

## HANSELLING THE SECTIONS THAT SCARE YOU: MYSTERIES

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### KEY CONCEPTS

1. Curate, curate, curate! Buzz focuses on hardboiled, and serious mystery lovers are largely unaffected. Create your own buzz, tailored to your customers' preferences and habits.
2. Who are your mystery buyers? Casual readers need only the books that "transcend the genre." But that's not serving hardcore fans, nor will it convert the casual reader into an addict.
3. The search for order is a foundational principle of the mystery story. Presenting whole, unbroken series appeals to mystery lovers on a primal level.
4. There's a hunger for quality cozies/trationals, and they're harder for readers to find because hype tends to flow towards hardboiled/noir/serial killers/thrillers. This is where you can really help.
5. Ignore most big bestsellers by men (Patterson, Baldacci, Grisham), unless you have a connection. Stock just a couple each of these authors. The women (Grafton, Paretsky) will sell a little better.
6. Stay a step ahead – watch purchases by series sequence (if someone buys #3 and #4, make sure you have #5 and #6 in stock), and be ready with the recommendation for the next series.
7. Don't ignore classics. You can still find lots of dollars in Stout, Sayers, Tey, Ross Macdonald, etc.

### RESOURCES

1. Ignore the Edgar Awards – these books are unlikely to sell for you. Pay lots of attention to the Dilys Awards – find info at [mysterybooksellers.com](http://mysterybooksellers.com). Anthony and Agatha Awards are also very helpful.
2. Mystery Scene Magazine – best overview of the genre, produced by and for mystery lovers.
3. Sisters in Crime (local chapter?) or your own discussion group. These readers will curate for you.
4. Magna Cum Murder, October 25-27, in Indianapolis – info at [magnacummurder.com](http://magnacummurder.com)
5. Mystery booksellers who are publishers. Midnight Ink, Poisoned Pen Press, Crum Creek Press/The Mystery Company (that's me!), Felony & Mayhem and Rue Morgue Press
6. Other publishers of note: Berkley Prime Crime, Soho Press, Hard Case Crime

### TAXONOMY

Make sure that you're at least touching each of these bases. Monitor sales based on these subcategories, and focus your efforts on the areas that do best for you. Here are some obvious and some less well-known suggestions.

#### COZY

Julie Hyzy  
Joanna Carl  
Nancy Atherton  
Joanne Fluke  
Karen McInerney  
Nancy Martin  
Denise Swanson  
Jess Lourey  
(Berkley Prime Crime)

#### TRADITIONAL

Louise Penny  
William Kent Krueger  
Susan Wittig Albert  
Mary Anna Evans  
Naomi Hirahara  
Peter Lovesey  
Julia Spencer-Fleming  
Terence Faherty\*  
P.M. Carlson\*

#### HARDBOILED

Timothy Hallinan  
James Lee Burke  
Sara Paretsky  
Steve Hamilton  
Craig Johnson  
Archer Mayor  
Jan Burke

#### NOIR

(not a series category)  
Laura Lippman  
Val McDermid  
Stuart Neville  
George Pelecanos  
Don Winslow  
(Hard Case Crime)

#### THRILLER

(not a series category)  
Lisa Unger  
Harlan Coben  
Thomas Perry  
Hank Phillippi Ryan  
Tess Gerritsen

#### ESPIONAGE

(not a series category)  
Olen Steinhauer  
Dan Fesperman  
Daniel Silva  
Rebecca Cantrell  
Alan Furst

#### HISTORICAL

Kate Ross  
C.J. Sansom  
Charles Todd  
Jacqueline Winspear  
Susan Elie MacNeal  
Rhys Bowen

#### INTERNATIONAL

Qui Xiaolong  
Colin Cotterill  
Cara Black  
Arnaldur Indridason  
Donna Leon  
(Soho Press)

\* authors I publish