True Crime
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Abstract
Whether or not Capote invented something called the “nonfiction novel,” he ushered in the serious, extensive, non-fiction treatment of murder. In the years since *In Cold Blood* appeared, the genre of true crime regularly appears on the bestseller list. It is related to crime fiction, certainly – but it might equally well be grouped with documentary or read alongside romance fiction. And while its readers have a deep engagement with the genre that is very different from the engagement of readers of crime fiction, its writers are often forced to occupy a position – in relation to victims, criminals and police – that is complex and contradictory. In this essay I will be tracing the history and development of this hybrid genre, as well as examining some of the tensions – between reader, writer, criminal and cops – that are at its heart.

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