The distorted relationships within these claustrophobic locales function as a microcosm for society as a whole and these relationships are investigated by the detective as thoroughly as the murders. The victims are generally scheming, ruthless characters who bring about their own murder due to their sinful lives.

Because she wrote in a social realist vein, James acknowledged creating an atmosphere of menace and suspense in these settings. Further, the solution of the mystery does not necessarily remove the causes of the crime and may reinforce the moral dilemmas implicit in the story. By avoiding tidy endings with their easy reassurance, Jame's novels mirror the times in which she lived.

**INSPECTOR ADAM DALGLIESH SERIES**

*Publication dates are for U.S. editions*

**Cover Her Face** (Scribner, 1966)

**A Mind to Murder** (Scribner, 1967)

**Unnatural Causes** (Scribner, 1967)

**Shroud for a Nightingale** (Scribner, 1971)

**The Black Tower** (Scribner, 1975)

**Death of an Expert Witness** (Scribner, 1977)

**A Taste for Death** (Knopf, 1986)

**Devices and Desires** (Random House, 1990)

**Original Sin** (Knopf 1995)

**A Certain Justice** (Knopf 1997)

**Death in Holy Orders** (Ballantine Books, 2001)

**The Murder Room** (Knopf 2003)

**The Lighthouse** (Knopf 2005)

**The Private Patient** (Knopf 2008)

**INSPECTOR CORDELIA GRAY SERIES**

**An Unsuitable Job for a Woman** (Scribner 1973)

**The Skull Beneath the Skin** (Scribner 1982)

**OTHER BOOKS**

**The Maul and the Pear Tree: The Ratcliffe Highway Murders, 1811** with T.A. Critchley (Warner Books, 2002)

**Innocent Blood** (Scribner, 1980)

**The Children of Men** (Knopf 1993)

**Time to Be in Earnest: A Fragment of an Autobiography** (Knopf 2000)

**Talking about Detective Fiction** (Knopf, 2009)

**Death Comes to Pemberley** (Knopf 2011)

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1920-2014

"All fiction is an attempt to create order out of disorder and to make sense of personal experience. But the classical detective story does this within its own established conventions. ... Within the formal constraints of the detective novel I try to say something true about men and women under the stress of the ultimate crime and about the society in which we live".
she introduced melancholic police detective Adam Dalgliesh and later wrote thirteen other novels in the Dalgliesh series.

In 1991 James was rewarded with a life peerage in the House of Lords and the title Baroness James of Holland, a reference to the west London neighborhood where she lived.

The author was an Anglican and lay patron of the Prayer Book Society. Her familiarity with the inner workings of church hierarchy were used to great effect in her 2001 book *Death In Holy Orders*.

**WRITING STYLE**

P.D. James books have been praised for their sophisticated narrative technique and complex, multifaceted characters. James has declared that she prefers the term “crime novel” rather than “detective story” thus advocating for renewed literary dignity for the genre. Her rationale for this declaration being that the conventions of the detective story had shifted from the demands of plotting, to concern for psychological truth and “the moral ambiguities of human action”.

Having stated this, James was fascinated by the conventions of detective fiction written during the Golden Age of this genre between the 1920s and 1930s and employed them in her own novels. “What we can expect is a central mysterious death, usually murder, a closed circle of suspects, each with motive, means and opportunity for the crime; a detective, either amateur or professional, who comes in like an avenging deity to solve it; and, by the end of the book, a solution which the reader should be able to arrive at by logical deduction from clues inserted in the novel with deceptive cunning but essential fairness.”

In James novels, the crimes occur within isolated communities of people including nursing homes, a private clinic, a theological college, and barristers’ chambers among others.