



Jack the Ripper in
Film and Culture

Top Hat, Gladstone
Bag and Fog

Clare Smith

**CRIME
FILES**

General Editor: **Clive Bloom**



Crime Files

Series Editor

Clive Bloom

Emeritus Professor of English
and American Studies
Middlesex University
London

Since its invention in the nineteenth century, detective fiction has never been more popular. In novels, short stories, films, radio, television and now in computer games, private detectives and psychopaths, poisoners and overworked cops, tommy gun gangsters and cocaine criminals are the very stuff of modern imagination, and their creators one mainstay of popular consciousness. Crime Files is a ground-breaking series offering scholars, students and discerning readers a comprehensive set of guides to the world of crime and detective fiction. Every aspect of crime writing, detective fiction, gangster movie, true-crime exposé, police procedural and post-colonial investigation is explored through clear and informative texts offering comprehensive coverage and theoretical sophistication.

More information about this series at
[http://www.springer.com/series/\[14927\]](http://www.springer.com/series/[14927])

Clare Smith

Jack the Ripper in Film and Culture

Top Hat, Gladstone Bag and Fog

palgrave
macmillan

Clare Smith
University of Wales: Trinity St. David
United Kingdom

Crime Files

ISBN 978-1-137-59998-8

ISBN 978-1-137-59999-5 (eBook)

DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-59999-5

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016938047

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2016

The author has/have asserted their right to be identified as the author of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

This work is subject to copyright. All rights are solely and exclusively licensed by the Publisher, whether the whole or part of the material is concerned, specifically the rights of translation, reprinting, reuse of illustrations, recitation, broadcasting, reproduction on microfilms or in any other physical way, and transmission or information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made.

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Macmillan Publishers Ltd. London

*This book is dedicated to my parents, Helen and Albert,
and my sister Sarah.*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book is based on my PhD thesis and would not have happened without the support of Dr Rob Shaill and Dr Steven Gerrard and the staff of University of Wales, Trinity St David. Thank you to Dr Clive Bloom for his support and help in making this book happen and to Ben Doyle and April James at Palgrave Macmillan.

It might be thought that people interested in the Whitechapel murders are in some way slightly frightening. This could not be further from the truth and I want to thank everyone within this community who has helped and supported my research especially The Whitechapel Society.

Thank you to friends and family who have put up with having Jack the Ripper in their lives for the past six years. Thanks especially to friends at Amgueddfa Cymru—National Museum Wales for their support and understanding. A special thank you to Sally Carter for accompanying me to films, musicals and operas featuring Jack the Ripper. Thanks also to my parents and sister who have always been supportive, if slightly bemused, by this research.

Finally, to Mary Ann Nichols, Annie Chapman, Elizabeth Stride, Catherine Eddowes and Mary Jane Kelly. The reality and brutality of their deaths has been a constant presence while writing this book and I hope that I have been as considerate to their memory as I aimed to be. Rest in peace.

CONTENTS

| | | |
|----------|---|------------|
| 1 | Introduction | 1 |
| 2 | Historical and Cultural Context | 11 |
| 3 | Psychoanalysis and the Whitechapel Murders on Film | 25 |
| 4 | Feminist Film Theory | 47 |
| 5 | Jack the Ripper | 57 |
| 6 | The Detective | 119 |
| 7 | The Victims | 145 |
| 8 | Whitechapel | 165 |

| | |
|---------------------|-----|
| Conclusion | 191 |
| Filmography | 193 |
| Bibliography | 197 |
| Index | 207 |

Introduction

‘Jack the Ripper’ entered public consciousness in the autumn of 1888 with the murder of five women in Whitechapel. Whoever was responsible was never caught. This has resulted in a murder mystery that literature and film has turned into a virtual industry of words and images. This book *Jack the Ripper in Film and Culture* does not seek to solve the mystery, there are already enough investigators, but to examine how Jack the Ripper, the women who were murdered, the detectives that investigated the murders and the murder site of Whitechapel have been depicted on screen, from their first appearance in *Waxworks* (Germany 1924: Leni) to *The Wolfman* (US 2010: Johnston).

What are the facts of the murders—the names of the victims, the dates of their deaths and the injuries they suffered? Even the most basic fact, the number of women murdered by the Ripper, cannot be confirmed. I have used three books as the basis for information on the case; Paul Begg *Jack the Ripper the Facts*, Stewart P. Evans and Keith Skinner *The Ultimate Jack the Ripper Source Book* and Philip Sugden *The Complete History of Jack the Ripper*.¹ These books present the biographies of the victims, detectives and suspects without agenda. This is important to my research as, with no disrespect to the victims, I have no interest in who Jack the Ripper was but in who he has become on screen.

¹Paul Begg, *Jack the Ripper: The Facts* (London: Portico, 2009); Stewart P. Evans and Keith Skinner, *The Ultimate Jack the Ripper Sourcebook* (London: Robinson, 2009); Philip Sugden, *The Complete History of Jack the Ripper* (London: Robinson, 2002).

During 1888 the media linked nine murders to the Ripper; the police at the time varied the number between four and nine. Five victims have become known as the ‘canonical’ victims, women who it is generally accepted were murdered by the figure who became known as Jack the Ripper. These were Mary Ann Nichols on 31 August, Annie Chapman on 8 September, Elizabeth Stride and Catherine Eddowes on 30 September and Mary Jane Kelly on 9 November. All of the victims had worked as prostitutes in the East End of London.

At 3.40 a.m. on 31 August the body of Mary Ann Nichols was found in Bucks Row, Whitechapel. Her throat had been cut and she had stab wounds to the abdomen. Mary Ann, or Polly, as she was known, was a 44-year-old woman who due to alcohol addiction was working as a prostitute in Whitechapel. Seven days after Polly’s murder on 8 September Annie Chapman was found dead on Hanbury Street, Whitechapel. Annie was 47 years old and as with Polly alcoholism had led her to a life of prostitution. Annie’s throat had been cut and her abdomen stabbed, in an escalation the killer had also removed her intestines from her body and placed them on her shoulder. A portion of her vagina and two-thirds of her bladder had been removed from her body and were not present at the murder site. The theory was that the killer had taken the organs from the scene.

The next murders took place on 30 September in what became known as the double event. At 1.00 a.m. the body of Elizabeth Stride was discovered in Dutfield’s Yard, Whitechapel. Elizabeth was 45 and her life mirrors that of Polly and Annie, alcoholism leading to prostitution. Elizabeth’s throat had been cut but she had not been mutilated. It was believed that the killer had been disturbed before he could mutilate the body and unsatisfied the killer went looking for another victim.

Less than an hour later at 1.45 a.m. the body of Catherine Eddowes, a 46-year-old alcoholic prostitute was discovered in Mitre Square, just outside the environs of Whitechapel within the City of London boundaries. The mutilations suffered by Cathy were extensive; her intestines had been removed and placed on her shoulder, her face was mutilated, a piece of her right earlobe and tip of her nose had been cut off. Cathy’s abdomen and organs had been stabbed and slashed, her left kidney and part of her womb were removed and not present at the scene.

The last of the canonical victims was Mary Jane Kelly who had a victim profile that was different to the four previous women. Mary was only 25 when she died and while she did drink she could not be considered an

alcoholic, she was the only victim not killed on the street but in her one room lodgings in Miller's Court, Whitechapel. What Mary did have in common with the previous victims was that she had earned her living as a prostitute.

At 10.45 a.m. on the 9 November Thomas Bowyer went to Miller's Court to collect rent arrears from Mary; on not receiving an answer when he knocked the door Bowyer looked through the window and saw a scene that must have haunted him for the rest of his life. Mary was laid on her back on her bed, her breasts had been removed, one was placed under her right foot; the other was found with her uterus and kidneys under her head. Her heart been removed and was not in the room, her right thigh had been flayed to the bone. Miller's Court was one of the first crime scenes to be photographed with the body in situ and the photographs still exist. However, the facial mutilations were so severe even after looking at the photographs it is impossible to tell what Mary looked like. Her catalogue of injuries is more extensive but this brief summation provides an idea of the brutality of the crime.

The details of the victims' lives are unpleasant and the manner of their deaths is brutal but these crimes fascinated the world, not least due to the coverage given in the newspapers. It is important to establish the press fascination with the murders as in my opinion they placed the murders firmly within the public consciousness. The coverage of the murders was so pervasive to the content of newspapers in 1888 that a book has been written solely to examine the phenomena: L. Perry Curtis examines both the content of the press regarding the murders and tracks the sales figures of the newly published newspaper *The Star*. The circulation of the paper after Annie Chapman's murder was 261,000 a day rising to 300,000 after the murder of Mary Kelly. Curtis interprets these figures as a 'barometer of public interest in the Ripper'.² I contend that this interest in the Ripper transferred from the printed press to film.

Jack the Ripper was never caught and this has created a market for books that claim to identify the Ripper. I do not claim to know if any of these texts do reveal the identity of the murderer but it is essential for this book to consider who has been linked to the murders. In films about the Ripper Queen Victoria, John Netley, Sir William Gull and the Duke of Clarence have all been implicated in the murders. A synopsis of

²L. Perry Curtis, *Jack the Ripper and the London Press* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2001), 59.

the suspects is important as I am as interested in who does not appear on screen as the Ripper as much as who does.

The earliest suspect list is known as the Macnaghten Memorandum written by Sir Melville Macnaghten in 1894. Macnaghten was Chief Constable of CID with the Metropolitan Police from 1889 so was not personally involved in the investigation into the murders. The memo came to light via Macnaghten's daughter, Lady Aberconwy, who showed it to a BBC reporter in 1959. The memorandum lists three suspects: Montague John DrUITt, Michael Ostrog and Aaron Kosminski.

In the memorandum Macnaghten mistakenly identified DrUITt as a doctor whereas he was in fact a barrister and a teacher who committed suicide by throwing himself into the Thames on or around 3 December 1888. DrUITt had been sacked from his teaching job on 30 November 1888 and this together with a fear that he was suffering from the same mental illness that affected his mother causing her to be committed to an asylum in July 1888 were probably the reason for his suicide. The timing of DrUITt's suicide and the mistaken belief that he was a doctor led Macnaghten to believe he was Jack the Ripper believing that the brutal murder of Mary Kelly on 9 November caused DrUITt to lose his mind and kill himself.

The second suspect, Michael Ostrog, Macnaghten described as a mad doctor, who was cruel to women and a homicidal maniac. Ostrog was eventually detained in an asylum but he had been at liberty during the murders. No evidence exists to connect Ostrog with the Ripper but in common with DrUITt he had two of the attributes Macnaghten felt the Ripper had—madness and medical training.

The third suspect Aaron Kosminski was a Polish Jewish immigrant living in Whitechapel who suffered from mental illness and had threatened his sister with a knife. Robert Anderson who had been a senior official at Scotland Yard during the murders attributed the murders to a Polish Jew who had been committed after the killings. This is considered to be Kosminski who, for Macnaghten, like Ostrog fell into the category of mad outsider.

Interestingly for my research film ignores Macnaghten's list when creating the screen Ripper. The only link to the list is found in a television series *Sanctuary* (Canada, 2000–2011). The programme is based on the premise that five friends in nineteenth century London inject themselves with vampire blood. They then assume attributes of nineteenth century literary creations Dorian Grey, Dracula, Sherlock Holmes and the Invisible Man. The final friend, John DrUITt, becomes Jack the Ripper.

In 1976 Stephen Knight published *Jack the Ripper the Final Solution* that provided a theory about who committed the murders, which had an immense impact on films about Jack the Ripper. In the book Knight is told by Joseph Sickert, who claimed to be the son of the artist Walter Sickert, that his father had told him the truth about the murders. They were carried out by William Gull, the Queens surgeon, with the assistance of John Netley, a coach driver, and the policeman Robert Anderson. The motive was to protect the secret of a marriage between Prince Albert Victor and Anne Crook, which has resulted in a daughter. The victims had to be killed as they knew the secret and were a threat to national security.

Knight claims that his research showed that the third man in the cover up was not Robert Anderson but Walter Sickert. Even though Joseph Sickert admitted his story was a hoax in 1978 a Masonic/Royal conspiracy remains the preferred solution for many film makers. Walter Sickert was again linked to the case in 2006 by the crime novelist Patricia Cornwall. In *Portrait of a Killer Jack the Ripper Case Closed* Cornwall claims that Sickert acting alone was Jack the Ripper and the motives for the murders were misogyny and the penile deformity that she claims Sickert suffered from.

This is not the place to argue for or against the guilt of Sickert, Gull and Netley. What I do find interesting is that while Gull and Netley appear as characters in films about Jack the Ripper Sickert never does. The artist may be amoral but he does not represent, for the audience, the evil that an aristocrat or a doctor can. In Chap. 4 I will examine the presentation of Gull on screen as part of an examination of the transfer of Jack from reality to art.

Jack the Ripper had an early transfer to the arts. In 1904 Jack the Ripper had appeared on stage as a character in Frank Wedekind's *Die Büchse der Pandora*. The play depicted the murder of the amoral Lulu at the hands of Jack the Ripper. In 1908 the artist Walter Richard Sickert painted 'Jack the Ripper's Bedroom', a work that depicts the supposed bedroom of the killer. Without the title this painting could show any middle-class bedroom in any middle-class home. The move of the Ripper into Sickert's imaginary home was confirmed by the 1916 play *Who is He?* The play was adapted from the novella *The Lodger* by Marie Bello Lowndes, a melodrama that explores the suspicions of a landlady about her lodger's involvement in a series of Ripperesque murders. The play transferred to New York in 1917 where it played on Broadway.

In 1924 Jack the Ripper was on screen in the film *Waxworks* (Germany 1924: Leni), only 36 years after the murders and possibly in the lifetime

of the killer. Since then every decade of the twentieth and twenty-first century has seen the release of at least one film depicting Jack the Ripper. The earliest of the films about the Ripper are based upon the novella *The Lodger*. This pattern held until the 1950s and 1960s when it was replaced by films that sought to answer the question of whom Jack the Ripper was and why he had not been brought to justice. This ‘detective’ model allowed for the introduction of the fictional detective Sherlock Holmes. The combining of the factual and the fictional continued on film with the linking of Jekyll and Hyde to the Ripper film narrative. The ‘supernatural’ also became added to the film Ripper, not only in terms of possession and occult objects but also via time travel and mental illness. In the 1980s the Ripper copycat became a screen presence, the killer who seeks to recreate the killings of 1888 in a new age and in a new country—the United States. Films that span the years 1960 to 2002 often base the narrative on conspiracy theory, either monarchic or masonic, not only to protect the killer but also to instigate the murders.

The films I have selected to look at are US and European productions. In total there are 26 films that I consider primary source material; these are films that have a narrative that links directly to the Whitechapel murders or the personification of Jack the Ripper. The films span the gamut of high-profile, big-budget studio productions to films that never received a cinema release and have lower budget and production values. The directors of the films are also as widely distributed, from studio contract directors to art house auteurs. This selection of a divergent group of films allows me to establish patterns and innovations in depictions.

While the number of books about the true identity of Jack the Ripper reaches well into triple figures there has been much less written about Jack the Ripper and the Whitechapel murders on film. In 1999 *Jack the Ripper: His Life and Crimes in Popular Entertainment* was published. Written by Gary Coville and Patrick Luciano the book can be described as a catalogue raisonné of the Ripper’s appearances in film, television and radio. The book locates the origins of the Ripper’s media character with two novellas; Maria Belloc Lowndes’s *The Lodger* and Robert Bloch’s *Yours Truly, Jack the Ripper*. Lowndes book is the basis for the Ripper as a Lodger subgenre while Bloch’s work is the basis for the supernatural aspect of the Ripper.

Coville and Luciano are very interested in radio plays dealing with the Ripper narrative that were popular during the 1950s and 1960s, including several directed and narrated by Alfred Hitchcock. In fact they state that the Ripper and the Radio is a perfect meeting of subject and medium, that

radio allowed the audience to ‘colour details to personal taste’, which, in turn, contributed to ‘transforming the original Ripper into an archetypal figure’.³

I agree with Coville and Luciano that audience tastes created the frightening aspects of the Ripper. The radio allowed this without the risk of showing an audience a Ripper that they were not afraid of and enabled the maintenance of a sense of menace through mystery. As with the film *Jaws* (US 1975: Spielberg) the shark and the Ripper are more frightening when we don’t see them. The films that fail to maintain a sense of fear are the films that allow the audience too much time with the killer or reveal the killer’s identity too early. The most unsettling films show the consequences of the Ripper’s actions—the blood, the body but not the Ripper in person.

However, I believe that the iconography of the Ripper that creates fear is visual and therefore that the Ripper is more suited to film than radio. Certain items when seen on screen can create a feeling of fear in an audience: the fear of fog that robs us of geographical certainty; the fear of a doctor/surgeon that a medical bag elicits; the gothic trope of a cape that makes us think of Dracula. None of these can be exploited on radio but have become integral elements of the screen Ripper.

The authors discuss the iconography of the Ripper without seeking to explain where or why the symbolism developed. They do not apply a methodology or seek to consider the audience responses to the Ripper. The current book is not as all-encompassing as Coville and Luciano’s as it does not seek to list the Ripper’s appearances instead it seeks to explain the narrative and the iconography connected to the Ripper.

In 2008 an exhibition at the Museum in Docklands, London explored the relationship between Jack the Ripper and the East End. In its accompanying catalogue one of the essays—Clive Bloom’s *Jack the Ripper—A Legacy in Pictures* considered how the Ripper, the police, the victims and the location of the murders had been mythologised on screen. Bloom notes how film can change the narrative of the murders and replaces middle-aged prostitutes, who were the victims of the Ripper, with young beautiful actresses. In his essay Bloom comments that the use of blood spurting from the wounds of the beautiful young women, ‘a cum shot

³ Gary Coville and Patrick Luciano, *Jack the Ripper: His Life and Crimes in Popular Fiction* (North Carolina: McFarland & Company, 1999), 35.

of death'⁴ makes the films 'teeter on the brink of pornography without becoming pornographic'.⁵ I agree—films about the Ripper at the very least can be classified as torture porn.

Bloom's work puts forward the argument that the East End is integral to the Ripper, that without the East End as it is imagined in Ripper films a Ripper film would become 'just another slasher movie'.⁶ The role of the East End in the films has, I think, been underrated and like Bloom I will consider, using the theory of psychogeography, the depiction of the locale in films.

The books by Coville and Luciano and Bloom engage with films depicting Jack the Ripper without a sustained examination of iconography, narrative or audience alignment. Here I engage with these areas using a sustained methodology. These texts will be used as an essential base from which to develop ideas about the screen Ripper.

My reason for opening this introduction by listing the atrocious injuries that the women murdered in 1888 suffered is not to be gratuitous or to indulge in goreography but to present the reality of the murders. This is not an easy subject to engage with but my interest lies with how film engages with a difficult subject. Why are people interested films about the Ripper? How do film makers respond to this fascination?

I am interested in how Jack the Ripper, a killer never identified, has such a strong screen iconography. By examining this iconography it will be possible to explain its origin and the message it conveys to an audience. The Ripper is a figure who has transmogrified from fact to fiction and I will trace and explore this metamorphosis. In an age of slasher films and torture porn I still find the depiction of a figure in a top hat walking through fog frightening and I want to understand why this image can carry this impact.

Fin-de-siècle literature produced the male characters that still dominate our cultural imagination. Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde, Dracula, Sherlock Holmes and Dorian Grey all emerged at the end of the nineteenth century along with Jack the Ripper. I am interested in the connections between the depictions of these characters, how they influence each other and how they have become so entwined in the image an audience has of

⁴ Clive Bloom, 'Jack the Ripper: His Life in Pictures', in *Jack the Ripper and the East End*, edited by Alex Werner (London: Chatto Windus, 2008), 252.

⁵ Bloom, 252.

⁶ Bloom, 248.

nineteenth-century London. The Ripper was never caught so nothing is known of his/her biography but we do have information about the biographies of the victims and the policemen who investigated the crimes. By comparing films I will establish how their lives and deaths are presented. Does film alter these biographies and if so why?

An important area for this study is audience alignment with the characters depicted in these films. I will look at who is the dominant figure on screen: the Ripper dominating provides a different audience experience to the experience where detective hunting the Ripper dominates. Developing this theme of audience alignment I will consider the presentation of the character and narrative in relation to the gender of the audience member. If the gender of the viewer impacts the way that the films can be read this means that there will be a difference between the genders in terms of which character dominates the screen.

It may be assumed, after reading the horrific injuries of the victims at the start of this introduction, that films telling the story of the Whitechapel murders will be part of the horror genre. I suspect that this is too simplistic a categorisation; the films potentially could share aspects of melodrama, thriller, detective story, science fiction or even romance. After establishing the meaning of the presentation the next step is to consider how the presentation has evolved over the nearly 100 years that the Ripper has appeared on screen. Is the presentation a stable construct? If not, has the development been influenced by cultural or criminal history?

In terms of gender the victims of Jack the Ripper were women, the Ripper is presumed to be male and the detective who investigated the murders was male. I will consider the presentations of each of these roles in terms of gender and consider the implications should the gender of any of these characters be altered. What does a female Ripper convey to an audience that a male Ripper does not? It is often presupposed that the victims of serial killers are women; certainly this is a demographic suggested by a brief consideration of the most infamous British and US serial killers—Ted Bundy, Fred West, the Yorkshire Ripper, the Boston Strangler. Does this mean for the audience victimhood is gendered female? If so is this too simplistic a reading? I anticipate that in terms of victims of the Ripper on screen victimhood is less about being a woman and more about being a ‘fallen’ woman.

The newspaper coverage of the murders in 1888 emphasised the class of the victims and the class of the area of London in which the murders occurred. I will consider if this idea of class has been transferred onto the screen with the additional elements of the class of the Ripper and the detective being depicted. Conspiracy theories surrounding the Whitechapel murders present Jack the Ripper as an upper-class killer. By considering the presentation of the class of the Ripper on screen his class can be assessed, along with the narrative implications of this class, in regard to the victims and detective.

Class will be considered in terms of the occupation of the main characters, are they viewed as aristocracy, middle or working class? Class is a comparative structure, by considering the class of characters in parallel it will be possible to identify if the presentation of the class of one character can be used to construct the class of another. In regard to Whitechapel I will consider how the locale is perceived in terms of class and how this perception affects the Ripper, the detective and the victims when they are on screen.

In theory the Whitechapel murders should be a closed narrative. Although the Ripper was never caught the murders did end and after 127 years the danger, from the Ripper, has passed. However, the audience's frame of reference for prostitutes, detectives and serial killers has changed since 1888. One of the themes I will consider is how an understanding of factual events can affect the fictional depiction of the Whitechapel murders on screen.

This book will be structured around four 'characters' that I have identified as being present on screen in films concerned with the Whitechapel murders. These four 'characters' are Jack the Ripper, the victims, the detectives who investigate the crimes and Whitechapel as the scene of the murders. These four 'characters' will be treated with a broad hand; for example, the killer in *The Lodger: A Story of the London Fog* (UK 1928: Hitchcock) is known as 'The Avenger' but can still be considered to be the Ripper.

The same questions and methodology will be considered for each 'character' to provide a consistent research structure. The themes of class, gender, the relationship between fact and fiction and its appearance on screen will be considered. In addition I will examine the narrative structure and genre of the screen presentations of each 'character'.

Jack the Ripper dressed in top hat and cape, Gladstone bag in hand as he walks along foggy streets is a potent and familiar screen image yet is has never been deconstructed. In this book I will not solve the mystery of Jack the Ripper's true identity but I will show who he has become on screen.

Historical and Cultural Context

In September 1888 the residents of 29 Hanbury Street were charging an admission fee to view the yard where Annie Chapman's body had been found. The crowds of people who flocked to the area could buy refreshments from the costermongers who had set up stalls in the area to cater for the influx of people. After viewing Hanbury Street the crowd could move onto Whitechapel Road where a waxworks had opened, using wax mannequins daubed with red paint to depict the victims of 'orrible murder', which could be enjoyed for a penny.¹ The relationship between Jack the Ripper and popular entertainment had begun.

In nineteenth-century Britain murder, and murderers, became stock figures in newspapers, novels and plays. The difference between Jack the Ripper and other nineteenth century murderers is that Jack remains a part of popular entertainment culture. Since 1888 Jack has been depicted in films, television programmes, computer games, literature and graphic novels. In fiction he has done battle with Sherlock Holmes, Bram Stoker and Batman. In 2015 it was announced that a computer game 'Assassins Creed' would be set in London and feature Jack the Ripper. Not only does Jack appear as a character but he has become a stock reference in television programmes as diverse as *House* (US, 2005), *The Simpsons* (US, 2009) and *MASH* (US, 1973). The public fascination with Jack the Ripper has not abated, in September 2015 a Jack the Ripper museum opened in Cable Street, London.

¹Peter Ackroyd, *London: The Biography* (London: Vintage, 2001), 273.