

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments xi

Introduction: Mass Art as Experimental Storytelling 1

PART I

1. The Art Novel Meets 1910s Formalism 29
2. Making Confusion Satisfactory: Modernism and Other Mysteries 55
3. Churn and Consolidation: The 1940s and After 81

PART II

4. The Golden Age Puzzle Plot: The Taste of the Construction 119
5. Before the Fact: The Psychological Thriller 157
6. Dark and Full of Blood: Hard-Boiled Detection 194
7. The 1940s: Mysteries in Crossover Culture 235
8. The 1940s: The Problem of Other Minds, or Just One 261

PART III

9. The Great Detective Rewritten: Erle Stanley Gardner and Rex Stout 285
 10. Viewpoints, Narrow and Expansive:
Patricia Highsmith and Ed McBain 318
 11. Donald Westlake and the Richard Stark Machine 336
 12. Tarantino, Twists, and the Persistence of Puzzles 357
 13. Gone Girls: The New Domestic Thriller 382
- Conclusion: The Power of Limits 405

Notes 413

Index 467