than to a quality of discourse.

> Ironically, this central weakness in the theory is suggested by the word itself. (These points are as true of the Russian word 'ostranenie'

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> as they are of its English translation.) Though a neologism, the word 'defamiliarisation' may be regarded as a nominalization of a verb. This verb could be transitive and always predicate an object, with an optional adjunct 'for x'. The text defamiliarises something for someone. This 'something' is the world (though in a sense which includes texts and language) and the 'someone' must be the reader.
>
> Cook (1990: 241–2)

He concludes that defamiliarisation is equally reader-dependent: a relationship between a reader and an object of perception, even if that object of perception is another text or the language itself.

In the context of genre theory, defamiliarisation contributes to the disrupting or challenging of conventional forms and therefore makes readers aware of the nature of the genre in the first place. By defamiliarising genre, the existence of the generic conventions that govern its past is reasserted, the genre becomes 'perceptible'.

Bringing it all together: review of the tripartite model

I have so far offered some historical background to the theoretical frameworks employed in this study. I drew on important distinctions when defining terminology, and further established a number of connections among the models used and others.

Overall, I assert that there are clear links between the three types of deviance to be investigated in the context of crime literature. The social and generic deviance manifested in such novels may help explain why certain linguistic choices are treated as deviant. Similarly, deviant language presents readers with a generic innovation therefore additionally constituting generic deviance. Finally, extracts taken from abnormal characters' viewpoints are expected to have deviant linguistic structuring. Auster's 'City of Glass', a story forming part of *The New York Trilogy* (1988), proves to be a case in point. In the narrative, the character of Peter Stillman Junior engages in a lengthy dialogue with Daniel Quinn, whom he believes to be a private detective, where he tells the story of his life. Peter was an isolated child, subjected to almost total sensory deprivation from birth until the age of 12. Though he was able in adulthood to learn fairly successfully the language of which he was deprived in childhood, his speech is deviant particularly because of the way in which he conveys information:

> 'No questions, please,' the young man said at last. 'Yes. No. Thank you.' He paused for a moment. 'I am Peter Stillman. I say this of my

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> own free will. Yes. That is not my real name. No. Of course my mind is not all it should be. But nothing can be done about that. No. About that. No, no. Not anymore.
>
> 'You sit there and think: who is this person talking to me? What are these words coming from his mouth? I will tell you. Or else I will not tell you. Yes and no. My mind is not all it should be. I say this of my own free will. But I will try. Yes and no. I will try to tell you, even if my mind makes it hard. Thank you.
>
> Auster (1988: 15–16)

Even though the language employed here is not grammatically deviant, it lacks background; Peter cannot rely on the 'givens' which underlie most linguistic communication. He violates a whole range of communicative rules (asserts necessary truths and presuppositions, and often lapses into tautologies which are totally uninformative), and fails to comply with the apparent purpose of the exchange within the detective story's narrative (for a detailed analysis of this story see Chapman and Routledge, 1999). It is this linguistic deviance that constitutes the character as an abnormal, while the employment of such a deviance further violates the generic conventions that underlie the nature of the novel itself; the extract at hand hence manifests all three types of deviance: linguistic, social and generic.

Outline of remaining contents

In Chapter 2, '*Contemporary Crime Fiction: Constraints and Development*', the genre is described according to general ideas presented in handbooks and articles, while its history is rendered in brief. I address the rules, regularities and constraints of the genre, discuss the attraction that it has been claimed to maintain, and finally draw on issues to do with the genre's characters and realism.

In Chapter 3, '*Linguistic Deviance: The Stylistics of Criminal Justification*', I draw on two studies of the language of extracts portraying the criminal consciousness. The first draws on the notion of *mind style* as a vital medium for one to get from the stylistic analysis of such extracts to the moral justification of crimes. The second addresses the nature of the criminal mind in Patterson and investigates the figurative language employed in such extracts.

In Chapter 4, '*Social Deviance in Contemporary Crime Fiction*', I examine the rule-breaking of the social perspective of abnormality, with a focus on Connelly's Bosch series. I discuss crime fiction as

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carnival, and finally analyse the genre's three criminal *archetypes*, giving various examples from the genre as illustrations of each one.

In Chapter 5, '*Generic Deviance in Contemporary Crime Fiction*', I revisit the definition of the genre at hand using *family resemblance* theory, *prototypes*, and *defamiliarisation*. Though various crime fiction analysts' definitions of the genre are offered in Chapter 2, here I attempt to define the genre at hand on the basis of these three theoretical frameworks. I also analyse novels that dismember the conventions of the crime fiction genre, and question whether the Cornwellian form constitutes a *subgenre* of crime fiction or an altogether new genre.

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