



Detecting Texts: The Metaphysical Detective Story from Poe to Postmodernism

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Although readers of detective fiction ordinarily expect to learn the mystery's solution at the end, there is another kind of detective story—the history of which encompasses writers as diverse as Poe, Borges, Robbe-Grillet, Auster, and Stephen King—that ends with a question rather than an answer. The detective not only fails to solve the crime, but also confronts insoluble mysteries of interpretation and identity. As the contributors to *Detecting Texts* contend, such stories belong to a distinct genre, the "metaphysical detective story," in which the detective hero's inability to interpret the mystery inevitably casts doubt on the reader's similar attempt to make sense of the text and the world.

Detecting Texts includes an introduction by the editors that defines the metaphysical detective story and traces its history from Poe's classic tales to today's postmodernist experiments. In addition to the editors, contributors include Stephen Bernstein, Joel Black, John T. Irwin, Jeffrey T. Nealon, and others.

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