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EDUARDA DE CARLI

From sleuths to high-ranking officers: the literary legacy behind television women detectives

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From sleuths to high-ranking officers: the literary legacy behind television women detectives

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Eduarda De Carli

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Tese apresentada como requisito parcial à obtenção do título de doutora em Letras pelo Programa de Pós-graduação em Letras do Instituto de Letras da Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul.
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RESUMO

O presente trabalho visa demonstrar como o processo de padronização da representação de detetives mulheres em obras literárias influenciou a criação de uma personagem paradigmática no cenário das séries de TV de caráter investigativo. As detetives literárias analisadas aqui são Srta. Marple, Cordelia Gray e V. I. Warshawski, personagens principais dos romances que compõe o corpus da pesquisa, que são, respectivamente, *The Murder at the Vicarage (1930)*, de Agatha Christie; *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* (1972), de P. D. James, e *Indemnity Only* (1982), de Sarah Paretsky. A detetive televisiva tomada como paradigmática na representação de mulheres investigadoras é a DCI Jane Tennison, protagonista interpretada por Helen Mirren na série dramática britânica Prime Suspect (1991-2006). A análise das investigadoras é feita a partir de dois eixos, a saber, um eixo narratológico, que explora as estratégias narrativas empregadas na apresentação e caracterização das personagens, e um eixo contextual, em que são apontados fatores histórico-culturais determinantes na criação e no engajamento do público com representações de detetives mulheres. Para tanto, o referencial teórico emprega a classificação de personagens proposta por Mieke Bal (2009) e Roberta Pearson (2007), os modos exposicionais de Meir Sternberg (1978) e seus desdobramentos narrativos, e considerações de Jason Mittell (2015) acerca da estrutura narrativa de seriados televisivos entre outros, cujos trabalhos tem sido fundamental para o entendimento da construção de uma narrativa, tanto na literatura quanto na televisão, como Frances Heidensohn (1992), cujo estudo e histórico sobre as mulheres na força policial também ajudou na fundamentação deste trabalho. Esta tese contribui para os estudos acerca de estruturas narrativas e personagens literários e televisivos, e também pretende refletir sobre questões feministas ao considerar como as representações de mulheres investigadoras por parte de escritoras influenciam, até hoje, obras audiovisuais de grande repercussão.

Palavras-Chave: Detetives mulheres; Literatura policial; Personagem; Séries policiais televisivas.

ABSTRACT

The present work aims at demonstrating how the process of standardization of the representation of women detectives in literary works influenced the creation of a paradigmatic character when it comes to television series on crime and investigation. The detectives analyzed here were Miss Jane Marple, Cordelia Gray, and V. I. Warshawski, main characters from the novels that form the literary corpus of the research, which are, respectively, Agatha Christie's *The Murder at the Vicarage* (1930), P. D. James's *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* (1972), and Sarah Paretsky's *Indemnity Only* (1982). The television detective considered paradigmatic in the representation of women investigators is DCI Jane Tennison, portrayed by Helen Mirren in the British drama *Prime Suspect* (1991-2006). The analysis of these investigators is done through two axes, namely a narratological axis, which explores the narrative strategies employed in the presentation and characterization of the characters, and a contextual axis, in which historical-cultural factors are pointed out as determining in the creation and public engagement with representations of women detectives. To this end, the theoretical framework employs the classification of characters as proposed by Mieke Bal (2009) and Roberta Pearson (2007), the expositional modes of Meir Sternberg (1978) and their narrative implications, and considerations by Jason Mittell (2015) about the narrative structure of television series, among others, whose works have been fundamental to the understanding of the construction of a narrative, both in literature and on television, such as Frances Heidensohn (1992), whose study and history about women in police force also helped in the substantiation of this work. This thesis contributes to studies about narrative structures and literary and television characters and also intends to reflect on feminist issues by considering how the representations of women detectives written by women writers influence, to this day, audiovisual works of great repercussion.

Keywords: Character; Women Detectives; Crime Literature; Crime TV.

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INTRODUCTION, OR "NOT THE USUAL KIND OF PRIVATE EYE"[1]

"It is difficult to know quite where to begin this story", says Vicar Clement at the beginning of *The Murder at the Vicarage* (CHRISTIE, 2016, p.1). And even though this is not a fictional work, it is not an easy task to pinpoint the exact origins of the mystery genre in Western society. What most authors, critics, and historians of different anthologies and theoretical books about this genre tend to do is to attribute the birth of the modern rational detective to Edgar Allan Poe's *The Murders in The Rue Morgue* (1841). Some years later the image of this detective was reinforced when the Great Detective, Sherlock Holmes, was created in those molds by Arthur Conan Doyle, thus establishing a tradition of characters that would soon be consolidated in literature and move on to other media, particularly to audiovisual narratives. From these publications onwards, until around the first three decades of the 20th century, the works that portrayed intellectual detectives that valued mental work over physical exertion in chasing criminals were considered part of the Golden Age of the detective novel.

In the year 1920, with *The Mysterious Affair at Styles,* British author Agatha Christie (1890-1976) entered the ranks with the now-famous Belgian detective Hercule Poirot and his unmistakable mustache. In 1930, she introduced a new investigator, this time a 65-year-old lady named Jane Marple, more commonly known only as Miss Marple (already indicating her marital status or lack thereof), with the novel *Murder at the Vicarage*. According to Sonia Coutinho, she is "[...] the great pioneer of the contemporary female detective. She deconstructs the classical detective, who only uses rationality to solve crimes. Instead, Jane Marple applies her psychological knowledge of the human being, her intuition" (1994, p. 47, our translation[2]). So, while Poirot maintains the tradition of the classic investigator, it is Christie's female protagonist that brings innovation to the genre and the construction of detectives. The classical elements that appear in her novels are the unity of place, time, and action (COUTINHO, 1994); her stories are usually set in enclosed spaces, a microcosmos of British society in which order must be restored. Therefore Agatha Christie stands on the borders of the Golden Age, paving the way for more contemporary authors.

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[1] From P.D. James's *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* (1972), page 220.

[2] From the original: "[…] é a grande pioneira da detetive feminina contemporânea. Ela desconstrói o detetive clássico, que usa apenas a racionalidade para solucionar os casos de crime. Em vez disso, Jane Marple emprega seu conhecimento psicológico do ser humano, sua intuição."

Taking into consideration that the Golden Age of detective novels is composed almost exclusively of British authors, one needs some degree of historical contextualization for a deeper understanding of women detectives within this setting. The tradition that emerged at the beginning of the 20th century, in the interwar period, comes from the Victorian Era, which brings certain values and specific gender roles to the foreground of the discussion. When writers, especially women, work within these different spheres of circulation and set a crime in the domestic and private places, considered to be a woman's territory, they are "[...] able to subvert the historical silencing of women by using the detective conventions to reconfigure the spheres of power and empower the woman as detective" (HOLLAND-TOLL, 2013, p. 572). Within these spheres, there are also expectations regarding gender-specific behavior from the investigators.

Even though times have changed and feminist protests since the Suffragette Movement have led to equality bills and an overall change in consciousness, women detectives are still faced with the "[...] male resistance in their jobs, as if they still lived in a universe at least residually Victorian in which they are obliged, as women, to the domestic confinement" (COUTINHO, 1994, p. 67), as the demands of the job regarding action are not traditionally seen as feminine, so they need to constantly prove themselves as professionals of investigation. In spite of these gendered characteristics, both women and men non-institutionalized detectives, that is, those who are not part of official police forces, seem to share certain traits, particularly a trend to feel intellectually superior to official investigators.

It is in the United States, during the Great Depression, that the detective novel becomes darker, reflecting the times, bringing the officer of the law to the foreground and giving him a voice as a protagonist. Even though the trend has reached other countries such as France, it was with names like Raymond Chandler that the noir novel was consolidated; the new detective novel became much more introspective and started dealing with real-life issues of common people, bringing the reader closer to the detective. Just as crime fiction has had a worldwide presence in more recent years, the genre that has been constantly present in television - especially American television, which is the one that is more commonly publicized and broadcast internationally - is the procedural. In a procedural television series, there is a certain structure to be followed in each episode. For example, a crime is discovered, detectives investigate, and the crime is solved, just as in the classic detective novel. Some series present a more complex structure (MITTELL, 2015), combining episodic elements, classical to the procedural, and serial elements, giving more continuity to worldbuilding and character

development, presenting more introspective and individual points of view of said characters, similar to the contemporary literary genre. The presence of women in detective roles on television has been increasingly stronger as well, going from amateur sleuths to high-ranking officers, as it is possible to see in *The X-Files* (Fox, 1993-2002, 2016-2018), *CSI* (CBS, 2000-2015), *Cold Case* (CBS, 2003-2010), *Veronica Mars* (2004-2007), *Bones* (Fox, 2005-2017), *Criminal Minds* (CBS, 2005-), *The Mentalist* (CBS, 2008-2015), *Elementary* (CBS, 2012-2019), *The Fall* (2013-2016), and *Marvel's Jessica Jones* (Netflix, 2015-2019), just to cite a few examples. As spectators of such television series featuring women detectives and reading baggage, we wanted to investigate and demonstrate how the process of standardization of the representation of women detectives in literary works ended up influencing the creation of a paradigmatic character when it comes television series on crime and investigation. Based on the premise – and thesis – that women detectives who are the main characters in television series follow a pattern of characterization, during the research, we could identify that the paradigm had appeared earlier chronologically.

With this in mind, this doctoral dissertation aims at demonstrating the existence of a pattern in the construction of women detectives in contemporary television that stems from the literary tradition. In order to demonstrate that, in what follows we present a study that identifies and delineates this pattern. The first step is to introduce the literary works that originated, shaped, and consolidated the pattern in Western fiction: Agatha Christie's *The Murder at the Vicarage* (1930), P. D. James's *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* (1972), and Sarah Paretsky's *Indemnity Only* (1982). Next, we analyze ITV's procedural series *Prime Suspect* (1991-2006), a TV program fed by the literary tradition aforementioned which further defined the pattern for female representation in crime fiction through the paradigmatic detective DCI Jane Tennison. Regarding women detectives, there seems to be a lack of research concerning character studies, especially within a narratological frame, both in literature and mostly in television. Therefore, it is our understanding – and hope – that this research will help increase the knowledge and practice of narratological analysis in literary and television and serial studies alike.

Though one may find a somewhat solid tradition of studies on Agatha Christie (yet not necessarily in character construction), this does not seem to be the case for other female writers of crime fiction, such as Lynda La Plante, the mind and pen behind the creation of Jane Tennison. What little academic publication there is, such as Creeber (2001), focuses on male precursors rather than focus on the work as a paradigmatic series. In addition to the limited critical fortune of La Plante's work, studies devoted to ITV's series also reveal a rather small

scope, most works focusing solely or mostly on the first season instead of taking the whole narrative arc into consideration, let alone derivative prequels that emerged later and which have been equally influential in the consolidation of Jane Tennison's paradigmatic condition. Of course, it is not possible to deny the importance of male detective antecedents – even my own Master's thesis and previous research had focused on them, with names such as Sherlock Holmes, John Watson, and Hercule Poirot permeating my studies -, but the present work intends to present a thoroughly female focus, as a woman writing about women detectives written and created for literature/or and television by women. However, while we do present a feminist reading and lens through which the texts will be looked at, this is not the main focus; what we propose is a narratological analysis of women detectives in literature and television that will be aided or complemented by feminist references.

In addition to this personal drive to contribute to the consolidation of studies on crime fiction with and by women, our decision of focusing on the characterization of women detectives has been further influenced by scholar Jason Mittell, according to whom audiovisual character analysis in academia seems to be overlooked in favor of world-building, plot, and temporality because they tend to be taken "as a self-evident given, wrapped up into conventions of performance and stardom, rather than analyzed as a specific narrative element" (2015, p. 118). However, the study of a pattern of characterization within a highly standardized genre cannot be based on the analysis of one single character in isolation but calls for a diachronic perspective and, in this particular case, on a transmedia approach that allows for the identification of fictional and narrative elements that circulate across media.

Therefore, the three novels of our literary corpus have been selected due to their seminal role in establishing the image of women detectives as appointed in anthologies, critical fortune, and crime fiction theory. Despite their importance as representatives of each era of crime fiction in the 20th century, however, references to other works that fit the genre are made in order to broaden the panoramic view we aim at.

Chapter one brings the introductory literature review, and is entitled "I was tired of being feminine and conciliatory", which is a line from page 24 in Paretsky's *Indemnity Only* (1982). It opens with a brief summary of the waves of feminism and an account of Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* (2016), a seminal critical work of the third wave. Butler's is our main theoretical work on gender studies for two main reasons: first, it is an immensely relevant work in the field as it proposes the idea of gender identity as performative; second, it was published only a year before the first season of *Prime Suspect* aired, which points to a correlation between

points raised by Butler and by the series, adding a layer to our comprehension of some issues Tennison faces. The second part of the chapter brings a summary and commentary of studies regarding the characterization of women detectives in anglophone literature, while in the third section, we comment on studies on television characterization of women detectives and to what extend this dissertation will contribute to narrow the gaps found in this area of research.

Chapter two, entitled "A Previously Unsuitable Job for a Woman", refers to the title of one of the novels from our corpus, and it introduces the literary analysis through a historical overview of the corpus, divided into four main sections. First, a chronology of the appearance and development of investigative jobs for women in police forces is presented to aid in determining whether the literature that first depicted such roles was realistic in representing what already existed or if it was somehow paving the way for a revolution in the field. Next, we present the rationale for the narratological analysis of the characters alongside a historical overview of the detective genre. In the third section, we look at the detective stories written by women authors during the 20th century, when the genre is consolidated in Anglo-American literature, with special attention to the three novels of our corpus.

Chapter three is divided into three main sections, and its title, "Call me Boss, Gov, anything but ma'am", is a line from Jane Tennison in the first episode of *Prime Suspect* and it is a statement that will be made more than once over the course of the entire series whenever someone addresses her as "ma'am" for the first time. The first section brings a brief contextualization of crime drama in television, highlighting some of the series that were important for both the consolidation and evolution of the genre; the initial series mentioned feature male detectives, and are the ones that are usually talked about in books that deal with the genre or television. Next, we bring five more examples of series that feature women as lead detectives, also presenting a discussion on the very definition of drama and the episodic and seriality modes of storytelling in television. The second section introduces the narratological rationale for the analysis of television characters, establishing a connection to what has been discussed previously regarding characterization in the second chapter. To aid in the analysis of Tennison, we are going to use Roberta Pearson's taxonomy (2007), Jens Eder's clock of character (2010), and also Jason Mittell's discussion on viewer engagement and character change arcs (2015). We then proceed to the analysis of *Prime Suspect*, presenting a summary of the episodes of the seven seasons of the series, so that we can take a closer look at the character of Jane Tennison. The two episodes that make up the first season are dealt with in more detail since they are the ones that first establish the character to the viewers. Finally, we

present our case that Tennison stands for the culmination of the pattern first identified in literature, stressing the narrative elements the series appropriates from detective novels, despite the fact that it is not a direct adaptation of any literary work.

This dissertation avoids the use of the term “female” to refer to the detectives, preferring the use of woman or women detective(s). Besides being a matter of personal preference, this orientation meets Simone de Beauvoir’s understanding that this term is “[…] pejorative not because it roots woman in nature but because it confines her in her sex, and if this sex even in an innocent animal, seems despicable and an enemy to man, it is obviously because of the disquieting hostility woman triggers in him” (BEAUVOIR, 2011, p. 21). However, languages have and impose limitations now and then, so the term might be unavoidable in some cases; what we wanted to clarify and justify is that the repetition of the usage of woman/women throughout this work is a conscious choice.

1 “I WAS TIRED OF BEING FEMININE AND CONCILIATORY”

This chapter summarizes and discusses the literature and research that has been published so far regarding the topics of interest of this dissertation. It is divided as follows: first, a summary of the four waves of the feminist movement and Judith Butler’s *Gender Trouble* (2006). Next, we proceed to discuss what has been published on women detectives in literature and, subsequently, the issues that have been raised on women detectives in television and about crime television in general.

1.1. ON FEMINISM

Feminism in Western society is marked by generational differences that constitute four waves that are roughly divided according to a specific time period. Before the first wave, however, there were earlier works that started to propel the movement forward, especially a manifesto entitled A Vindication of the Rights of Woman: with Strictures on Political and Moral Subjects, published by Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792. This particular work is groundbreaking for the presentation of some initial ideas on women’s emancipation and equal rights, focusing on exclusion and impotence, including the fact that women were excluded from having an equal education (SOLNIT, 2017a)

The first wave of feminism has as its starting point the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848; this convention saw a gathering of people whose main objective was to rally for the equality of men and women. There were intersections between this early feminist movement and abolitionists and their goals of women having the right to own property and to have an education, for example, but the initial focus was on the right to vote with the women’s suffrage movement – white women’s right to vote.

The second wave saw its emergence in the 1960s, having Betty Friedan’s *The Feminine Mystique* (2013, originally published in 1963) as one of its catalysts. The other issues that would be relevant to the movement at the time were propelled by the civil rights movements, labor rights movements, and a post and anti-war context; rights concerning sexuality, reproduction, education, equal pay, and sexual discrimination and harassment mainly in the workplace and similar institutions were at the foreground of their discussions. Feminists start to define and institute new categories of violence that up until that point had never been considered, resulting

in a questioning of male authority and power abuse (SOLNIT, 2017b). It is in this wave that gender roles and expectations start to be questioned and theorists also start to look at media representations, especially in television.

The third wave of feminism emerges in the 1990s, having as one of its catalysts the Anita Hill case in the United States in 1991; Hill was called to testify on the nomination of Clarence Thomas for the Supreme Court, and she brought to the surface claims on sexual harassment against him, leading to an attack against Hill in a massive attempt to discredit her (SOLNIT, 2017b). In this wave, intersectionality emerges as a response to criticism of the previous waves for focusing mostly on white women, bringing race, ethnicity, and class as interwoven places of discrimination. It is in this time period, influenced by post-modern and post-colonial theories that some constructs start to be questioned and deconstructed, such as notions of gender, body, sexuality, and the idea of compulsory heteronormativity. One of the great names of this period is Judith Butler, whose writings will be used to guide this research's considerations about gender and identity.

The fourth wave of feminism emerges in the late 2000s, with new conversations regarding gender and sexual violence and the act itself of speaking up; the breaking of silence regarding sexual violence found platform on the internet and social media networks for the sharing of stories and activism (SOLNIT, 2017a). One of the biggest events of this wave so far has been the #MeToo movement, with people sharing their stories of sexual harassment and abuse on Twitter using the hashtag in 2017. With these online networks as spaces of activism, there have been discussions on rape culture, the wage gap, trans rights, movements of body positivity and empowerment, and social injustices building on the previous wave's proposals of intersectionality.

One of the terms widely discussed by the feminist movement that is of crucial importance in this dissertation is gender. Cortez, Gaudenzi, and Maksud (2019) affirm that the term "gender" first appeared around the 1950s with works on sexuality by psychologist John Money and a littler later, by the end of the 1960s by psychiatrist Robert Stoller. Moreover, the concepts of gender, gender identity, and gender roles started to appear in feminist works of the late 1960s, some referencing these two authors explicitly (CORTEZ; GAUDENZI; MAKSUD, 2019). There was, according to Cortez, Gaudenzi, and Maksud (2019) a biomedical need for a term to help explain subjects whose bodies were not as easily classified as male or female in the case of intersexuality, for example. While the creation of the term and initial theorization of identity and roles might be attributed to them, they were not the first to propose certain

questions; the issue and the act of questioning a naturalization of a feminine condition was a relevant step in the process of a gender theory (CORTEZ; GAUDENZI; MAKSUD, 2019). There were several authors who proposed this discussion in their early works, notably Simone de Beauvoir in *The Second Sex* (2011), published for the first time in 1949.

> One is not born, but rather becomes, woman. No biological, psychic, or economic destiny defines the figure that the human female takes on in society; it is civilization as a whole that elaborates this intermediary product between the male and the eunuch that is called feminine. (BEAUVOIR, 2011, p. 283)

The quote above generated much debate and it opens the first chapter of Judith Butler's seminal work *Gender Trouble* (2006), originally published in 1990. This idea of one becoming a woman is one of the initial discussions of what *is* to be a woman and the feminine condition.

In *Gender Trouble* (2006), Butler critically reconsiders pre-established ideas of gender and the understanding of its roles in contemporaneity. One of the first ideas Butler (2006) brings is that gender intersects with race, class, ethnics, regional, and sexual identities. Moreover, gender is constructed culturally, that is, it is permeated by cultural meanings that are assumed by a sexed body. In quoting Beauvoir, Butler (2006) states that Beauvoir's idea of "becoming" a woman is a cultural-imposed compulsion. In the gender debate, the body is initially seen as a mere passive instrument or medium through which a certain set of cultural meanings will be associated; however, Butler (2006) argues that the body itself can be seen as a construction as well as the several "bodies" that are part of a set of gendered subjects.

On gender identity, Butler (2006) proposes that instead of wondering about the internal features that can establish a continuity of an identity, we must ponder about how – and how much – the regulatory practices of both gender constitution and division compose one's identity, internal coherence, and self-identical status. We must also wonder to what degree identity is considered a normative ideal instead of a descriptive element of one's experience, and also how these practices that control and regulate gender also control cultural notions of identity (BUTLER, 2006).

Thinking historically, in a pre-feminist context, there is no significant distinction between the terms gender and sex – they were used interchangeably –, and gender brought a notion of unity against the opposite gender/sex, creating parallel internal coherence between sex, gender, and desire (BUTLER, 2006). In this context, Butler (2006) states that being of one gender means that one is not of the other gender; there is a binary restriction that is also universal, and its internal coherence requires opposition and differentiation that is going to happen through compulsory and naturalized heterosexuality. Because gender is neither a noun

nor a free set of attributes, they propose then that a gender identity is performatively constructed by expressions of gender and regulated by an internal coherence, that is, what is said to be a result of an identity – an expression – is what actually constitutes a gender identity (BUTLER, 2006).

In discussing gender, Butler (2006) also brings together the ideas of desire and identity, and that these are practices that are restricted and inhibited and in turn reworked within a specific framework of binary oppositions, that is, a supposed unity of gender is the result of a practice that regulates and renders identities in a uniform manner via compulsory heterosexuality and, in turn, restricts meanings of different sexualities and subversions through an exclusionary practice. When one argues that gender is a construction, the emphasis is not on an idea of illusion or artificiality, but rather on the attempt to understand how plausible a binary relation is through discursive production and that some gender configurations consolidate through self-naturalization; returning to Beauvoir's affirmation, Butler (2006) states that we can define woman as a term in process: woman is a process of "becoming". In this process of becoming, gender is a "repeated stylization of the body" (BUTLER, 2006, p. 69) and a set of acts that are repeated within certain frames that are solidified over time through social means and give an appearance of a natural being. To the author, a successful understanding comes from the deconstruction of the superficial appearance of gender into the small acts that constitute it and the identification and accountability of these acts within the compulsory frames that regulate gender socially (BUTLER, 2006).

Therefore, the identification of an individual as a "woman" is a cultural construct deeply rooted in the representation and massive repetition of gender roles, which foregrounds the relevance of cultural texts in establishing and reinforcing gender identification. Within this framework, Laura Mulvey's seminal essay "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema" (1975) argues that there has been a lack of theorization on the representation of women – or the female form – in cinema. To fulfill this theoretical gap, Mulvey (1975) uses psychoanalysis to build her argument that classic cinema from Hollywood presents a male point of view which has the woman as a visual pleasure, as the man is the one who looks in an active role, while the woman is the one being looked at, as a passive role.

An important Freudian concept that Mulvey (1975) brings is that of scopophilia, which at its basic definition is the love of looking, and several works about crime television mention this as a pleasure of looking at (violated) bodies on the screen. This is one of the structures of looking in cinema; the scopophilic act of looking has a person as an "[…] object of sexual

stimulation through sight" (MULVEY, 1975, p. 10). The other structure of looking is the identification with the image that is seen, and it stems from narcissism and the ego.

There are three gazes in the audiovisual according to Mulvey (1975): the gaze of the camera, the gaze of a character towards another character, and the gaze of the spectator. Whenever the shot implies a subjective point of view, the camera shows instances in which visual pleasure is male-coded through the gaze; men look at women in an objectifying manner, which is the character gaze, and in turn, the viewer adopts the same gaze, objectifying the woman on the screen.

To consider the issue of gender and gaze in television, it is also important to keep in mind the contexts of the production of the works. A highly cited article that permeates research on contemporary crime drama that feature women detectives as lead roles in television is Angela McRobbie's "Post-Feminism and Popular Culture" (2004). In it, McRobbie discusses the idea of post-feminism, which refers to a process that undermines all work done by feminists and their gains during the 1970s and 1980s, as both an undoing of feminism and a response to it as something outdated and redundant (2004). However, she argues that, to her, a post-feminist world is one in which previous feminist discussions are taken into consideration, and feminism itself is something that can be taken into account, that is, there is a suggestion that equality has been achieved and thus feminism would not be longer needed (MCROBBIE, 2004). The result of such a movement is that there are certain conservative ideas about gender, sexuality, and family being valued again, while at the same time, it promotes liberal ideas on relations (MCROBBIE, 2004). In a post-feminist scenario, spectators still expect that women will adhere to standard norms of femininity and, taking feminist achievements for granted, representation of sexism in the workplace would be outdated and no longer a moving point in a series (JERMYN, 2016). *Prime Suspect*, however, right at the cusp of the beginning of the post-feminist context, brings up sexism in the workplace as still relevant and worthy of debate throughout the series.

1.2. ON DETECTIVE FICTION

1.2.1. Detectives in Literature

This dissertation is anchored in the findings of Urszula Clark and Sonia Zyngier (1998) because they mapped out a chronology of crime fiction written by women. To begin with, Clark

and Zyngier (1998) argue that contemporary detective fiction written by women can be considered a fusion between elements from the Golden Era of British novels – in the 1930s – and feminist elements from novels published in the 1970s in the United States. According to the authors, English fiction features the intellectual detective, while the American novel brings an action-driven story following the hard-boiled detectives.

According to the authors, most studies concerning women's writing have had feminist theory as a background, but there is a lack of studies concerning linguistic choices. Clark and Zyngier (1998) argue the need for a more thorough study involving looking at both form and content, connecting theories in a complementary manner. The authors bring considerations regarding society and culture, with family, workplace, and professional implications; but most importantly, they bring to the foreground of the discussion the narrative elements, including characterization and point of view. They also argue that by challenging some representations of women in detective fiction, women writers writing these new women from the 1970s onwards end up helping in the reconfiguration of the genre itself. They focus on the language of the text in order to raise awareness of the ideological processes that permeate the works chosen for their analysis.

Moreover, they argue that varied authors seem to reinstate the importance of social class in detective fiction. It has always been a genre that focuses on middle to upper class and the aristocracy, never the lower classes. So while women's fiction battle genre issues, the works being published within the detective genre still maintain the status quo of classes by usually having criminals being of lower classes and using regional dialect and other characters including detectives using standard English, for example, in British fiction (CLARK; ZYNGIER, 1998).

They were able to identify some characteristics present in contemporary detective novels that feature female investigators, constructing the beginnings of a pattern of characteristics. These characteristics that seem to be present in the four novels they analyze, representative of the time frame, are the loss of immunity of the detective; there is a blurring of the duality of criminal and victim; there is the questioning of what has been established as justice; an instinctive protectiveness; there is a redefinition of the traditional family and its ties; the distinction between public and private spheres is eliminated; the traditional rational deduction gives way to a more sensorial perception of the events; and when there is murder, it is usually within familial, social, or political contexts. All of these elements "[...] challenge institutionally controlled patriarchal systems of justice" (CLARK; ZYNGIER, 1998, p. 156), that is, they both

emerge from rising feminist questioning of the 1970s and contribute to the crescent feminist ideology within the genre.

There is plenty of research concerning detective fiction published to this date both in literature and television. Most of what has been found in the process, however, focuses on mostly on four eras: the classics – the Golden Era of British fiction -, the 1930s in America, the 1970s in America, and what is considered "contemporary" in the Anglophone world[3] (which seems to be such a feeble term with authors using it to denote publications either of the 1990s or the more recent 2000s, according to the date of publication of the study).

Young (2001) affirms that while in very early detective fiction the protagonist is male and the heroine is usually falsely accused and must clear her name, in the 19th century, the detective is a woman, usually upper-class, and will usually get involved in the investigation due to police errors that will mistreat either her family or friends. Later on, when women write hard-boiled fiction, they both bend the masculine voice traditional of the genre and occupy a stance of power that includes being knowledgeable, articulated, and the subject of the gaze (YOUNG, 2001).

Agatha Christie's works have been thoroughly dissected with different approaches in several studies, theses, articles, and media pieces, as well as those of other well-known authors. The same is applied to some subgenres of crime fiction, such as cozy mysteries, noir, police fiction, spy novel, thriller, etc. These works identify characteristics of a certain author, era, or even of a detective, but our contention is that there is an underlying narrative pattern that permeates the history of the genre and connects works written by women and that feature women in protagonist roles.

1.2.2. Detectives in Television

In his work *Do que as séries americanas são sintoma?*, François Jost (2012) defends the idea that when a television series is successful, it is mostly – or at least it is often – due to a symbolic gain to the spectator that is not limited to the other visual codes. His research is focused on those programs that have a bigger audience instead of the ones that are the most

[3] Considering mostly fiction written in English; it would be too much to consider the Nordic Noir, even though it has such a great influence and presence in today's media in Anglophone countries.

critically acclaimed; for the author, they are not the same especially when it comes to the matter of popularity.

The scholar argues that the reason why some television series are so familiar to us, so close to our own realities is that they are created based on transnational ideologies, common places, a rejection of the elite, manipulations coming from politicians and the government - situations in which the spectator can see himself and, as a consequence, lead to identification with the heroes. From this, Jost affirms that what truly characterizes American series in contemporaneity is the connection between reality and television through the intermediation of images. As an example, he brings up crime shows, stating that "[…] the image provides a knowledge that the direct contact with the world is unable to obtain. It functions as a semiotic reservoir, in which the police-semiologist tries to find the indices that will lead them to the culprit"4 (JOST, 2012, p. 31-32, my translation).

As for our connection to the heroes, he proposes that in contemporary television, there is the impression they are more realistic because there is an ongoing erosion in the image of the hero that is above others and situations. Moreover, this erosion is twofold: one of its unfoldings is into the duo of heroes, and the other is into the fragmentation of the main hero into several characters that are part of a "collective hero". As a result, there is a humanization to the image of the until-then infallible hero. The division into a pair of characters allows for contrasting traits and opposing views on life. The main example the author brings is that of *The X-Files*, which, in his words, opposes Mulder's irrational view of the world with Scully's scientific view. Regarding the fragmentation into the group of heroes, Jost mentions *Hill Street Blues* as the milestone for this development when it started airing in 1981. In addition to that, David Bianculli states that this series brought significant innovations, such as

> […] the overlapping and continuing story lines that weaved through and among various episodes […]. The handheld camera work. The frenetic blocking of scenes, with important action in both the foreground and the background. Overlapping dialogue. Broad humor and dramatic tension, sometimes in the same scene. (BIANCULLI, 2016, p. 156)

Programs such as *Hill Street Blues* showcase characters with more "human" dimensions than the figure of the one good detective that solves everything on their own and is infallible. Because of this development, the characters' private lives can affect and interfere with their professional lives consequently the spectator can identify and relate to a certain character in the

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[4] *"[…] a imagem propicia um conhecimento que o contato direto com o mundo não permitia obter. Ela funciona como um reservatório semiótico, no qual o policial-semiólogo procura encontrar os índices que o conduzirão aos culpados"* (from the Brazilian Portuguese edition).

group. Furthermore, Jost (2012) affirms that these American series with groups of specialists come to (French) television in a way that it starts to occupy the symbolic place of the family.

In his studies, Jost (2012) also identifies that all of these successful series involve a world that is made accessible to the spectator, with three types of knowledge present in them. They are focused on a profession and deal with the scientific *modus operandi*, investigations focused on human psychology, identification of our diseases and illnesses, and medical care. In order to provoke the spectators' desire to know more, the way in which the characters represent or create the different types of knowledge determines the bond we have with them. The realistic character is created in the articulation of three roles: the private, the professional, and the social. Television series, to Jost (2012), can be divided into these same three types: series centered in the characters' private lives, in which the professional workplace and social scenes further enhance the private aspect; series centered in the characters' professional lives, in which the conflicts in the private lives are just the background setting for workplace conflicts and professional problems - most procedural serious fit into this category; series centered in the society, in which the conflicts that emerge question or jeopardize society's functioning and/or survival. With serialization, private life becomes as important as professional life, and American series start highlighting romances and sexual relationships. This movement to foreground the inner workings of characters also brings forth the more repeated usage of voiceover narration to explicitly inform the viewer of the character's feelings, emotions, and point of view. Besides the voiceover, the development into looking at the characters more intimately also presents what the author refers to as "impossible images" (JOST, 2012). These images are usually present in procedural series when there is an explanation of the causes of a disease, an accident, of a crime, and the viewer sees the exact trajectory of a bullet in the crime scene, for example. Still considering this movement, these stories that deal with different types of investigations have the same objective of accessing another's mind, being able to know, understand, and also see from that perspective. Because we are closer to the characters, we can also see that "What all these heroes who inhabit contemporary series have in common is the fact that they have gone through a traumatic event, unbeknownst to the other characters who surround them, but it is what makes them choose to share their gifts with the police"5 (JOST, 2012, p. 61, my translation). To quickly illustrate, in the case of *The X-Files* as mentioned by the author, Fox Mulder's sister is kidnapped when he was a child, and the novelization *Devil's*

[5] *"Todos esses heróis que povoam as séries atuais têm em comum o fato de haverem vivenciado um acontecimento traumático, desconhecido pela maioria dos personagens que o cercam, mas que os levam a decisão de colocar seus dons a serviço da polícia"* (from the Brazilian Portuguese edition).

Advocate by Jonathan Maberry (2017) builds on some gaps left by the TV show and creates a past for Dana Scully in which she has visions that have to deal with a string of murders. The past is something that almost haunts the heroes; it is a secret - either personal or related to the State - that drives and motivates the characters in the process of investigation. And "[...] if the heroes owe their current activity to a secret trauma, which they usually refuse to evoke, the secret is also what allows them to understand others, get inside their heads, penetrate their interiors"6 (JOST, 2012, p. 64, my translation). The hero is only able to get to the truth due to this capacity of empathizing with the other, of sympathizing, of comprehending them. And it is due to the hero's expertise that the viewer can obtain knowledge and therefore revenge against the dominating institutions. By unveiling the truth, these American series act in a comforting manner to the definitive loss of transparency in democratic societies; they are, to the author, a symbolic compensation (JOST, 2012).

When it comes to studies about crime fiction on television, however, it is possible to see that there are a lot of connections being made between different series. There are patterns being identified within decades, networks, and subgenres, and we believe there are more attempts at establishing relations in a wider time range than what can be found in literary studies. A particularly relevant study is that of Tsilia Romm, which maps the portrayal of female detectives in television crime dramas from the 1970s and their stereotypes (1986a, 1986b). According to her, it is in the middle of the 1970s that there is a change in television when series such as *Police Woman* (1974 – 1978), *The Secrets of Isis* (1975 – 1976), *Wonder Woman* (1975 – 1979), *The Bionic Woman* (1976 – 1978), *Charlie's Angels* (1976 – 1981), and *Nancy Drew* (1977 – 1979) introduce women in leading roles as detectives/investigators. More importantly, they inaugurate a trend in North American television, because until then, women had to share the main role or even act as supporting characters to male detectives, usually depicted being less intelligent, totally dependent, and passive characters – when they were not the victims of crimes in detective series.

Romm (1986a) was able to identify certain traits that made up the stereotypes of the women detectives in the seventies, starting with the fact that they were usually beautiful and attractive, never married, and didn't have any children or other people who depended on them. They all had male bosses but there were no disagreements or issues with them; their main

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[6] *"[...] se os heróis devem sua atividade presente a um traumatismo secreto, que eles geralmente se recusam a evocar [...], esse segredo é também o que lhes permite compreender os outros, entrar em suas cabeças, penetrar em seu interior"* (from the Brazilian Portuguese edition).

conflict was with male villains while they rescued female victims. They mostly presented a more passive behavior in the investigation, and they never made an actual arrest – that was a job for the men in the series. They were also never truly involved in physical altercations, using instead other means to fight the villains such as throwing objects; they never captured or injured the opponents, but the women detectives were on occasion injured, kidnapped, and then rescued by their male colleagues. They frequently gave emotional support and reactions instead of receiving them.

Romm (1986a) also identifies that after the emergence of these series, there is a lack of main roles for women as detectives that lasted for almost a decade, with the exception of *Cagney & Lacey* (1981 – 1988). From mid to late 1980s, the depiction of these women starts to change, contrasting with the stereotypical one-dimensional characterization from before that prevented women from identifying with the characters (1986b). These new developments in television portrayal also follow real-life changes for women, enabling the characters to have a more active role in the investigations and also have more freedom to explore their sexuality and not be considered immoral (1986b).

Michael Arntfield (2011), when writing about the American police procedural, proposes a division of the genre into three: the Golden Age, the Gilded Age, and the Dark Age. The Golden Age spans from 1967 to 1975, troubled times for the police in the country, and the programs are seen as a way to restore some social order and the integrity of the police force in the eyes of the general public. The Gilded Age spans from 1976 to 1992, and the programs from this era show the dichotomies of industrialization, with the procedural aspects being portrayed trivially in order to focus on the personal lives of the detectives and police officers. The Dark Age has been around since 1993, and to Artfield (2011), it shows a much darker side of the profession, with crammed squad rooms, uncertainty about the future of the roles of police officers in American society, and an ever-present Captain figure to impose and show order in the workplace.

In the case of British television and crime drama, Heather Nunn and Anita Biressi (2003) state that since the beginning of the genre in the medium, women have been largely depicted as either victims of crimes or as the culprits, usually highly sexualized. There was a division between the workplace – and work itself –, which was seen as pertaining to the masculine order, and the domestic life, which was seen as pertaining to the female order. In early television series, women who were professionals were portrayed as prostitutes, never as detectives or part of the police force, and when they were detectives, they frequently saw themselves going

undercover as prostitutes or escorts to help in investigations – and more: they were portrayed changing their behavior and looks with ease and eagerness, which possibly implies these detectives were much closer to these other working women than their male colleagues in the force. It is from the 1960s onwards that these series start to present different portrayals, and the authors affirm that *Prime Suspect* was one of those which contributed to the gradual alternation of gender representation; the series that made a difference started to present a variety of women officers, in uniform and plain-clothes, who faced contemporary issues and brought discussions about sexism and public and private spheres to the foreground (NUNN; BIRESSI, 2003).

Still about *Prime Suspect*, Nunn and Biressi (2003) argue that Jane Tennison has a dual role in the show, being both the main detective of an investigation in a police procedural series while also being an ambitious woman in a male-dominated context, bearing "[…] the hallmarks of popular liberal feminism as debated in the mainstream media of the late 1980s and early 1990s: tough, power-dressing, and career-orientated with a severely disrupted private life" (p. 194); however, they also state that she still works to restore the status quo, which is typical of police procedurals. While some series presented characters bringing these discussions and questioning certain patriarchal structures, there was still an issue regarding the gaze: in some scenes, the detectives were allowed to briefly possess the gaze (but not challenge conventionality), but mostly, women were still depicted through a male gaze which objectified and sexualized them, especially bodies of female victims (NUNN; BIRESSI, 2003). They argue that *Silent Witness* (BBC, 1996-) is one of the pioneers and examples of a series that allows the gaze to belong to a woman investigator while also challenging the usual hierarchies of objectification.

In an article about contemporary television crime drama, Name Jermyn (2016) states that for women characters to survive, they must have a Unique Selling Point (USP) that should be quickly and clearly identifiable, since the mere presence of a woman in a protagonist role nowadays is not really innovative or novelty in television. But does this also apply to men/male detectives? Do all male detectives have a USP or they can just exist on television and several programs without worrying about being innovative or offering something different to the viewer? The author argues that because a contemporary television series showing sexism and the struggles of a woman detective being accepted in the workplace make no sense anymore in a post-feminist era because it is a general belief that these inequalities have ceased to exist, there needs to be something special about a woman character to justify her existence as a protagonist.

In this post-feminist world, according to Jermyn (2016), women are still expected to maintain a certain level of femininity no matter what position they occupy in the police force, being the downfall of some (such as is the case of the new *Prime Suspect USA* series aired in 2011 by the NBC) and the success of others (Stella Gibson of *The Fall*, portrayed by Gillian Anderson and the character's silk blouses). In the case of Jane Timoney, the protagonist of *Prime Suspect USA*, her signature Fedora hat was not accepted by the public, meeting criticism and mockery of a more masculine visual tradition making a reference to male detectives, and the focus of the critics on talking about this wardrobe choice implies that her outfits were more noteworthy than her detective work. On the other hand, the excess of femininity as a selling point, in the case of Stella, ends up drawing on the tradition of a hyper-fetishized femme fatale and reinforces a male gaze on current television (JERMYN, 2016).

Glen Creeber (2001) affirms that on a surface level, *Prime Suspect* is about what Tennison faces being a woman detective in what is considered a masculine world of the London Metropolitan Police Force, encountering several difficulties in the investigations having to do with both institutional and personal discrimination. The character of Tennison became an icon, "[…] her unusual mixture of ambition and vulnerability producing a complex female character that quickly set a benchmark for the portrayal of women on the small screen" (CREEBER, 2001, p. 150) and, despite this, the author affirms that the series still has not attracted enough academic attention, fortifying the need for this dissertation. However, one of the motives mentioned for this is that there might be an assumption that the series fails in the attempt to reinvent the traditions of a traditionally masculine genre and that Tennison herself would present too many masculine aspects and a lack of femininity as a result of her success in the force, even quoting Eaton (1995) that Tennison's price of being a successful detective was to not be a successful *woman* (CREEBER, 2001). Creeber (2001) mentions Tennison's smoking, swearing, and drinking as masculine traditions, but in an attempt to reinvent the hardboiled tradition, she must at the same time embrace and deconstruct it; the issue of the violent masculinity so present in the hardboiled/noir is in crisis, and Tennison would not only deconstruct the genre but also eliminate the issue of "masculine angst and isolation", being what Creeber (2001) considers to be a light in the darkness of the genre. This idea would be proved by the final scene in the first season, in which the men give her flowers for her accomplishment, and to Creeber (2001) this would mean that they recognize her both as a colleague and as a woman. While we do agree that Tennison helps break some of the traditions of the genre, the idea and reinforcement of being a woman in the article seem to stem from

traditional notions of femininity and womanhood, and we also intend to question that definition of genre.

As a counterpoint, in Julia Hallam's work on the producer and creator of *Prime Suspect*, Lynda La Plante, she argues that her imaginary worlds depend on the manipulation of traditional story and genre formats "[…] achieve their dramatic effect through an emphasis upon spectacle, strong characterization, and a point of view structure that attributes agency to female characters" (HALLAM, 2014, p. 221). Furthermore, La Plante's works give voice to usually marginalized points of view that are going to frame these crime stories, and that mystery or crime genre written by women historically challenges and deconstruct traditional and conventional portrayals of femininity (HALLAM, 2014). She also mentions that when we focus our attention on certain women authors, we are taking a political stance on the formation of the canon because these writers are usually unacknowledged and do not appear in teaching – or critic – canon due to institutional decisions that situate women on the margins (HALLAM, 2014) of a polysystem (EVEN-ZOHAR, 1990), so once more there is a reinforcement of our justification for this research.

Gray Cavender and Nancy Jurik (2007) argue that television both reflects and reproduces certain ideologies on justice and, more specifically, the crime genre portrays sentiments and ideals about crime and justice in a certain society at a certain period of time. A feminist crime work would propose a different notion of the ideals of law, order, and justice, situating crime in a context in which the traditional notion of justice is questioned and transformed, and that would be what the authors call a progressive moral fiction (CAVENDER; JURIK, 2007). Within this idea of progressive moral fiction emerges a character who is going to be the opposite of that traditional cynical detective: a character who is going to be a justice provocateur that will find creative manners within the law to achieve justice, and Tennison would fit into this proposal because she is often juxtaposed and paralleled with victim's bodies and is going to commit to solving the case and bringing justice (CAVENDER; JURIK, 2007).

What most of the works discussed above indicate, particularly those by Romm (1986a, 1986b) and Clark and Zyngier (1998), is that crime TV built around women detectives is a highly standardized genre that reflects the developments of gender debates in Western societies. As noted, this process culminates in the creation and repercussion of the character Jane Tennison and her portrayal by Dame Helen Mirren. However, since crime TV is a 20th-century development of the crime fiction inaugurated in literature in the previous century, it is only natural to wonder to what extent this development mirrors or is associated with literary

movements of similar nature. Therefore, in what follows we present the analysis of literary works we believe to have set a pattern for characterization of women detectives, paving the way for DCI Tennison and her colleagues.

2 A PREVIOUSLY UNSUITABLE JOB FOR A WOMAN

This chapter is divided into two main sections. The first one will briefly discuss the history of the Anglo-American police force, focusing on the creation of the institution and how women became part of it. The second part will focus on the emergence of the detective genre in western literature, briefly discussing male writers who created women detectives, and then focusing on presenting a historical contextualization of the characterization of women detectives in literature, bringing to the foreground the women who dedicated at least some of their literary effort to writing women detectives, investigating who these characters were. This second part is organized chronologically in order to present an overview that will allow general considerations, and the three novels of our corpus will be highlighted and analyzed more in depth so we can better understand some of the trends and choices of certain times.

2.1. A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ANGLO-AMERICAN POLICE FORCE

2.1.1. A very brief history of the (male) Anglo-American police force

Before the official police forces and law enforcement institutions were created, several cities across the United Kingdom and the United States had their own groups of people responsible for policing; however, the need for an institution of control emerged due to the "[…] breakdown of the old local constable and watch systems, and their inadequacy in dealing with a burgeoning urban industrial society or the threat of public disorder" (HEIDENSOHN, 1992, p. 33[7]).

In 1829, after numerous failed attempts by varied people at creating an organized institution, Robert Peel presented the Metropolitan Police Act in the British Parliament, thus emerging what would be known as the New Scotland Yard. A few years later, an American delegation visited London to study this new force and in 1845 a police force based on the London model was established in New York City.

When Edgar Allan Poe created his renowned detective, Auguste Dupin, the police force had already been established and active in France for half a century; more specifically, the *Préfecture de Police de Paris*, Paris' police force, was established in the year 1800, and "The

[7] Unless stated otherwise, all information regarding dates, acts, and associations are from Frances Heidensohn's *Women in Control? The role of women in law enforcement* (1992).

Murders in the Rue Morgue" was published in 1841. This short story is considered the first detective work presenting an intellectual detective and it is also the one that establishes certain tropes that became paradigmatic in detective fiction, such as the analytical detective, the companion/friend narrator, the explanation of the solution, the police force as somewhat incompetent, etc.; tropes that were later on reinforced by Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories.

2.1.2. A history of women in the Anglo-American police force

Women's roles in policing did not begin only when they officially entered the police force; on the contrary, ever since the middle of the nineteenth century they had been present in positions that allowed them to exercise some sort of social control, and while some of these women "[…]were fronting traditional activities, others had very much chosen their sphere, felt that they as women brought special qualities to it, and had in several areas invented or developed their own new roles and tasks." (HEIDENSOHN, 1992, p. 24) And it is considering these roles of social control that Frances Heidensohn (1992) distinguishes five phases in the history of women in policing, and I will bring ideas from Carrier (1988) and Bland (1985) to complement.

While the official and formal means of social control were attributed to men by the end of the nineteenth century, women were slowly starting to get more involved in political activities. There was an increase in participation in what Heidensohn (1992) names 'gendered social control'. This participation stems from the fact that women have always had a role in maintaining a certain order in the private sphere, beginning with the family role of socializing and caring for the house as wives and mothers in a patriarchal society.

Part of "[…] the moral enterprises on which many Victorian women were engaged were either of a socially controlling, order-maintaining, or a morally coercive kind. Strong powers were not usually available to them" (HEIDENSOHN, 1992, p. 21), so for as much as they could exercise their power with gendered social control in their rescue missions, as will be explained shortly, they still needed a police*man* to arrest transgressors at that initial point in the Victorian Era. And it is because of this that

> […] What is probably more important is that, in the pursuit of what could be seen as coercive goals – the moral reordering of society, the suppression of sin – they used the only techniques available to them, ceaseless careful work, close to homes and hearths, with women and children and at the most fundamental level. (HEIDENSOHN, 1992, p. 24)

The reason why these initial women in policing who worked policing (mainly) other women stayed so close to homes and dealt with issues that arose from other women and children was the idea and division of the social spheres of society; while men could circulate freely in the public sphere, women did not partake in the same freedom. Even though the New Scotland Yard was established in 1829, it was not until 1918 that women could be officially part of it. That year saw the creation of The Metropolitan Police Woman Patrols, the first official unit in the police force that employed women.

We shall start then with this period, the one of moral reform, rescue, and police matrons (1840-1910/15). One of the first introductions of women into roles of law enforcement in the United States was the introduction of the so-called "prison matrons" in the nineteenth century, more specifically in the year 1845. The Women's Prison Association and the American Female Moral Reform Society managed to have six women hired as matrons to supervise women prisoners. Their goal was to prevent sexual abuse, attacks, and occasional prostitution in the prisons by male guards and even male prisoners, besides protecting younger girls and women arrested for the first time from more experienced ones who could lead them into an immoral path.

These matrons, however, were not perceived at the time as police officers; neither the police department nor high-ranked women in these associations wanted the connection to the actual job. Instead, matron work was seen as social work at the time when the professionalization of this work began. The women were considered "safety workers", and, as mentioned, their duties were closer to that of social workers with a focus on maintaining morality inside the prisons.

It was not different in Britain. Women part of societies that were an alliance between evangelical, temperance, and moral reformers started pressuring officials to introduce matrons to care for women prisoners. They believed the matrons could help with (moral) education and also help diminish the effects of incarceration and life in an institution. But no matter the success they had, they still found themselves within a limitation of power due to the fact that they were neither enfranchised nor properly paid for the work they did.

According to Carrier (1988), the entrance of women into the police force can be seen as an anti-feminist act, contrary to what many might believe. He argues that, differently from a career in medicine of law, women who entered the police force claimed they were doing a better job than men for the sole fact that they were women and, furthermore, it was not as liberating

of traditional gender stereotypes because they worked to enforce the traditional view on family life, purity, and morality. They exerted social control *over* women, instead of protecting them from men, as the initial idea stated.

It is only in 1907, with the creation of the Women's Freedom League in Britain by Mary Allen and Nina Boyle that the word policewomen did start to have another meaning. With this organization, they started to monitor courts in order to record the inequalities in sentencing and the systematic failures of the criminal-justice system to protect women from male violence. Their desire was to have women protect women since they considered men to be a danger.

We reach then the period of specialists and pioneers (1910/15-1930). It becomes even clearer that, just before and with the beginning of World War I, authorities were actually using women to protect men *from* them and the possibilities of contagion with venereal disease. As Lucy Bland states, we can interpret the policing (of) women both as "[…] women policing as police, and women being policed" (1985, p. 24, author's emphasis). With the onset of the war and the presence of soldiers in towns and the influx of Belgian immigrants, "[….] 'social work' organizations saw women police as an extension of their work of rescue, reform and prevention" (BLAND, 1985, p. 24), continuing with the already established trend. The focus was on the protection of the troops,

> […] From numerous sources came claims that multitudes of young women were *infesting* military camps, *preying* upon soldiers, *spreading* nasty diseases. Infesting, preying, haunting harpies became the war's stock terms for young women who visited the military camps stationed in their neighborhoods. The 'amateur prostitute', or simply 'amateur', was the other key term. Such a woman was not, however, a prostitute at all/ The term seems to have reflected a difficulty with understanding the possibility of active female sexuality outside the institution of prostitution. (BLAND, 1985, p. 26, author's emphasis)

One of the ways army commanders found to protect their men from 'amateurs' and the risk of venereal disease – not hindering the troops' freedom to come and go, of course – was to establish a curfew; this curfew started in 1914 in Cardiff by a Colonel East, and it was imposed on "[…] women 'of a certain class' between the hours of 7pm and 8am" (BLAND, 1985, p. 28). Women who disobeyed this would be arrested, taken to martial court, and then sentenced to a period in prison. This same colonel also banned women from pubs between 7 pm and 6 am, and soon enough the Commissioner of Police in London forbid pubs to serve women before 11.30 am. What followed suit was several other towns started prohibiting women to drink after 6 pm in all places, not only pubs, as "Alcohol was clearly thought to encourage promiscuity in women" (BLAND, 1985, p. 30). It was not long until wives and dependents of soldiers and sailors who were away at war also started to be surveilled; any action deemed as immortal by

the police or other misconducts such as heavy drinking was enough for the allowances those women received to be removed and the payments would go to the chief constables, which enabled them to maintain vigilance on the women.

The feminist opposition was strong, affirming that locking women (and prostitutes) up would not prevent men from going after them. They managed to get the Cardiff curfew canceled; however, the protests and public demonstrations seemed to encourage General Hammersley, the Grantham Commanding Officer, to establish even harsher restrictions. He "[…] introduced an order that empowered the police and the military to enter houses within a six-mile radius of the Army Post Office" (BLAND, 1985, p. 30) to check if women were (alone) in their beds in the evening.

The Grantham military, encouraged by the Home Office, used women police to aid in their curfew control efforts. And while policewomen thought they were "[…] protecting women sexually and morally, they were viewed by authorities as an ideal means of protecting men: men's physical protection from VD 8through the 'protection'/control of women" (BLAND, 1985, p. 31). This use of women police to control girls and women, however, failed to account for the soldiers who sought out women themselves. Moreover, this issue of social control caused disagreement within feminist organizations at the time. A few women were against the surveillance and coercion of their own gender and separated themselves from the Women Police Volunteers; the group supported by the majority changed its name to the Women's Police Service. According to the few women who left, those who stayed and took part in the control were going against their suffragist principles.

This next period is marked by both an initial expansion and growth in numbers of women joining the police forces followed by a stagnation caused by the Depression (1930-1945). There was an attempt at creating a separate "women's precinct" in New York in 1921 but it did not last long due to political and legal issues. In many places then police women were assigned to precincts only temporarily, having no true "base" to establish themselves. Moreover, the exigencies for their entrance into the force were higher than four men and there was no chance of being promoted in the USA. In Britain, the situation was slightly better, with women being able to rise to the role of Superintendent, but the overall scenario was the same due to the Depression. It is only in 1931 that women are granted the same conditions of service, pay, and pension (CARRIER, 1988).

[8] Venereal disease.

The period of expansion comes with the Second World War, seeing a great increase in recruitment. It is in this year span of 1945 to 1970 that some of the moral aspects ingrained in the job from its inception lose their strength and policewomen see themselves assigned to patrol duty more often. Even more significantly, from the mid-1950s and onwards, there is a shift in women's role in the police due to the Civil Rights Movement and the Second Wave of feminism.

There are, of course, different policies in each country, but in the end, the results are similar – at least when talking about USA and Britain. As a direct consequence of the Civil Rights Movement and the Second Wave of feminism, there were several changes to the role of police women in the fight for the rights of minorities. The changes include, but are not limited to, the integration of women into the mainstream with the removal of discriminatory practices officially (in the actual day-to-day, they still had to face difficulties and prejudice from male colleagues); the increase in both number and percentage of women in the force; the specialist work replaced by general policing, and the police crises in the USA, with a rise in crime rates, and in Britain, with the police's own performance being questioned.

There are two milestones in the history of women in policing that led to integration: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in the USA and the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 in Britain. The first, Title VII, "[…] made it unlawful for an employer to discriminate in recruitment, promotion, or other employment practices on the grounds of 'race, color, religion, sex or national origin'" (HEIDENSOHN, 1992, p. 57); it was amended in 1964, and in 1972 it started being applied to the government under the Equal Employment Act. The second milestone, the Sex Discrimination Act, arose alongside the Equal Pay Act, also in 1975. In more general and simplified terms, the Equal Pay Act is almost self-explanatory, requiring that everyone be paid equally for the same work, and the sex Discrimination Act "[…] made illegal three types of discrimination: direct, indirect, and as a result of victimization" (HEIDENSOHN, 1992, p. 61). These two milestones suddenly brought on changes to policies with barely any preparation. According to Heidensohn, "[…] In the USA the key issue was of women going on patrol, in Britain of abolishing the police woman's departments and with them, apparently, the specialist work women had always done with women and juveniles" (1992, p. 63).

Despite these developments, the overall situation was one of slow change, especially in the minds and acceptance of male police colleagues, who "[...] were crucially determining factors in the police woman's lives" (HEIDENSOHN, 1992, p. 65), with attitudes such as harassment, the use of nicknames, and even abuse arising in research. This resistance from fellow police officers is also reflected in the crime literature being written by women at the time

- it's not only the fact that some characters are amateurs or private investigators that is the main issue, but the fact that they are women detectives that ends up being the major cause of resistance.

2.2. CONSIDERATIONS ON LITERARY CHARACTERIZATION

To begin the conversation about literary characters, it is important to define the term characterization, which will be used throughout this dissertation. According to Antonio Candido, characterization has to do with "[…] the elements that an author uses to describe and define a character in a way that it gives it the impression of having a life, configuring itself as such to the reader"9 (CANDIDO et al, 2011, p. 59, my translation). For Candido, there are three elements that are central to a novel, and they are the plot, the character, and the technique; but for him, it is through the character that the reader can relate affectionately and intellectually to a text using mechanisms such as identification, projection, and transference (2011). He criticizes the idea that the character is the essential element of the novel, arguing that the structure of the novel itself is the most important element.

Antonio Candido affirms that the truth of a character depends on its function in the overall structure of a novel and that its characterization happens in its situation in relation to other characters of the work, the work's setting and temporal duration, and the ideas presented. It is due to the choices and distribution of traits that can be interrelated that a fictional being is constructed. Moreover, For Candido, it is virtually impossible to thoroughly describe a being, and therefore an author must choose the characteristics carefully. Each author then is going to *conventionalize* their patterns of characterization. The reader then, I complement, learns to read these patterns in order to identify the selected traits and start the process of sense-making and analysis – or at least the process of identifying the traits in order to try to understand a character, especially in relation to the other characters in the work, even if they are doing so unintentionally. This pattern is relevant because a character in a novel is a "schematic configuration" (CANDIDO et al, 2011, p. 33).

Mieke Bal, in her seminal work *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* (2009) divides the text into three layers: narrative, story, and fabula. Following this division,

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[9] *"[...] os elementos que o romancista utiliza para descrever e definir a personagem, de maneira a que ela possa dar a impressão de vida, configurando-se ante o leitor".*

she splits characters into two layers as well. In the narrative layer, the text is considered to be a finite and whole structure that is made of signs. In defining the story layer, the one in which the fabula "[…] is presented in a certain manner" (BAL, 2009, p. 5), she discusses characters, that is, "[…] the effect that occurs when a figure is presented with distinctive, mostly human characteristics" (BAL, 2009, p. 112). In analyzing the fabula layer, the "[…] series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by actors" (BAL, 2009, p. 5), Bal uses the term "actors" to define a structural position that is related to the events of a narrative, and it has to do with their intentions and aims.

The reader carries with them a certain reading baggage that will influence the construction of meaning, and Bal uses the term frame of reference for that concept. This will certainly have an effect even in the way a reader first approaches a narrative; considering the character of Miss Marple, for example, chances are that a first-time reader already has some pre-conceived ideas about her due to overall cultural knowledge, for she can be a referential character. The reader's expectations then can be confronted or confirmed when reading the narrative. Alongside our expectations, from the first time we read information about the character in the narrative and onwards, the character becomes more or less predictable, in the sense that at each description or facts that are mentioned, the identity that is slowly revealed starts creating expectations that limit different possibilities for that character. Some of the elements that act as limiters include but are not limited to gender, type of narrator, names, physical descriptions, history, and profession; however, the expectations can always be broken.

For Mieke Bal (2009), there are four main principles to the construction of the image of a character, and they are repetition, accumulation, the relationships with other characters, and what she calls transformation. This means that the reader ascertains who a character is through the repetition of important information and traits throughout the text, and with this repetition comes the accumulation of characteristics; moreover, the similarities and contrasts that the reader can establish between characters also add to their characterization, and, finally, she talks of the changes and transformations a character can go through. Meir Sternberg (1978) argues that characters do not face changes in the novel, what actually changes is the reader's perceptions with the discovery of new expositional information, which will be further discussed shortly.

But how does the reader come across the information about a character? According to Bal (2009), the reader can deduce the characteristics by interpreting the text from the way in which the character interacts with the world, the events, and the other characters, or they can

be given explicitly to the reader by the narrator, the character itself, or other characters. Regarding the second way, the reader can come upon the traits in different ways; a character can talk about itself to itself, or it can talk about itself to another character, or another character can describe the character of interest. The reader also needs to pay attention to the manner that this information is presented, whether through narration or character speech, because then one might need to take into consideration the issue of focalization, that is, through whose point of view the story is being told.

The other level of analysis then will see characters as actors. For Bal (2009), actors "[…] who have no functional part in the structures of that fabula because they do not cause or undergo functional events […] may be left out of consideration" (p. 201). Drawing from Greimas (1973), she further characterizes as actants those actors who have aims, and we can think of their functions considering the relations between subject and object – the one who aspires towards a goal and the one who is the goal -, receiver and power – the one who receives the object, often coincides with the subject, and the power is the one who gives support to the achievement of the goals -, helper and opponent. Furthermore, the actors have a competence, but "[…] what characterizes the detective story is that the murderer fails in his or her competence: he makes a mistake" (BAL, 2009, p. 211), and they can also be read regarding their truth value, that is, the facet that they present to the reader and what they actually are; for the author, detective stories rely on secrets, and the reader can only ascertain the truth value of an actant by the end of the text in the process of looking at it in retrospection.

In *Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering in Fiction*, Meir Sternberg (1978) presents the idea that the main function of the exposition is to "[…] introduce the reader into an unfamiliar world, the fictive world of the story, by providing him with the general and specific antecedents indispensable to the understanding of what happens in it" (p. 1). The information given to the reader includes "[…] the time and place of the action; of the nature of the fictive world peculiar to the work […]; of the history, appearance, traits and habitual behavior of the dramatis personae; and of the relations between them" (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 1). Some of this information might be dispensed with if the author considers the reader's frame of reference, that is, the prior (common) knowledge one might have about the fictional universe, including the recurrence of a central character such as in detective stories.

According to Gerrig and Allbritton (1990), readers have an active participation in the construction of characters, that is, readers can step beyond the literary text in order to explain and predict some aspects of the narrative instead of just being passive recipients of information.

The authors center their article around three issues: the readers' preconceptions and theories of causality; the readers' impressions and the division of the focus of analysis into categories or individuals, and the way in which immersion and the study of literature can help in cognitive psychology studies.

The authors start by stating that literary authors portray their theories of causality by creating antecedents to situations and also by portraying their consequences, and the causes are usually attributed to agents, whether they are human or nonhuman, but most theories are only implicit in their works. When observing characters' behaviors, the causes that produce the actions can be internal, such as a particular disposition, or external, such as constraints imposed by social situations. To accurately and properly observe, one needs to be careful to identify the circumstances; however, readers tend to make the Fundamental Attribution Error of explaining behavior mostly in terms of dispositional causes instead of situational ones because of biased analyses.

In a category-based analysis, we see a character as a member of a defined category and create expectations based on that category's norms and rules, and in a person-based analysis, we see a character as a unique individual and create expectations upon observing them over a certain amount of time. And a reader's predictions are made based on real-world experience, the process of formation of impressions of a character is affected by real life and our processing biases, as per Ryan's principle of minimal departure (1980) and Elleström's and Peirce's concept of collateral knowledge (2018), that is, extratextual sources can interfere in the interpretation of a character. (EATON, 1976).

To go from a category-based analysis (which can be enough and efficient to judge or create expectations) to a person-based one, the reader becomes more involved and must go through a reorganization of memory, that is, instead of looking at a character and only "seeing" categories, we also have to see and consider other properties that are specific to *that* character. This way, "category memberships become only a small part of the information associated with" a character (GERRIG; ALLBRITTON, 1990, p. 387). To examine a certain situation, we can try to remember a similar past experience in order to feed our expectations. These expectations can follow what has already been identified as a well-know or highlighted aspect of a character's behavior in the past. Consistent with Sternberg's take on exposition (1978, p.3), when a reader reads works that involve the same (main) characters, one can bring some certainties to what Gerrig and Allbritton (1990) call a "continuing experience" (p. 388), then the author needs only to allude to certain themes to evoke those memories. The reader can also

be more aware of the consistency of implicit and psychological aspects because they have more direct access to thoughts through the narration, whereas in real life we can only ascertain someone's consistency of motivations through actions and words that are assimilated through our own biases. Even with the created expectations, however, "[…] *anomalous suspense* motivates a strict demarcation between information that readers apply within the literary world and information that readers apply from outside of it" (GERRIG; ALLBRITTON, 1990, p. 389), therefore, there is information that is still unattainable and helps in one's immersion in a literary work. All these processes that a reader goes through (the Fundamental Attribution Error, based representations, and immersion) are not unique to literature and therefore are not what is considered special about literary characters; "[…] Unique to the world of literature are the types of information authors provide for these processes to act upon" (GERRIG; ALLBRITTON, 1990, p. 389), so for a thorough analysis, one must also pay close attention to the text itself and consider possible biases both in one's own interpretation and also in the manipulation of information that is shown in the narrative.

In 1990, David Fishelov proposes a typology of characters in literature. Before he does so in the article, however, he brings an overview of what had been attempted so far, raising issues and problems with the theoretical works that had been published. He begins by bringing the traditional division of characters into flat and round as proposed by Forster. In his theory, he proposes that flat characters are simple and do not develop much, whereas round characters are complex and go through a bigger development. According to Fishelov (1990) and what he discusses, Forster lacks a clearer distinction between the two terms.

Harvey proposes a division of characters into four types: protagonist, background, card, and ficelle. The protagonist would be the round character while the background would be the flat one, and the card would propose realistic characterization while the ficelle is more typified and representative. According to Fishelov (1990), however, this theoretical proposal becomes problematic because it also lacks clear distinctions when it comes to the classification because the author mixes "[…] the criterion of the function of characters within a novel with an attempt to make a general typology of characters" (p. 423).

The next author Fishelov (1990) brings is Hochman, who proposes an elaborate taxonomy of characters with eight distinct categories and their opposites: stylization vs. naturalism; coherence vs. incoherence; wholeness vs. fragmentariness; literalness vs. symbolism; complexity vs. simplicity; transparency vs. opacity; dynamism vs. staticism; and closure vs. openness. One of the issues that Fishelov (1990) brings is that some of these

categories that are considered characteristics or qualities of characters are in truth referring to the degree to which the narrator reveals the related information; another issue is that while the typology itself proposes to be basic, there are sixty-four possible combinations of characters.

In an attempt to solve these issues raised by citing other authors, David Fishelov (1990) then proposes his own typology using two types of distinctions. The first distinction uses the ideas of flat and round in conjunction with the distinction between what he names the textual and constructed levels of a literary text. He mentions that, for a typology of characters to work, there needs to be a focus on the division of a literary text into different levels, and that the distinction of flat and round characters can be used in both levels (textual and constructed). The textual level refers to the linguistic aspects, the "surface", such as whether the character is present or not, if it has a name, if its thoughts are represented, and if it is portrayed through more than one point of view. According to him, the function of these elements that are present – or not – at the textual level is to "[…] create the impression of a lifelike character" (FISHELOV, 1990, p. 425), that is, by the accumulation of information on the textual level, the reader can interpret that character as being truly present in the narrative as a person (or any other type of creature, depending on the work). The constructed level, as the name suggests, is an activity that attempts to construct and "[…]"match" the various details and patterns provided by the literary work with the conceptual network with which we perceive and apprehend the world" (FISHELOV, 1990, p. 425), that is, it refers to an integration of the reader's past experiences and previous knowledge, which in turn creates an imagined fictional world that is inhabited by characters, some more individualized than others.

Just because a character is flat on one level, it does not mean it is necessarily true that it will be flat on the other level; Fishelov (1990) affirms that by using the division of the literary text into textual and constructed levels it is possible for a character to receive different treatment in the two levels. There are, then, four categories: textually flat, textually round, constructionally flat, and constructionally round. If a character is textually flat, it means that it is depicted in a one-dimensional way, without change in characteristics or point of view from which it is portrayed; if a character is textually round, it means that there is a more elaborate description and portrayal of thoughts and actions throughout the text; if a character is constructionally flat, it means that the character can be fit by the reader into a single category in retrospection; and for a character to be constructionally round, it means that we cannot classify it into a single category.

If a character is textually and constructionally flat, it can be labeled as the "pure" type; if a character is textually round while constructionally flat, it is an individual-like type; if a character is textually flat and constructionally round, it is a type-like individual; and, at last, if a character is textually and constructionally round, it is labeled as a "pure" individual. There is not, however, a hierarchy as all categories have their functions and degrees of importance in a narrative. Fishelove (1990) also emphasizes that these labels are not fixed and absolute for they can be relative and change according to the context that the character is in.

Fishelove (1990) also mentions the issue of psychological depth, defining it as a trait the reader can assign to a character if its personality seems to be multilayered and complex, and if, in its social interactions, it presents inner conflicts and thoughts about its relationship with other characters and situations. Interestingly, in presenting his examples to further explain each category, David Fishelove (1990) comes to the conclusion that in the classical novel of the 18th Century, the background characters were "pure" types, while in the modernist novel, the background is permeated with type-like individuals, that is, characters that he deems to be more eccentric. There is also a higher focus on type-like individuals and "pure" individuals as the protagonists in the modernist novel.

In his chapter "Character" in *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, Uri Margolin starts by giving two definitions of what a character is; in a broad and more general definition, a character is any entity in a fictional narrative, or storyworld participant, and in a more narrow and specific definition, a character is a participant in a fictional narrative, or a fictional agent. According to the author, characters can be introduced in a work by three types of expressions: proper names, personal pronouns, and descriptions. There are different perspectives through which one can approach character studies, and Margolin (2007) chooses three that he considers to be the major ones: "[…] character as literary figure, that is, an artistic product or artifice constructed by an author for some purpose; […] character as an individual within a possible world; and character as text-based construct or mental image in the reader's mind" (p. 66).

In considering characters as artifices, we can define them in their creation through the use of a language by a human mind in a specific cultural and historical context, even following certain literary conventions, according to Margolin (2007). A reader forms a mental image based on a text and can share it with others by talking and/or writing. When readers know they are talking about the same character and compare their mental images, there is some agreement on some features, and a "[…] public image or notion […] that does not depend on any one reader" is formed (MARGOLIN, 2007, p. 67). This means that they can be considered to be

semiotic constructs, and they are defined by the very act of storytelling, that is, they do not exist without a text or without being realized in the reader's mind; they are not, however, reduced to or identifiable with these two instances.

Moreover, they are characterized in a certain way to produce an effect, so one can wonder to what ends an author has chosen these specific characteristics for a fictional being. And because texts are finite, the characters are considered incomplete if we consider the select number of features ascribed to them in comparison to an indefinite amount of possibilities of properties. Margolin (2007) then considers characters to be "[…] partially indeterminate (schematic, not fully individuated), and are technically person-kinds who can be filled in (specified, concretized) in various ways and to different degrees" (p. 68), and one of these ways is what we do in our studies and analyzes. In analyzing characters as artifices, we can also identify types, that is, when certain properties are fixed and often occur together. Margolin (2007) also affirms that one of the genres in which there are several types is the detective story.

When we consider characters as non-actual individuals, there is a shift in perspective that will dictate what issues are more relevant. Now, a character is an individual that exists in a (set of) world(s), whose properties can be as far or as close to the actual real world, and the most relevant issues are the way in which such an individual exists, presents their identity, and survives in a fictional setting. This fictional world can be mapped in relation to its inhabitants by the answers to who or what exists and in what manner. Moreover, in this level, Margolin (2007) affirms that characters themselves can create a mental image of other characters. After the existence is established, it is essential that we identify the properties and divide them into different aspects: physical, behavioral, communicative, and mental. The set of properties ascribed to a character is limited by the possibilities in the storyworld and their role in the story.

As non-actual individuals, a literary character is "[…] an entity with human-like exteriority and internal mental states defined by current cultural concepts" (MARGOLIN, 2007, p. 73), and while the exterior features can be identifiable by other characters who in turn are characterized by this process and their ability to ascertain properties, internal properties are only available to a narrator. Once the properties of a character are ascertained, the next step is to establish a structure or pattern to organize these features into a consistent unity, and such categories that can be used are to consider the species of a character, their gender, age, ethnicity, social status, actional patterns, and psychology. And because most stories involve some degree of change, we can also view characters as either static or dynamic based on whether or not changes occur; a character that can evolve is dynamic, whereas a character that is presented to

us from the beginning of the *sujet* that maintains the characteristics throughout the narrative can be considered static.

Once we have established mental images of the characters and according to the idea that they are "[…] text-based menta models of possible individuals, built up in the mind of the reader in the course of textual processing" (MARGOLIN, 2007, p. 76), we can then consider characters as readerly mental constructs.

Most important here are the operations involved in the formation of the mental representation according to its textual sources, the rules that guide these operations, and the final product's composition. Reading is a "[…] multistage activity of information processing" (MARGOLIN, 2007, p. 76), and when we read and identify a character, we start by spotting a "referring expression" and all that is mentioned from that point onwards about that character is accumulated and updated until we reach the end of the text and can form the final profile.

One of the operations of this process if the formulation of a statement of characterization that attributes a property to a character. Characterization can be direct or indirect, the first having only one step, while the latter involves more steps. For example, a mental property can be attributed from an inference about a physical property that has been previously attributed. The source text provides an extensive *textual database* in which narrator(s) and characters make statements that function as direct and indirect characterizations. Once the reader gathers the data, they need to be critically evaluated so that we can choose what will be used in the construction of a character.

A reader's inferences are regulated by rules of inference: "[…] those explicitly enunciated by the impersonal authoritative narrating voice […]; genre and period conventions […]; and those based on the reader's general world knowledge" (MARGOLIN, 2007, p. 77). The process of character construction is a mental activity that is continuous, built on the constant movement between textual information and the reader's general knowledge structures. In gathering properties, we activate these general knowledge structures to create a character model, integrating all information to properly understand the characterization. Once we come upon more information, we can either fit it into the pattern that has been established or try to modify it. If it is contrasting, it can lead to recategorization and invalidation of what has been inferred so far. This could lead to a new type of character that does not fit into any (stereo)type in the reader's knowledge, or the category could be applied to a specific phase of a character's journey. All of this, according to Margolin (2007), is the process of reading *for* character.

On stereotypes, Richard Dyer (1999) affirms that they are an ordering process, a "shortcut", a way of reference, and an expression of values and beliefs. As an ordering process, stereotypes are a way to make sense of a society through the creation of patterns. As a shortcut, it means that they are capable of being a simple form of representation that at the same time encapsulates a vast array of complex information. As a way of referencing and representation in fiction, they are a subcategory of the type; a type, according to the author (DYER, 1999), is a character that is created with recognizable and defining features that are unchangeable – if the traits are universal, they are archetypes, and if the traits are culturally specific, they are social types or stereotypes.

As an expression of values and beliefs, stereotypes are considered to be an agreement about a certain social group; social types are people (or characters) that "belong" to a given society defined by those groups in power, while stereotypes are those who are outsiders. In fiction, this distinction is made through social types being more flexible and capable of starring into any plot and role, while stereotypes' own representations become implicit narratives. To Dyer (1999), the most relevant function of the stereotype is to establish and maintain clear boundaries between who belongs and who does not, and, in turn, bring certain invisible issues to the foreground.

What Dyer and Margolin have in common in their attempts at creating a theoretical framework through which characters can be analyzed is that they bring to the foreground the reader's interpretations and processes of retrospection. Although these readerly theories are informed by cognitivist narrative studies, they are also anchored on the Russian formalist concept of the two-fold nature of narratives, i.e. of the relationship between fabula and sujet.

> […] The *fabula* of the work is the chronological or chronological-causal sequence into which the reader, progressively and retrospectively, reassembles these motifs […]. The *sujet*, in contrast, is the actual disposition and articulation of these narrative motifs in the particular finished product, as their order and interrelation, shaping and coloring, was finally decided on by the author. To put it as simply as possible, the *fabula* involves what happens in the work as (re)arranged in the "objective" order of occurrence, while the *sujet* involves what happens in the order, angle, and patterns of presentation actually encountered by the reader. (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 8-9)

However, it is not just the chronology of a narrative that is affected by the (mis)matching of fabula and sujet; the whole exposition of events and characters depends on this arrangement that creates gaps, generates hypotheses, and feeds (dis)likes towards characters. No matter how long a story's narrative arc, such readerly responses can only be reaffirmed or modified once

the reader reaches the end of the narrative and has all the expositional data s/he needs to reassess first impressions and the primacy effect.

Sternberg also affirms that we need to take into consideration the fact that both *sujet* and fabula are subject to manipulation when it comes to point of view. Moreover, the expositional information, that is, what Sternberg (1978) also refers to as the "antecedents" of a work can also be manipulated and reorganized in order to create expositional gaps and tension in the narrative interests. However,

> […] Whenever the author decides [...] to refrain from starting his work with a block of antecedents, he considerably reduces the difficulty of pinpointing the end of the expositional period in the fabula. [...] the work generally plunges into a full-fledged scene, thus indicating the temporal point of reference to the reader right at the beginning while delaying the communication of the expositional material that will explain what is happening at the present moment and why it is happening. […] forcing the reader, during his progression along the continuum of the text, to regress in order to relate the material gradually disclosed to earlier stages in the action and/or the reading, to link and re-link past, present and future, and constantly to reinterpret what has gone before. (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 31)

Regarding the manners of presentation of exposition in the *sujet* – "[…] for in the fabula the exposition is always wholly concentrated at the beginning" (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 33) -, the author divides it into two: location and form. The presentation of exposition when it comes to form can be either concentrated or distributed, that is, it might be "[…] communicated to the reader in a single continuous bloc or be broken up into smaller, discontinuous units" (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 35). When it comes to location, the exposition can be preliminary or delayed; when the exposition is preliminary, it is concentrated and pre-dates the first scene of the work; when the exposition is delayed, it means that upon looking at it, the information will retrospectively illuminate or change the reader's understanding of the events. Another important concept for the author is that of the beginning of a literary work *in media res*. He brings the discussion on the origin conception of the expression as plunging into the middle of the fabula, indicating a deviation in the chronological order of the presentation of the exposition. However, this term, besides entailing a temporary suppression of some exposition, it "[…] denotes no more than a certain deformation of the chronological sequence. Though it often coincides with a plunge into a scenic occasion and the delay of most of the antecedents, it necessarily involves only the preclusion of identical starting-points for fabula and sujet" (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 40).

Meir Sternberg (1978) sees the literary text as a *dynamic system of gaps* (p. 50) that can be opened and manipulated; these gaps can be temporary or permanent, and it is up to the reader

to fill them in by creating hypotheses and testing them out against the divulging of what might be relevant information. Whether the gap is permanent or temporary, it necessarily involves some sort of deformation of the chronological order of presentation (p. 51), and if and when the information is divulged, the chronological order is still deformed. The reader's attention is drawn to the lack of certain information in the text and stimulated to attempt to search for it. However, the desire to try to fill the gaps depends on several factors, such as

> […] the interest created by the initially dramatized situation; […] the author's skill in opening the gaps and maintaining the reader's curiosity […]; the importance of the suppressed information; and […] the extent of the reader's consciousness that he has been plunged into the midst of a causal sequence […]. (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 54)

The expositional gaps also function as propellers of what Sternberg (1992) refers to as the universal narrative interests of curiosity, suspense, and surprise. Curiosity happens when there are expositional gaps related to information about the narrative past, that is, it is the interest of retrospection; suspense happens when there are expositional gaps and hints related to the future, that is, it is the interest of prospection, and surprise happens when there are twists in the communication that culminate in the effects created in the moment of disclosure, that is, it is the interest of recognition – both of the reader's initial ignorance and the truth about the world.

For the purposes of this dissertation, I will consider the dynamics of the gaps and the matters of exposition as they relate to a gradual unfolding of the characters that will be analyzed in the third chapter. Regarding the presentation of characters, Sternberg (1978) brings a study on the issue of the endurance and influence of the first impressions the reader has about certain characters due to the order of presentation of the information. Moreover, in his analysis of Homer's *The Odyssey*, he affirms that the character of Odysseus does not change or evolve or develop throughout the work; what truly changes is the reader's acquaintance with the character due to the manipulation of the expositional information. In discussing primacy versus recency, he affirms that the conclusions he reaches in this work have practical and theoretical implications for several areas of communication. He also affirms that those findings on verbal and literary communication can also be applied to the narrative and drama, including cinema – and I will also include contemporary television here.

> […] First, because their frame of fictionality ensures that the reader's first impressions shall be those freely devised by the text rather than rigidly derived [...] from the receiver's extratextual subjective experience and doctrinal preconceptions. Second, because the very duration of their reading-process makes it possible, for instance, to effect both a more durable or settled primacy effect and a more gradual recency effect than in corresponding cases of (say) lyrical poetry. Third, because their objects of

> manipulation - characters in action - naturally call forth strong emotive and normative response. And fourth, [...] because of the superior rhetorical resources afforded by their manifold (actional as well as presentational) dynamics. (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 95-96)

Another model of dynamic control in a narrative is that of the rhetoric of anticipatory caution. Here, the primary effect and the readers' reactions are qualified from the beginning of the text, and the effect is defined in terms of the relations between the primacy and recency of information disclosed to the reader. This model also

> [...]devises in addition a correspondence between the reader's and the protagonist's impression formation. The dynamics of response, hypothesis-construction, and chronological reconstruction, within the rhetorical framework consisting in the relationship between author and reader, has a concurrently sustained dramatic equivalent, within the fictive world itself, in the dynamics of the heroine's own perceptual adventure. (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 130)

This means that the reader's process of figuring out the events of a work can coincide with the protagonist's discoveries and perception due to choices of focalization and point of view. One of the dangers of this coincidence is prejudice or prejudgement due to a biased observation point in the narration, of which the reader can be made aware. We also need to consider one's pre-conceived notions, that is, the extratextual information that is the framework of reference one has about a certain subject or even a type or a specific character.

> No doubt is left in the reader's mind, however, that the most potent source of prejudgment and misjudgement in the world of the novel is the observers' "prejudice" or "partiality" in its various forms and combinations [...]. Sometimes the narrator herself helps to lay bare the influence of the observer's wishful thinking on the valuations of character and event [...]. More often, the characters themselves are made to point out the dangers of partiality, explicitly relating them to their own views, usually by way of polite demurrer [...] or, naturally more trenchantly, to the views of others. (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 140)

This will become even clearer in the next chapter comparing the chosen objects from different eras of the detective tradition; one of the biggest differences is that of the types of narrators in Agatha Christie's works featuring Miss Marple and later works in the 1980s, but there is a similarity when it comes to the creation of an opinion about a person that is according to a specific character who is observing the events.

When Sternberg discusses the issue regarding the gaps of expositional antecedents, approximating this to the detective novel, the author affirms that they are not

> [...] fully and authoritatively conveyed by the narrator at the very start but are on the contrary delayed, distributed and submerged, fragmentary and often temporarily or even permanently ambiguous, at best less than wholly reliable, and never conclusive.

> Consequently the reader can fill in the gaps only by hint of a laborious process of selection, rearrangement, and reinterpretation of data [...]. In short, he has a firsthand understanding of the agent's perceptual predicament, since his superior insight into the developing situation is ultimately based on more or less tentative hypotheses and he is seldom as sure of his ground as when enjoying the privilege of Trollope's confidence. (p. 156)

This reinforces Sternberg's idea that the process of filling in the gaps and trying to understand the *sujet* is a retrospective process; it is only at the end of a work that the reader has a full grasp of what happened and can understand what expositional elements, if any, need to be used to fill in the gaps.

As for the exposition concerning the detective story itself, Sternberg (1978) states that

> [...] the explanation of the delay in the execution of revenge or unmasking of the criminal in terms of the revenger's or the detective's ignorance of the identity of the evildoer or the doubtful nature of the evidence he does possess. The climax is postponed, then, owing to the lack of what is to the reader expositional information. (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 178-179)

This, of course, considering the more traditional model in which it is only at the end of the novel that the true culprit will be revealed, with the detective explaining their investigation process and reasoning. It usually happens in the form of a monologue, usually with little to no interference from the culprit or the police. It is only then, with the disclosure of the information thus far held back by the detective that the reader can reassemble the puzzle pieces in their mind. Also,

> The detective story […] exploits what is in essence the same type of overall structure not for the stimulation of suspense but primarily of curiosity. […] if any discrepancy in awareness is created between us and the detective, it relates not to the past but to the future. We know in advance that the criminal is to be apprehended in the last chapter and that the detective is sure to come to no harm; but we are kept in ignorance all along of the circumstances leading up to the crime, particularly the identity of its perpetrator. Indeed, it is precisely the necessity to unravel the expositional mysteries that propels forward both the action […] and our attention […] from the beginning to end and justifies the constant postponement of the climax […]. (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 179-180)

These general structures and expectations that the reader has are common in detective stories from different periods. In this structure, the gaps that are opened have to do with the expositional past, concealing the truth about the crimes, especially the culprit's identity; this reaffirms Sternberg's proposition that the narrative interest of curiosity is the one that is manipulated the most in this literary genre. With the closing of the gaps being postponed to the last possible pages, the reader then

> [...]looks forward to the surprise that is to be sprung on him in the last chapter, in which the detective brings his investigation to a successful conclusion by triumphantly

> unmasking the criminal and explaining to the astonished audience every link in the chain of reasoning that led to the dramatic denouement. In the course of this delayed and concentrated exposition the clues distributed throughout are reexamined and sifted. (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 182)

In these stories, there is not only a sort of battle of wits between the reader and the detective to reach the solution but also a battle between the reader and author. The clues are available throughout the text, but the information needs to be communicated in such a manner for the reader to be able to participate in the investigation and also in a way that prevents the mystery from being solved too soon. For that reason, there is a steady flow of expositional material for the reader to piece together into a coherent exposition in order to disambiguate the major and minor gaps. So whenever new clues come to light, the reader must re-examine and rework the hypotheses created to see if they are compatible with the new information, that is, there is a continuous checking of data. As a general rule, the reader must come to a point in which it is impossible for him/her to continue, and there are usually two outcomes: the reader either gives up on the investigation and leaves it to the detective, or the reader becomes suspicious of a character without being able to validate it logically.

According to Meir Sternberg, we can define these detective stories in general as "[…] a retardatory structure that achieves its effects - sustained curiosity and suspense - by distributing the expositional material piecemeal throughout while postponing the concentrated, true exposition - the opening part of the fabula - to the end of the sujet." (1978, p. 182)

While this is not the point of the upcoming analysis, it is worth mentioning that it is not an easy task to conceive of innovations without infringing the traditional generic conventions. Some of these innovations mentioned by Sternberg (1978) include possibilities such as the "[…] permanent ambiguation of the gaps […], the restriction of the "detective's" powers or the questioning of his motives […], the charging of clues and quest with psychological and thematic meaning […] or the transposal of informational discrepancies" (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 182). For Tzvetan Todorov (2013), however, the typical crime novel does not transgress the norms of the genre; instead, the novel would adapt itself and its new ideas to fit into the already established rules.

On the matter, Todorov discusses the three subgenres of crime fiction: the mystery novel, the noir novel, and the suspense or thriller. The mystery novel, for Todorov (2013), is the classic detective novel that emerges strongly in the interwar period, and this subgenre presents a duality in the narrative. He argues that there are two stories being told in the classic

detective novel, namely the narrative of the crime itself and the narrative of the process of investigation. Traditionally, the first line of the narrative, that of the crime, begins and ends before the second. According to Todorov (2013), the characters that are featured in the storyline of the investigation do not act, they only uncover and discover what happened and nothing can happen to them due to the rule of immunity of the detective. But if the characters do not act, are they to be considered *characters* at all if we keep in mind Bal's idea of actants? Todorov will go one step further and affirm that the story of the investigation has no importance in itself, that its only function is to be a mediator between the reader and the truth about the crime. If it is truly insignificant – Todorov's own words – then why not forego the second story at all and just present the files of the crime to the reader so they can investigate by themselves? He mentions that there were attempts at that, but does not go into further details. I believe that the relevance of the second narrative is precisely *the detective* in the classic mystery novel, their relations, and the way in which they investigate the crime, going against Candido's idea that the character is not the most relevant element in a novel. Let's consider Sherlock Holmes and Hercule Poirot for a moment, iconic detectives from this classic era that have been conquering readers up to this date. What is it about their stories that fascinate people generation after generation? We are of the opinion that it is due to their particular personalities that distinguish them from other detectives and characters, their catchphrases, and their eccentric visuals.

The second subgenre Todorov analyzes is the noir novel. It emerged in the United States of America during the Second World War, bringing violence and questioning of morality to the foreground of the novel. According to the author, in the noir novel, the first story, that of the crime, is more suppressed to give way to a focus on the investigation itself; in this subgenre, the narration of the story coincides with the unfolding of the events, and while the classic mystery novel is narrated usually by a companion, the noir novel is narrated as a memoir (TODOROV, 2013). The key to the noir novel is viewing it as an expression of a modern pessimism that arises from the disenchantment in North-American society that will bring ideas of a fragmented world, disorder, anarchy, and a world in crisis (FRANÇA; SASSE, 2017). Other elements that are part of the noir novel include a subjective point of view that contributes to building the disenchanted world; the futility of power and morals in character roles; the detective feeling alienated and imprisoned by society, and sociopolitical criticism (FRANÇA; SASSE, 2017). Todorov (2013) also affirms that in the noir novel, there are two forms of *interest* from the reader: curiosity and suspense – interest here meaning the reader's attention to and interest in the work. With curiosity, there is a need to find the cause of an effect, and for

the suspense, it is the opposite, there is a need to find the effect of a cause; the reader's interest in the work is sustained by the suspense of what is to come. In other words and relating to Sternberg's (1978) narrative interests, the main interest in the noir novel would be the one of prospection, the tension of what is to come, especially considering that the detective is not immune to anything anymore.

The third subgenre is the suspense or thriller novel. For these stories, according to Todorov (2013), the initial mystery is exactly that: an initial point to propel forward the narration and highlight the second narrative, which happens in the diegetic present. It is possible to affirm then that there is the manipulation of suspense in the reader in the sense that there is an expectation of what is to come because the novel's narration and fabula have a tendency to occur simultaneously. This subgenre emerged simultaneously with the noir novel, and it brings two types of stories in general: in one, the detective is vulnerable and integrated into the narrative, and in the other, the protagonist is the suspect, and they must investigate in order to prove their innocence.

Considering these subgenres of crime fiction as proposed by Todorov (2013), we can see that *Murder at the Vicarage* undoubtedly belongs to the classic detective novel period. The crime must be solved, but this will not be done by the police; Miss Marple and her particularities – and immunity – are the main point of interest to the reader, as we navigate that microcosmos of society in a small town. When it comes to the 70s and onwards, however, the detectives are more at risk than ever before, as the crimes are not completely finished; the investigations themselves will pose bigger threats, and detectives who usually had in their cities security blanket to fall back into suddenly find themselves having to face more dangers and even having their homes – either physical house or the people they are close to – messed with. Additionally, due to the manipulation of narrative interests (STERNBERG, 1978) and the subjective point of view, we can situate the two other novels, *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* and *Indemnity Only*, within the noir tradition as proposed by Todorov (2013). Personal relations fluctuate a lot more, a trend which reaches its peak in the series *Prime Suspect*, with manipulation of the tension of suspense. So when we look at our detectives in the next section, we will regard their construction as characters as well as pay attention to the expositional details and generic conventions that aid in their configuration.

2.3. A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF WOMEN DETECTIVES IN ANGLO-AMERICAN LITERATURE

The first work to feature a woman detective was a collection of short stories appropriately entitled *The Female Detective*, published in 1864 and written by Andrew Forrester. The detective was Mrs. Gladden, who was an undercover police agent at a time when women were not yet allowed to be formally recruited. It was also in this year that *Revelations of a Lady Detective*, written by William Hayward, was published; this book featured the detective Mrs. Paschal, and it was also a collection of stories. The first novel presenting a woman detective as the protagonist was *Mr. Bazalgette's Agent*, published in 1888 and written by Leonard Merrick.

When taking into consideration the tradition of detective stories in Western fiction, it is common to link it to the masculine perspective and write the history of the genre – and the rational detective – departing from Poe's works, as we discussed previously in more detail in an overview of such tradition (DE CARLI, 2017). Also, according to George Grella (1970), fictional detectives in general derive from the tradition established by Dupin and Holmes, and even though they may not appear so at first sight, especially regarding male detectives' physical appearances,

> […] They generally possess a physical appearance as distinctive as Holmes's hawklike profile – they may be either very tall or very short, very fat or very thin, or they may affect unusual attire. They are usually pronounced eccentrics, enjoying old hobbies, interests, or life styles, and frequently overindulging in what Auden calls the 'solitary oral vices' of eating, drinking, smoking, and boasting. Above all, whatever his particular method of detection the sleuth is blessed with a penetrating observation, highly developed logical powers, wide knowledge, and a brilliantly synthetic imagination […]. (p. 36)

Regarding women detectives, their physical and emotional characteristics are distinct yet reiterated enough in such a way that we can bring up the discussion that ends this chapter on the existence of types or archetypes in the genre.

In discussing the novel *Trent's Last Case*, written by E. C. Bentley and published in 1913, Grella states that the main character, an amateur investigator, "[…] can succeed where the official police cannot: the characters accept him socially, and his accomplishments […] give him greater mobility. Most important, he understands the social code of the world he investigates […]" (1970, p. 37). This also applies to women detectives, especially during the Victorian Era, in which they were able to solve mysteries pertaining to the private/domestic

sphere, spaces in which they had free circulation, in opposition to the official police forces. While discussing the works of the Charlotte Pitt series, written by Anne Perry, set in the Victorian Era, Linda J. Holland-Toll affirms that due to the separation of private and public spheres, the female characters were able to

> […] employ ‘‘women’s knowledge,’’ in some cases simple domestic knowledge, or an understanding of the subtle mores of the socialscape, or an affinity with women’s problems that Pitt lacks. Not only is it territory within which men are not particularly knowledgeable, it is also territory from which representatives of the public sphere, that is, the constabulary, are either restricted or excluded on two counts. For one thing they are male, and for another they are not of an appropriate class. Although Pitt refuses to go to the tradesmen’s entrance, as is expected, rarely does he have access to the private rooms of the houses at which he calls. Charlotte, Emily, and Vespasia in particular, on the other hand, do have access to the private rooms. (2013, p. 568)

She also affirms that Perry, by

> setting the crime within the domestic, within the private, within women’s territory, and invoking the indirect genteel method of gathering evidence, is able to subvert the historical silencing of women by using the detective conventions to reconfigure the spheres of power and empower the woman as detective. (HOLLAND-TOLL, 2013, p. 571)

The woman writers of the 19th Century saw themselves as “[…] literally and figuratively confined. Enclosed in the architecture of an overwhelmingly male-dominated society, these literary women were also, inevitably, trapped in the specifically literary constructs” (GILBERT; GUBAR, 1984, p. xi). Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar, in their seminal work *The Madwoman in the Attic* (1984), argue that there is an anxiety in women authors of the time regarding splitting one’s identity due to the necessity of projecting themselves into different characters and situations. According to them, there is what they call a “schizophrenia of authorship” that women writers are “[…] especially susceptible because she herself secretly realizes that her employment of (and participation in) patriarchal plots and genres inevitably involves her in duplicity or bad faith” (GILBERT; GUBAR, 1984, p. 69).

When a woman novelist leaves female protagonists aside in order to focus her writing on male characters, it is as if she is falsifying both her sense of self and her experience in a form of a “*psychological self-denial”* that can lead to identity crises and “[…] become even more self-destructive when the female author finds herself creating works of fiction that subordinate other women by perpetuating a morality that sanctifies or vilifies all women into submission” (GILBERT; GUBAR, 1984, p. 69). And even when what the authors refer to as “male mimicry”

does not involve necessarily this self-denial and instead is merely the use of plots, genres, and conventions geared towards men, there are still tensions in the writing.

This anxiety of authorship implies that there must have been strategies that women writers in the nineteenth century employed to overcome it, and they managed "[…] the difficult task of achieving true female literary authority by simultaneously conforming to and subverting patriarchal literary standards" (GILBERT; GUBAR, 1984, p. 73). These writers, in their struggle to create their own literary identity, needed to work within male-devised genres conforming to the traditions and standards created by and for male authors. At the same time, they managed to imbue the texts with hidden and secret meanings and concerns, almost as if there are two plots; the main plot, the one visible to the naked eye, and an underlying plot, a hidden one, that holds women authors' true expressions of self.

In this quest for the expression of *her*self, the woman writer needs to break the fixed images that have been constructed of her, of what she is supposed to be, and throughout both the 19th and 20th centuries, women writers "[…] have been especially concerned with assaulting and revising, deconstructing and reconstructing those images of women inherited from male literature, especially […] the paradigmatic polarities of angel and monster" (GILBERT; GUBAR, 1984, p. 76). In order to do so, they needed to reject certain societal values and ended up creating some characters that seemed in a way to be a representation and enactment of their own anger, even when they do not explicitly express their criticism towards moral conventions, which is the case for most authors in the 19th century as the Gilbert and Gubar (1984) discuss. One very recurrent figure is that of the madwoman, as a mirror image of the women writers of the era, and

> […] Even the most apparently conservative and decorous women writers obsessively create fiercely independent characters who seek to destroy all the patriarchal structures which both their authors and their authors' submissive heroines seem to accept as inevitable. Of course, by projecting their rebellious impulses not into their heroines but into mad or monstrous women (who are suitably punished in the course of the novel or poem), female authors dramatize their own self-division, their desire both to accept the strictures of patriarchal society and to reject them. (GILBERT; GUBAR, 1984, p. 77-78).

The madwoman functions as the woman writer's double in a way that she is able to understand and process her fragmentation of the self in the dispute of societal expectations and who she is. Relating this to detective fiction, these *madwomen* are not necessarily *mad*, but they are present in the figure of the – most of the times – young and pretty victim who is also too independent for the times, or the femme fatale, those women "[…] whose beauty […] is both sinister and tempting" (GILBERT; GUBAR, 1984, p. 460). In the Golden Age more specifically

these women are usually the murder victims, but the performance of such characters in the earlier novels will give way to the detectives themselves later, mostly from the 70s onwards, who will be able to present similar characteristics and behavior in a much more accepting manner, now as the protagonists instead of the victims of the crimes in this genre of fiction.

Another aspect that dominated women's writing in the 19th and 20th centuries is the anxiety about space. Women's confinement could be seen as literal, with them being confined in their fathers' or husbands' houses, or figuratively, in the way the authors had to trap themselves into men's aesthetics in their writings. Male authors also used images of confinement, but the main difference, according to Gilbert and Gubar (1984) is that while men wrote about metaphysical and metaphorical images of imprisonment, women wrote that which was on an actual and social level. One can also relate the issue of confinement to that of having to fit and perform according to the rules and morals of society, especially thinking about the Victorian Era, as another level of imprisonment for those women. With these rules and expectations that they were not allowed to circulate in all spheres of society, women crime writers sought the alternative for the solution of the crime in a manner in which "[…] it is in the private space that the truth lies; the effect of the women solving the crime again deconstructs the importance of the public and foregrounds the private" (HOLLAND-TOLL, 2013, p. 575). It is in the confinement in the private sphere that the detectives will eventually find their power and even freedom of action in this Era.

On the topic of crime women writers, my focus on this research, when reading and trying to find information about women writers who were pioneers in the genre on the other side of the ocean, I came upon the information that someone named Eden "Phillipots", who sometimes wrote under the pseudonym Harrington Hext, was the first woman to publish a detective story in England in 1888 (ALBUQUERQUE, 1979); however upon further investigation and research, it came to my attention that this information is absurdly wrong: Eden Phillpotts (the correct spelling of the surname) was, in fact, a man. There is no source on the page in which Albuquerque affirms this and even puts this man's name in the subtitle of the chapter as a woman pioneer, but all data and bibliography to this Eden Phillpotts check with the male author. This goes to show that more thorough and attentive research is still necessary to talk about women crime writers.

It is in the year 1861 that the novel *The Experience of a Lady Detective* was published by Anonyma, which still to this day remains a mystery whether the author was truly a woman or a man; yet, it is still considered one of the first stories featuring a woman detective (possibly)

written by a woman. Due to this uncertainty, in compilations and books about the genre, the first woman to be officially acknowledged as having ever published a detective story was the American author Anna Katherine Green in the year of 1878 with the story entitled *The Leavenworth Case*, featuring the detective Mr. Gryce, almost a decade before Arthur Conan Doyle published his first Sherlock Holmes work, *A Study in Scarlet* (1887). Anna Katherine Green is considered then the mother of the modern detective novel in general in the bibliography of the genre, and it is who will start the tradition that will lead to what is one of the most famous eras of crime fiction.

2.3.1. Agatha Christie

The Golden Age of detective fiction is the era of the classic murder mystery stories that predominated especially in the United Kingdom throughout the 1920s and 1930s. One cannot – or at least it is difficult to do so – think about making any considerations regarding contemporary women detectives without mentioning her, the Queen of Crime, who was so important to the detective genre: Agatha Christie. Born in 1890, Christie created the next Great Detective after Holmes, the Belgian Hercule Poirot, who first appeared in *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (1920). Establishing what would later become a tradition for women writers, Christie also created one of the most relevant and famous women detectives of all times in literature, Miss Jane Marple, who debuted a decade later in the novel *Murder at the Vicarage* (1930). Her novels were extremely popular during the Second World War, and even though "[…] Her detective fiction rarely references war directly, […] there is a running commentary on domestic and commercial spheres, and women's roles within these" (BERNTHAL, 2015, p. 41) This lack of explicit reference to the Second World War happened because she was instructed by people who commissioned her stories "[…] not to mention the war in any of them, and she tended to set her detective fiction at this time in the 1930s" (BERNTHAL, 2015, p. 42). Because violence and damaged bodies were a cruel reality during wartime, reading a novel that featured death meant that it belonged to a fictional and artificial world, different from reading reports in newspapers of the time. One of the ways Christie found to present these dead bodies and still maintain this difference between fiction and reality was to use many more female victims during wartime narratives. However, according to J. C. Bernthal (2015), in other periods there is a higher presence of male victims in Christie's novels; this could mean that presenting more female bodies during wartime could be escapism and an alternative to the every day dying male soldiers.

In the article, Bernthal (2015) discusses the works *The Body in the Library* (1942) and *Evil under the Sun* (1941), the latter a novel with the then-elderly Belgian detective Hercule Poirot. In this work, Arlena, the victim, is presented as a femme fatale as men – including Poirot – present reactions that are sexually coded in their descriptions (BERNTHAL, 2015). As the to-be-victim, she has no space nor way of contesting how people see her, enhancing her stereotypical characterization. Because of her apparent need to make herself desirable – a conclusion reached due to items in her bedroom -, Poirot sees her as a "predestined" victim, as every feature that is ascribed to her can be related to stereotyped images, and when she changes from "[…] woman to corpse" (BERNTHAL, 2015, p. 49), there is not really much of a transition because her characterization was lacking significant features in the first place.

When discussing Christie's *The Body in the Library* (1942), Bernthal (2015) juxtaposes the woman detective, Miss Marple, with the police*men* force built on masculine stereotypes. "In this novel, the masculine mind, scientific and inadequate, represents seeing but not observing-looking for preordained clues rather than reading the general scene and set-up. […] The police see a dead 'blonde', but Marple sees a collection of signifiers" (BERNTHAL, 2015, p. 47). From the same ideas that marked the 19th-century literature and the behavior of women in relation to the public and private spheres, because Miss Marple is able to integrate within the local communities and actively observe and listen to people, she is the more capable detective in the investigation of the murder of Pamela. Moreover, as an investigator, she focuses on understanding the relations and even the motivations behind the (female) victims' behavior, while the policemen focus on just searching for culprits based on the victims' appearance.

> There are, finally, limited options available to women in Christie's world-view. In the conservative dictates of the 'whodunit' puzzle and the nostalgia of the pre-war domestic setting, women have few opportunities to retain an acceptable feminine essence without sacrificing their autonomy in business or family life. Although Christie's stylized, escapist prose does not confront the everyday reality of death on the battlefield, it clearly has things to say about the changing reality of women. (BERNTHAL, 2015, p. 55)

Therefore, even though there are limitations to what is possible for Agatha Christie to write in the 1920s due to both generic conventions and historical elements, there are possible ways to work within the expectations at the same time she sets a new tradition for women writers of the genre; this corroborates the argument previously presented by Gilbert and Gubar (year, p. 198) that women could – and sometimes had to – conform to standards while they also subverted them.

Murder at the Vicarage is the first novel to feature Miss Marple and the small village of St. Mary Mead, but she had appeared in a few short stories before. In the novel, Colonel Protheroe is found dead with a gunshot wound in the Vicar's study – hence the title. The deceased was not really liked by the people in the town, so there are plenty of suspects in the pool of investigation.

A first aspect that is worth mentioning is that Christie's novels that feature Miss Marple have a tendency of having a narrator that is not as close to her as the traditional idea of the detective's companion as the narrator of the stories, and they vary between a self-restricted and an omniscient narrator. In the specific case of *Murder at the Vicarage* (2016), the narrator of the novel is the vicar himself, Reverend Leonard Clement, different from the traditional roommate or companion narrator such as Watson, the narrator of Sherlock Holmes's adventures, and even Captain Hastings, the narrator of Christie's Poirot's adventures.

The first time Miss Marple is mentioned in this novel is in the second chapter of the novel, when the vicar's wife, Griselda, is talking about the "Tea and scandal at four-thirty" (CHRISTIE, 2016) that is her duty to host as the Vicaress, according to her; she lists the people who are coming and says "[…] that terrible Miss Marple" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 5), and her husband continues the conversation,

> 'I rather like Miss Marple,' I said. 'She has, at least, a sense of humour.'
> 'She's the worst cat in the village,' said Griselda. 'And she always knows every single thing that happens – and draws the worst inferences from it.' (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 6)

For the readers of the time, this is the first time they are hearing, or better yet, reading about this character who was to become one of the most important women investigators, even though there were indeed others before her, as we have just established. Shortly after, while attending the tea, the vicar describes Miss Marple as "[…] a white-haired old lady with a gentle, appealing manner […]. Of the two Miss Marple is much the more dangerous" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 13), refers in the text to one of her memories as "unsavoury reminiscences" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 14), and says he never dreamt of describing her as someone trusting. Even more, to complete her characterization as to what we now recognize as the "old gossiping lady", he completes with "[…] Miss Marple always sees everything. Gardening is as good as a smoke screen, and the habit of observing birds through powerful glasses can always be turned to account" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 17). The chapter ends with Miss Marple arguing in response to the Vicar criticizing her for talking about other people, stating "[…] I'm afraid that observing human nature for as long as I have done, one gets not to expect very much from it. I dare say

idle tittle-tattle is very wrong and unking, but it is so often true, isn't it?'" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 18)

It is not unintentional that this is the first impression we will have of Miss Marple. In this novel, she is revealed to the reader through other characters' eyes. The reader needs to be aware of this as is creates certain notions about the character; this initial view – the primacy of the information needs later to be contrasted with the more recent information that is disclosed. As Sternberg (1987) has affirmed, we need to consider that it is the way and *when* the facts are presented to us that changes our opinion and understanding of an event or character, and this certainly applies here. We can see that there is a lot of criticism towards Miss Marple, her first image is created as the old gossiping lady who knows a lot about the neighborhood because she is nosy. The figure of Miss Marple is constructed to the reader through a very biased observer, with dialogues such as "[…] 'Miss Marple may be mistaken.' / 'She never is. That kind of old cat is always right.'" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 20), and the following excerpt:

> '[…] these women are singularly deficient in humour, remember, and take everything seriously.'
> 'What they need,' said Griselda, 'is a little immorality in their lives. Then they wouldn't be so busy looking for it in other people's.' (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 20)

This excerpt emphasizes the image of an older woman as someone who spends her time observing and scrutinizing the lives of other people for any signal of "immoral" acts and judgment while she herself would be a poster picture of morality, but while the characters are doing this, characterizing Miss Marple, they are also being judgmental and characterizing themselves in this process.

We can explicitly see the narrator's resistance to Miss Marple's character when he states "[…] I paid a grudging tribute to Miss Marple. She had not been deceived but had evidently suspected the true state of things with a fair amount of accuracy" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 25); by using words such as grudging and fair amount, the Vicar does not mask his opinion, which is why it is important for us to be aware of the focalization here. With lines such as "[…] It was our neighbor, Miss Marple. […] She looked faintly flushed and quite excited" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 56), "[…] Miss Marple leaned forward, her cheeks pink with excitement" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 57), "It is so seldom that Miss Marple is worse informed than we are that I had taken for granted that she would know the latest developments" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 57), and "[…] For all her fragile appearance, Miss Marple is capable of holding her own with any policeman of Chief Constable in existence" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 76), the narrator lets the reader subtly

know more about how she behaves in face of a crime and when confronted with the police officers responsible for the investigation. Whenever she is in these situations, her cheeks flush and she becomes visibly more agitated, and this also means that she does not bother to hide her feelings and does not care if other characters realize this about her.

On one of the occasions that the character of Miss Marple does have a voice through dialogue, she states "'[…] That is why it is so important to have proofs. I, for instance, am quite convinced I know who did it. But I must admit I haven't one shadow of proof. One must, I know, be very careful of what one says at a time like this – criminal libel, don't they call it?" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 57, original emphasis). Because the novel is narrated by the Vicar, the instances in which we can have her own perception of herself or of the world are through dialogue. Contradicting the idea of the gossiping old lady, here she affirms that even though she is sure of the culprit, she will not spread the word around, knowing she needs actual proof to prove her point. The narrator lets his opinion bleed into the description of her actions as well, when he states that "Miss Marple shook her head slowly and pityingly. The pity was, I think, for two full-grown men being so foolish as to believe such a story" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 82), as a reaction to an official conversation on the investigation. Maybe she did not feel pity, but the fact is that we only have the Vicar's views and interpretation of events and actions of the other characters, highlighted by the *I think* he uses; due to his limited perspective, we can question the veracity of his statements especially when describing Miss Marple, but there is no other observational point here. Possibly, it is the Vicar himself that feels pity and considers the men as foolish in believing such an obvious story, but instead of stating that about himself, characterizes her as thinking like this.

Another moment in which it is even more clear to the reader the narrator's bias towards Miss Marple is in the following excerpt. The Vicar again uses *I think* to make a statement about her, complementing what he thinks about her imagination, and the character with whom he is having this conversation emphasizes the image of Miss Marple as the old gossiping lady by using the terms *typical elderly spinster*, even going so far as to refer to it as a *breed*, giving it a negative connotation.

> 'I think she's quite dependable,' I said cautiously. 'that is, in so far as she is talking of what she has actually seen. Beyond that, of course, when you get on to what she thinks – well, that is another matter. She has a powerful imagination and systematically thinks the worst of everyone.'
> 'The typical elderly spinster, in fact,' said Melchett, with a laugh. 'Well, I ought to know the breed by now. God, the tea parties down here!' (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 76)

While this is clear that it is an opinion of the Vicar and he proceeds with caution, it is presented to the reader in such a way that when we add these features to the image that we have been mentally constructing, it doesn't seem to alter it much. The first time Miss Marple actually appears in a more significant manner and speaks about the crime in the novel is only on page 56 (in our edition), and up to that page, there have been many comments about the character and her imagination. She says herself that it is important to have proof and be careful about what one says on page 57, but by this point, the reader has already started constructing an image of her, and it has been mostly done through comments about her fertile imagination and intromission into other people's lives. We can see how the novel has been permeated with these negative terms and imagery being used to refer to our detective even before she has even a slight chance to defend or to show herself to the reader through her actions and speech.

One of the highlighted aspects of Miss Marple's initial characterization in *Murder at the Vicarage* is the widely known stereotype of knowing everything – or at least a lot – about the people who live in the same small town. When Colonel Melchett talks about motive, he mentions that there are two suspects in mind, to which Miss Marple counts out loud how many people she thinks have motive to have committed the crime and affirms "'[…] I can think of at least seven people who might be very glad to have Colonel Protheroe out of the way.'" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 83) This shows the type of inside knowledge she has of the people of the village, and she could probably only know certain things by being who she is and by having lived for so long in the same small town. Shorty after, the vicar comments on how Melchett paid no compliments to Miss Marple after their conversation, referring to her as a "wizened-up old maid" who knows nothing about life because she has not really left the village, to which the vicar responds that "[…] though doubtless Miss Marple knew next to nothing of Life with a capital L, she knew practically everything that went on in St Mary Mead" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 85).

As we can see, most of Miss Marble's characterization – and the information we learn about her – is given to us by the narrator, the Vicar, who clearly has a formed and strong opinion about the detective. There is much emphasis on her knowing a lot about the town and its people and this is seen by him under a questionable light, perceiving her as only an old gossiper. However, it is precisely because she has that type of inside information that the mystery can be solved. And it is according to the character herself that we can affirm this when she states that "[…] It's really what people call intuition and make such a fuss about. Intuition is like reading a word without having to spell it out. A child can't do that because it has had so little experience.

But a grown-up person knows the word because they've seen it often before" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 98). It is only when she proves herself useful that the vicar has more positive things to say about her. He narrates "I stared at the old lady, feeling an increased respect for her mental powers. Her keen wits had seen what we had failed to perceive. It was an odd thing – a very odd thing" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 101), and shortly after "I thought she was probably persuading herself of the fact rather than actually remembering it, but she had just contributed such a valuable new outlook to the problem that I felt highly respectful towards her" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 102-103). From that moment onwards, the Vicar's declarations to the reader start being more positive and affirmative of the prowess she has that has been aiding in the investigation; he still doesn't see her as an investigator on the same level as the police, but he realizes that she is capable and even more correct than the police when he mentions that he did not agree with the officer, because"[…] I was quite sure that Anne Protheroe had had no pistol with her since Miss Marple had said so. Miss Marple is not the type of elderly lady who makes mistakes. She has got an uncanny knack of being always right" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 113). The following excerpt showcases this well too, but now in dialogue.

> […] If there was anything to be seen yesterday evening Miss Marple saw it. I don't mean anything necessarily connected with the crime. I mean some outré or bizarre incident, some simple little happening that might give us a clue to the truth. Something that she wouldn't think worth while mentioning to the police.' (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 151-152)

Here, the police officer is talking to the Vicar, and his answer emphasizes her importance to the investigation; it is due, as I have already mentioned, to the fact that she *truly* knows the place and usual comings and goings of the people, being part of the private spheres, that her knowledge is useful. She is almost considered omnipresent and omniscient by some characters such as Lawrence Redding; in this excerpt, he is walking with the Vicar, and upon Miss Marple saying hello to them he affirms the following: "[…] we made our way to Miss Marple's. She was working in the garden, and called out to us as we climbed over the stile. / 'You see,' murmured Lawrence, 'she sees everybody'" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 153).

They ask her about the shot, trying to gauge the timeline to inform the police, and when Lawrence says they can eliminate one suspect, Miss Marple replies that she finds it prudent to suspect everybody, even if a little bit, because one never truly knows, and the Vicar thinks that that kind of thought is typical of her. Shortly after, she mentions that the Vicar must know the reason for Mrs. Lestrange's visit – because she knows they talked the day before – and he thinks "Now how did the woman know that I had been to visit Mrs Lestrange that afternoon? The way

she always knows things is uncanny" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 155). In this, the Vicar attributes almost a supernatural force to Miss Marple's knowledge when, in fact, she is just extremely observant of the comings and goings of the village. That proves again a few pages later when she calls the Vicar in a hurry because she saw Gladys Cram going into the woods with a suitcase and emerging from them without one. She says she does not truly suspect it has anything to do with the murder, but it is what she calls a "Peculiar Thing", and they must notice those to help with the case. This is what makes her different from the detectives and the other characters: she pays attention to every single thing that happens in the village and knows that even looking out of the window at night wondering about the case and seeing something out of place can help.

The inquest ends up being a huge event because there had not been any murder in St. Mary Mead for at least fifteen years (according to the Vicar on page 168), and it indeed seems like a public event, with the Vicar having access to everything being said. He states that "To recapitulate all the evidence would be merely tiresome" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 168), and he summarizes what evidence each person gave; the reader here then does not have full access to the evidence and clues as the detectives, and the mystery, therefore, starts to be unsolvable by the reader, needing to rely on the narrator to inform us of the solution when it is presented. He "confesses" that he knew next to nothing, and in this, we can see that the role of the usual companion who is oblivious to the detective's findings or unable to make the necessary connections to solve the case – as a stand-in for the reader - is filled by him in this novel.

In a conversation with Lawrence, Lawrence says that Miss Marple knows a thing or two because he followed her idea to talk to the women servants and see if they noticed something unusual. The Vicar replies that she is unpopular on this account – knowing a thing or two – but we as readers have been noticing that she is the one that is picking up on the Peculiar Things that the police itself is overlooking. Lawrence recounts that he cursed Miss Marple's suggestions at the time but ended up getting somewhere with the servants of the house. The Vicar finds it difficult to suspect Mrs. Lestrange, questioning himself that it could not be her, but he mentions that following that thought, an "imp" in his brain made him think that she is a very attractive woman, so it could not be her, justifies this thought with "There is, as Miss Marple would say, a lot of human nature in all of us". Even though she is not present in a lot of scenes in the novel, she is constantly remembered and mentioned by the Vicar in thoughts to the reader.

The Vicar is then invited to have dinner with Miss Marple and her nephew, Mr. Raymond West, who is a novelist and poet. During what the Vicar claims to be a dull

conversation with Miss Marple, her nephew engages in conversation with the Vicar's wife and irritates the Vicar by constantly stating that they are out of touch with what happens in the world, considering St. Mary Mead a "stagnant pool" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 196), to which Miss Marple replies that "Nothing, I believe, is so full of life under the microscope as a drop of water from a stagnant pool" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 196), so much so that their village is now under investigation for murder. But Miss Marple states that life is the same everywhere, that people are born, grow up, and their lives are momentarily shaken when meeting new people, but then it is back to routine with marriage and what follows. They discuss the crime, and Raymond states that murder does not interest him and that it would be quite a drama if the culprit turned out to be the Vicar himself, considering it all happened in his home. From the discussion, Miss Marple and the Vicar end up realizing that the Vicar mistook a person's identity at the station, and they state that this mistaken identity would be another Peculiar Thing, worthy of mention to the police.

It is interesting that we can follow as the Vicar's admiration for Miss Marple and her methods grow, first in the dinner scene, then noticing another Peculiar Thing all by himself, and then when one of the constables investigating the crime dismisses Miss Marple's idea about the time that the Vicar himself mentioned. The constable says that he can't "[…] take notice of what old ladies say. When they've seen something curious, and are waiting all eager like, why, time simply flies for them. And anyway, no lady knows anything about time" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 218), the Vicar responds in thought, wondering why the world is prone to generalizations, and that Miss Marple has a very acute sense of time, as "[…] Her clock keep time to the minute and she herself is rigidly punctual on every occasion" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 218).

This change of heart about our lady detective becomes even clearer when the Vicar has an idea and decides to investigate it himself. While at it, he crosses paths with her, "Mentally registering the fact that in the art of seeing without being seen, Miss Marple had no rival" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 220), praising her abilities almost, and forgiving an exaggeration she makes about recognizing a piece of evidence, because "[…] the whole business of the suitcase was Miss Marple's particular triumph and, as such, she was entitled to a little pardonable exaggeration" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 221). They call up the Inspector and, after he leaves, the Vicar and Miss Marple start discussing the crime in further detail, analyzing the evidence and motives they have just discovered. This time, he wants to listen to her, and she is apologetic, saying she has no doubt she is quite wrong and stupid (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 223), and he

mentions more than once that she gets flustered talking and is again apologetic, but their conversation progresses to the point they can, together, identify a motive – well, Miss Marple making statements and the Vicar agreeing with her lines of thought, but clearly different from how he behaved and thought about her before. In another scene with the official investigators, the Inspector says that Miss Marple may have made a mistake, and the Vicar disagrees, saying that she is usually right, which is why she is unpopular. This is quite a difference from the beginning, when he stated that she had a fertile imagination and liked to imagine the worst in people to now, stating that she is usually correct in her affirmations due to her observational nature. After a sermon, Miss Marple asks to speak to the Vicar, and she confides in him about why she is interested in the investigation and the mysteries, being one of the rare instances in the novel in which the character talks about herself instead of being characterized by others; she even begins by saying that the Vicar might think it is unwomanly of her to be doing the investigation – so even though the feminist discussion is not at the foreground of the novel, there are a few instances in which the expected roles are mentioned.

> "You see," she began at last, "living alone, as I do, in a rather out-of-the-way part of the world one has to have a hobby. There is, of course, woolwork, and Guides, and Welfare, and sketching, but my hobby is — and always has been — Human Nature. So varied — and so very fascinating. And, of course, in a small village, with nothing to distract one, one has such ample opportunity for becoming what I might call proficient in one's study. One begins to class people, quite definitely, just as though they were birds or flowers, group so-and-so, genus this, species that. Sometimes, of course, one makes mistakes, but less and less as time goes on. And then, too, one tests on oneself. […] "That, I am afraid, is what has made me a little conceited," confessed Miss Marple. "But I have always wondered whether, if some day a really big mystery came along, I should be able to do the same thing. I mean — just solve it correctly. Logically, it ought to be exactly the same thing. After all, a tiny working model of a torpedo is just the same as a real torpedo." (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 225-226)

So the reader has from the detective herself that it all began as a hobby, observing people in that quiet and quaint small village of St. Mary Mead; in testing herself trying to identify the reasons behind very small changes in behavior, she set up a model for herself that could work out on a larger scale in case a crime of a bigger scale ever came to pass. This explanation – and justification of her being involved with the investigation – works on two levels: one, for the Vicar to further accept a partnership with her, and two, it creates a deeper level of understanding and partnership with the reader. The Vicar even mentions that each one of us, deep down, thinks we can be Sherlock Holmes, and for a reader who is interested in detective mysteries, this creates another connection; yes, we too want to investigate and try to solve these mysteries by ourselves while we are reading. Miss Marple even goes further saying that she has been reading American detective stories to see if they can help in the crime, widening her knowledge of

possible investigations. They share details of the investigation that they have written down, and Miss Marple says that they must have an explanation for every single detail. In their conversation, by the end of the chapter, Miss Marple has an epiphany and reaches a conclusion, but this is not yet shared with the Vicar and, as a consequence, neither with the reader. We must wait for the solution and, when it does come, the reader is just as shocked as the people in the city. Not only that, but she must articulate her reasoning to convince everyone of her theories, delivering a "[...] gentle old-maidish lecture comprising the most astounding statements in the most natural way in the world" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 280), precisely the way in which the detective must present his reasoning at the end of the classical detective novels. Throughout the recounting, people interrupt, exclaiming, asking questions, agreeing, disagreeing, and becoming bewildered at her affirmations. We are informed of the success of her plan to catch and arrest the culprit, albeit with scarce details from the Vicar. At the end of the novel, however, the Vicar's last sentence states that "Really Miss Marple is rather a dear…" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 298), a reaction to her promise not to tell anyone that his wife is expecting.

As previously stated, because the narrator is the Vicar himself, a character in the novel, the narration can be restricted to one observational point. The consequences of this restriction are that the reader is faced with an explicitly biased version of the events and perception of the world, and also that the closure of whatever expositional gaps there are will depend on this narrator. Moreover, the details we slowly learn through time do not really indicate a change in the character of Miss Marple, presenting her to us as a quite static character. What little about her psychology is known mostly through the Vicar's opinions and the rare instance we have something from her does not seem to add any complexity to her construction; she justifies her actions, but that is the extend of it; what seems to be more relevant is that the Vicar's perception of her – and his exposition - change as the investigation progresses and he sees she is right in her hunches.

Using Fishelov's typology (1990), we can consider Miss Marple to be textually round, because while she is mostly depicted in a one-dimensional way, there is a slight change in her presentation from the point of view in which she is portrayed, that is, by the Vicar, as he learns more about her. She would also be constructionally flat, for there are neither elaborate descriptions, accounts of thoughts nor relevant actions to add depth to her. This would make of Miss Marple an individual-like type, but a type, nonetheless.

The overall structure of the text is that of the traditional detective novel, with the expositional gap related to the crime being closed by the end of the novel. In this work, the

issue of the primacy versus the recency effect can also come to the foreground of the discussion. We can consider the contemporary reader; a reader that has heard of Miss Marple before, and of the image that she has in the tradition of literary detectives. The image that has stuck through history, from the moment that she was created by Agatha Christie onwards, ended up being one of an old single lady who is able to solve crimes because she is part of the gossiping circle of the town. This is certainly influenced by the effect that the primacy of paratextual information has on the reader in this case; it is strong and reiterated enough throughout the novel, even if the Vicar seems to take Miss Marple into higher consideration by the end. Even though we learn her motivations and he does agree with her investigating the crime, this image of the "nosy old lady" in a small town seems to stick with the reader. This information is not really contradicted by what we learn later on, it seems just to be reinforced. In turn, the reiteration of these characteristics with Miss Marple will end up creating a type of woman detective that has evolved into the cozy mystery genre. The cozy mystery has since then permeated literature, and television, with *Murder, She Wrote* (CBS, 1984-1996), for example, and even role-playing games (RPGs), such as *Brindlewood Bay*, in which the players assume the roles of elderly women in a small town that investigate murder mysteries (CORDOVA, 2021).

2.3.2. From the 1970s onwards

The next time period which we will pay closer attention to starts in the 1970s, because it is in the late 1970s that the hard-boiled tradition is brought to the foreground again, this time with women authors subverting the genre so as to bring forth issues such as the ingrained patriarchal power structure that permeates our society, getting closer to the detective genre in television that we will discuss in the next chapter. They were "[…] women writing about women protagonists concerned with women's issues" (SCHOENFELD, 2008, p. 837). With names such as Sara Paretsky, Linda Barnes, and Sue Grafton, new voices started to fight their way to be heard, "[…] not necessarily political, feminist, or lesbian" (SCHOENFELD, 2008, p. 837), but certainly bringing up women's matters to the center of the discussion.

The issues that these authors bring to the core of their novels can be considered a reflection of contemporary (American) society. The crime is solved, but these women investigators also deal with exploring "[…] new aspects of how women successfully function

in this specific society" (SCHOENFELD, 2008, p. 837); moreover, they discuss social issues such as

> […] illegal workers, child pornography, and abusive husbands that underlie the murder investigation and the women's role in society […], divorce, domestic violence, death of a spouse, and single parenthood […], aging or second careers. Some novels deal with sexual issues, such as lesbian relationships. Furthermore, these writers raise practical issues such as employment and the need for exercise. […] this new treatment becomes the focus of the works and not a peripheral issue. (SCHOENFELD, 2009, p. 837-838)

Bethe Schoenfeld has also observed that there is a trend in the characterization of the protagonists in detective novels from this period. Some of the common aspects that she mentions include that these characters are highly educated, professionals or married to professionals; these women make their living outside the home and "[…] thus uphold the American work-ethic of self-reliance and economic viability" (SCHOENFELD, 2008, p. 838); they often live in suburban areas or small towns, and they believe in values such as consumerism and ownership explicitly in the novels. The works present almost an insight into a particular fragment of society to the readers and, moreover, the target reader of these new voices seemed to be similar to the "type" of authors who predominated at the time: white middle-class educated women, more often than not holding higher degrees, who wrote integrating liberal feminism into the discourse. Of course, not all novels written by women and published in this specific period will present an outright feminist ideology within their lines, but even those that do not integrate gender politics like that still mostly present very active and outrightly independent women protagonists as "realism" (SCHOENFELD, 2008).

This new era of crime fiction in the United States of America with both amateur and hard-boiled professional women detectives is set to have started with the publication of *Edwin of the Iron Shows* in 1977 by Marcia Muller. Even the amateur detectives in these novels are not stuck to their houses only caring for their families; they find a way to conciliate detective work with what is expected of them as women by society. At the beginning of this new era, some issues that were previously mentioned were not as openly discussed in society, therefore the "[…] social ideologies raised in these works are […] independent and separate from the conventional discourse in both literature […] and society" (SCHOENFELD, 2008, p. 842). Moreover, these "[…] female protagonists give a sense of empowerment to women readers, thereby enabling possible changes in society and social norms" (SCHOENFELD, 2008, p. 842). With the highlighting of certain social issues through female lenses, these new works presented the crime investigation thoroughly with the answers of *who*, *why*, and *how* at the same time they dealt with different types of relationships.

> […] Traditionally, lust and desire have been attributed solely to men, both in literature and in society. The only women portrayed with any sensuality and desires were the femme fatales, loose women, or prostitutes. Today's new amateur women sleuths, in contrast, not only feel sexual desire but also react to and comment upon that desire. […] The women characters are allowed to feel, fantasize, or act upon their desires without degradation in the eyes of the reader for so doing. […] They are acting as empowered women, as the readers themselves act or wish to act. (SCHOENFELD, 2008, p. 844)

Another deviation from the hard-boiled formulaic tradition is that on the rare occasions when humor was written in those novels, they were at the expense and detriment of the few typified women characters, always laughing *at* them; this new humor that started to become more present in crime fiction by the end of the 1970s was "[…] written by women for women and about women's specific problems and perspectives" (SCHOENFELD, 2008, p. 845). In addition, the new type of humor presented was often regarding crime fiction itself, its usually formulaic structure, and how some situations the protagonists faced shared similarities to a mystery story. Considering the fact that the main readers at the time were often college-educated and consumers of crime novels, as has been already mentioned according to Schoenfeld's research (2008), they were more than likely to notice and understand the nuances of metafictional humor. With this, the reader can regain control of her reading experience. Still according to Schoenfeld,

> This empowerment is accomplished first of all by the large quantities of crime fiction books by women authors about women investigators that are bought by women readers. Secondly, a woman reads the text written by a woman as a woman confirming her status as woman and allowing her to connect to the greater community of women. This is opposed to a woman reading a text written by a man, where she is considered The Other and thus disconnected from her distinct perspective and culture of womanhood. The female reader hopes that other women will join her by recognizing something of themselves in the fictive story that can ultimately lead to a change in both objective and subjective reality. (2008, p. 847-848)

This is one of the main reasons why this research has come to exist. A lot of detective fiction studied by academia has either been written by men or featured male detectives, even if written by women. The detective genre is already at a point in the margin of the literary canon, not studied nor discussed in classes in general, and detective fiction written by women is even further away from the center. This gap then needs to be filled by studying women detectives written by women authors, especially by women scholars, so that these fictional works can start gaining more relevance both in the literary canon and in academia.

Regarding issues that are pertinent to these women, the verisimilitude in these novels means that they illustrate contemporary America (of the time) in which the divorce rate is ever-growing and traditionally nuclear families start to become absent in these stories. Schoenfeld (2008) identifies that the women detectives in this new era are often divorced and/or reject the institution of matrimony; sometimes, the protagonists come from dysfunctional or fragmented

families. Moreover, for those characters that have gone through a divorce or a tragedy, they can be faced with issues involving motherhood, and must perhaps leave home to find means of financial support, and "[…] The fact that they are looking for a profession indicates that they are middle class, as opposed to working-class women who would probably look for a job" (SCHOENFELD, 2008, p. 849). These new women detectives sometimes have religion as a significant part of their lives; they have connections by being religious in different degrees, or by their backgrounds, or even by being involved in their communities.

2.3.3.1. P.D. James's *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman*

Born Phyllis Dorothy James (1920 – 2014), P. D. James became famous for her detective works featuring detective – later commissioner – Adam Dalgliesh, the first one, *Cover Her Face*, published in 1962. While Adam Dalgliesh rises through the ranks in the Metropolitan Police force, James's woman detective, Cordelia Gray, struggles to prove her worth as now sole proprietor and inheritor of Pride Detective Agency. Dalgliesh saw more success than Gray even in the real world: James wrote and published fourteen novels and two short stories that feature Dalgliesh as the main character, and two novels with Cordelia Gray at the front (with a small participation of Dalgliesh in both), *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* (1972) and *The Skull Beneath the Skin* (1982).

In *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman*, the opening happens with the establishment of its setting and the event that was the first catalyst for the action; the first sentence mentions the Bakerloo Line just outside Lambeth North station, and then shortly after that our main character emerges from the Oxford Circus station, going on to mention more street names and locations, clearly setting the story – at least this initial part – in London. But the initial words of this novel sets the tone for what the character is soon going to face: *"On the morning of Bernie Pryde's death"* (JAMES, 2005, p. 1). On the next page, the reader discovers that Bernie Pryde is an *"'ex-C.I.D.[10] Metropolitan Police'"* (JAMES, 2005, p. 2) and co-proprietor of Pryde's Detective Agency alongside Cordelia Gray, as it is engraved in the plaque that is on the wall left to the door on the entrance to the place.

> […] Cordelia had brought no qualifications or relevant past experience to the partnership and indeed no capital, except her slight but tough twenty-two-year-old body, a considerable intelligence which Bernie, she suspected, had occasionally found

[10] Criminal Investigation Department.

> more disconcerting than admirable, and a half-exasperated, half-pitying affection for Bernie himself. (JAMES, 2005, p. 2)

From the beginning, as well, the narrator establishes itself as an omniscient narrator with mostly an internal or restricted focalization on Cordelia, our main character. It focuses on her process from going to the train station to the building, already late for work, and it mentions "The hurry she knew was irrational, a symptom of her obsession with order and punctuality. There were no appointments booked; no clients to be interviewed; no case outstanding; not even a final report to be written" (JAMES, 2005, p. 1). While considering her tardiness, she thinks about Miss Sparshott, the typist the agency has hired to help promote their business to London solicitors, who is

> […] an unprepossessing woman with lips permanently taut as if to prevent the protruding teeth from springing from her mouth, a receding chin with one coarse hair which grew as quickly as it was plucked, and fair hair set in stiff corrugated waves. That chin and mouth seemed to Cordelia the living refutation that all men are born equal and she tried from time to time to like and sympathize with Miss Sparshott, […]. (JAMES, 2005, p. 1)

This excerpt right at the first page of the novel emphasizes Cordelia's focalization as she thinks about the secretary, showing the type of restriction the narrator has and showing the reader early on some of the internal ideas that might cross the protagonist's mind.

The setting of the agency is described as follows, and it seems to corroborate the contemporary image of other literary and television private detectives' offices, usually depicted in the midst of a not-so-pleasant environment, usually a decrepit building, with lighting issues, broken elevators, but in this specific case it is described as

> The staircase smelt as always of stale sweat, furniture polish and disinfectant. The walls were dark green and were invariably damp whatever the season as if they secreted a miasma of desperate respectability and defeat. The stairs, with their ornate wrought-iron balustrade, were covered with split and stained linoleum patched by the landlord in various and contrasting colours only when a tenant complained. The Agency was on the third floor. (JAMES, 2005, p. 3)

There are some passages in the novel that reinforce its title; the character is quite often questioned about her skills and hears that being a detective is no place for a woman. The first instance that this happens in the novel is shortly after Cordelia finds that Bernie has committed suicide in his office, at the agency. The police officer that responds to the scene assumes she is his secretary and later, upon Cordelia asking him to dismiss Miss Sparshott, who is a secretary paid by the hour, agrees, and affirms that it is not a "[…] nice place for a woman.' His tone implied that it never had been" (JAMES, 2005, p. 9), clearly referring to Cordelia's presence at the detective agency as well.

She goes to the pub where they usually have lunch, maintaining their routine – "[…] unable to bring herself to so early a disloyalty" (JAMES, 2005, p. 11) – and presents the news

to Mavis, the woman who usually serves them, and Cordelia has to hear another disapproving speech when Mavis asks if she will look for a new job, after all, being at the agency alone and working by herself will be difficult, as "[…] It isn't a suitable job for a woman" (JAMES, 2005, p. 12), and "'I shouldn't think your mother would approve of you staying on alone" (JAMES, 2005, p. 12) upon Cordelia's refusal to stop being a detective now that Bernie is gone. The people in the bar mind their own business, but Cordelia feels that their silence is heavy with censure at her words.

One aspect that seems to be common amongst women detectives is the fact that most of them are orphans of at least one parent. In the case of Cordelia, she no longer has living parents, including Bernie, who although never explicitly stated, can be read as a second father figure to her.

> Her father had never talked about her mother's death and Cordelia had avoided questioning him, fearful of learning that her mother had never held her in her arms, never regained consciousness, never perhaps even known that she had a daughter. This belief in her mother's love was the one fantasy which she could still not entirely risk losing although its indulgence had become less necessary and less real with each passing year. Now, in imagination, she consulted her mother. It was just as she expected: her mother thought it an entirely suitable job for a woman. (JAMES, 2005, p. 13)

This quotation is very telling of Cordelia's relationship with both her parents; regarding her father, she doesn't seem to talk to him about truly important issues. About her mother, Cordelia has created an image due to the absence that she doesn't want to taint; this is also relevant to the construction of Cordelia herself because it shows that she indulges herself in this fantasy and has no plans on changing it anytime soon, preferring not to know the truth about her family. And more than that: in her imagination, her mother truly supports her choice of becoming a detective, something that seems essential for her life.

The first description of Cordelia's appearance happens through her own eyes when she looks into the mirror above the bar, and it is as follows

> Today's face looked no different from yesterday's face: thick, light brown hair framing features which looked as if a giant had placed a hand on her head and the other under her chin and gently squeezed the face together; large eyes, browny-green under a deep fringe of hair; wide cheekbones; a gentle, childish mouth. A cat's face, she thought, but calmly decorative among the reflection of coloured bottles and all the bright glitter of Mavis's bar. Despite its look of deceptive youth it could be a secret, uncommunicative face. Cordelia had early learnt stoicism. All her foster parents, kindly and well-meaning in their different ways, had demanded one thing of her—that she should be happy. She had quickly learned that to show unhappiness was to risk the loss of love. Compared with this early discipline of concealment, all subsequent deceits had been easy. (JAMES, 2005, p. 13)

As the reader can notice, it is a description that is full of adjectives as the character herself scrutinizes her own reflection, not exactly flattering yet in a somewhat kind manner.

Even though we can consider this as a restricted focalization again – due to the restriction of the observational point –, there seems to be more thorough detail and even judgment of oneself coming through the text.

As she goes on, she lets Miss Leaming and the reader know some of the things she had learned with Bernie: “Bernie taught me some of the things he learnt in the CID: how to search the scene of a crime properly, how to collect exhibits, some elementary self-defence, how to detect and lift fingerprints—that kind of thing.” (JAMES, 2005, p. 21) The next morning, Cordelia finishes her preparations to depart to Cambridge to solve the case, and we learn more of the investigative procedures that she had learned in the short time she had become a partner in the agency.

> As Bernie had taught her, she checked systematically the scene-of-crime kit, an unnecessary routine since nothing had been touched since, in celebration of their partnership, he had first set it up for her. She put ready the Polaroid camera; sorted into order the road maps from the jumble pushed into the back of his desk; shook out the sleeping bag and rolled it ready; filled a carrier bag with iron rations from Bernie’s store of tinned soup and baked beans; considered, and finally decided to take, their copy of Professor Simpson’s book on forensic medicine and her own Hacker portable radio; checked the first-aid kit. […] These preliminaries had always been the most satisfying part of a case, before boredom or distaste set in, before anticipation crumbled into disenchantment and failure. (JAMES, 2005, p. 37)

She seems so far to be a character who prefers things done in an orderly manner – and very specific, as it is all part of the procedure, augmented by the fact that the person who taught her everything has passed away. Cordelia has then this affection and closeness to two people who are no longer alive; the character seems to have a stronger connection with the dead than with the living around her, emphasizing, even more, the fact that she can connect more to her cases –even if they involve murder – than with the people who are currently in her life. The reader can infer this, and it is information that will remain the same even after the conclusion of the novel. The people she gets more involved with in the novel have to do with the case instead of her own personal life.

Clothing, of course, is also a part of her travel preparation. She opts to travel in a skirt and jumper, but also packed jeans and warmer clothes in case there would be any fieldwork to do. Even more, we also learn that she enjoys clothes, but she considers it to be a “[…] pleasure circumscribed less by poverty than by her obsessive need to be able to pack the whole of her wardrobe into one medium-sized suitcase like a refugee perpetually ready for flight.” (JAMES, 2005, p. 37) This is also an important issue when it comes to women detectives. They are part of one’s characterization, and they can also be indicative of the genre. Women detectives are usually depicted, especially on television, wearing boots with heels, or even heeled shoes in

more formal attires, whether they are institutional or private detectives. Some characters have very defining outfits, and even subgenres such as noir novel have a pattern of clothing that is usually mentioned and/or are part of popular culture. Throughout this novel, the narrator will mention Cordelia's choices of wardrobe relating to how she wants to be perceived by other people in the process of investigation, needing to be taken seriously, emphasizing once more in this manner the title of the novel. It is clear, through her observational point, that she is aware of this and of how others perceive her, so she must make the effort to fight for space in this line of work.

Although she is certain of her place as a detective in the agency, now working without her partner and housemate, Cordelia understands that some people might doubt her capabilities just by looking at her, as is stated in the following paragraph, when she first gets in touch with Miss and Major Markland as requested by Sir Ronald, in relation to his son's death.

> She composed her face into the appropriate expression—seriousness combined with efficiency and a touch of propitiatory humility seemed about right, but she wasn't sure that she managed to bring it off. As she sat there, knees demurely together, her shoulder bag at her feet, she was unhappily aware that she probably looked more like an eager seventeen-year-old facing her first interview than a mature business woman, sole proprietor of Pryde's Detective Agency. (JAMES, 2005, p. 41)

She hands them the letter that confirms that she is indeed there to investigate what happened to Mark Callender, and she hears "[…] disbelief, amusement and contempt" (JAMES, 2005, p. 41) in Miss Markland's voice when she asks if he sent *her*; Cordelia, however, as previously stated in the indented quotation, can understand at that moment why they would doubt her story. It is her first case alone, in another city, and having just gone through a loss, so she knows she doesn't look like the most confident private detective, at least initially.

The atmosphere of the place and events ends up influencing and affecting the character's mood and thoughts, as the narrator states in the following excerpt. Here, I'd like to stress the importance of this influence because it is characteristic of the noir novel.

> She drove away from the cottage with a feeling very like regret, as if she were leaving home. It was, she thought, a curious place, heavy with atmosphere and showing two distinct faces to the world like facets of a human personality: the north, with its dead thorn-barred windows, its encroaching weeds, and its forbidding hedge of privet, was a numinous stage for horror and tragedy. Yet the rear, where he had lived and worked, had cleared and dug the garden and tied up the few flowers, had weeded the path, and opened the windows to the sun, was as peaceful as a sanctuary. Sitting there at the door she had felt that nothing horrible could ever touch her; she was able to contemplate the night alone there without fear. Was it this atmosphere of healing tranquillity, she wondered, that had attracted Mark Callender? Had he sensed it before he took the job, or was it in some mysterious way the result of his transitory and doomed sojourn there? (JAMES, 2005, p. 59)

It is the subgenre that brings the more human side of the detectives and how they can be influenced by the environment and atmosphere, and *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* nods to this tradition, strengthening the idea of a pattern of items and characteristics are appropriated to this day. Here, the way it affects Cordelia makes her wonder about the victim and his relation to the place due to how her own impression of the locale, how heavy the place feels to her, and how the victim's house is a sanctuary in the midst of the property. And yet again the character seems to be establishing a connection to the dead, imagining if the victim had felt the same as her when in the cabin.

The following excerpt presents a commentary that we can consider metafictional, as it speaks of the convenience of people involved in the case always being ready for interviews in fiction. We might step so far as to say that this could almost be a self-aware narrator with the following excerpt as an example of the metafictional commentary.

> It was only in fiction that the people one wanted to interview were sitting ready at home or in their office, with time, energy and interest to spare. In real life, they were about their own business and one waited on their convenience, even if, untypically, they welcomed the attention of Pryde's Detective Agency. Usually they didn't. She mentioned Sir Ronald's note of authority to impress her hearer with the authenticity of her business. The name was not without influence. (JAMES, 2005, p. 60)

We continue on to learn more about Cordelia's childhood and her life at the Convent, showing the reader how it has shaped her into who she is in the novel. The narrator presents to the reader a whole background of information on the character, so we have a more complete idea of who our main detective is very early on in the novel. With the expositional information about the character being presented like this, the primacy of information is what will be important to the reader. There aren't really many gaps of expositional information about the character that remain open for a long time; they are generated when new information is introduced, but they are soon closed to aid in the characterization of Cordelia, and in the end, the gaps that remain open for longer and are emphasized are more related to the mystery itself and the tensioning of the effect of curiosity.

> […] Cordelia had stayed on at the Convent for the six most settled and happy years of her life, insulated by order and ceremony from the mess and muddle of life outside, incorrigibly Protestant, uncoerced, gently pitied as one in invincible ignorance. For the first time she learned that she needn't conceal her intelligence, that cleverness which a succession of foster mothers had somehow seen as a threat. (JAMES, 2005, p. 63)

This shows again that her connection to her *living* father was pretty much nonexistent, and that being there was a time of happiness for her, of stability. By using the superlative to indicate those were the happiest years, the reader understands that ever since then, her life has not been as such. Perhaps the orderly fashion in which she organizes herself to go investigate

the crime is reminiscent of her childhood in the Convent with all its rules. And it continues. Sister Perpetua had wanted Cordelia to go to Cambridge, planning her entrance for two years later, when the girl would be 17. Cordelia started dreaming about this, imagining the promise of a future that would never come. Her father never used to reply to her letters, until "[…] He had discovered a need for his daughter. There were no "A" Levels and no scholarship and at sixteen Cordelia finished her formal education and began her wandering life as cook, nurse, messenger and general camp follower to Daddy and the comrades" (JAMES, 2005, p. 64). The narrator mentions how the fact that the detective was polite, but not gallant reassured her, as

> […] she had no wish to be treated with the indulgence shown to a pretty but importunate child. Sometimes it helped to play the part of a vulnerable and naïve young girl eager for information—this was a role in which Bernie had frequently sought to cast her—but she sensed that Sergeant Maskell would respond better to an unflirtatious competence. She wanted to appear efficient, but not too efficient. And her secrets must remain her own; she was here to get information, not to give it. (JAMES, 2005, p. 65)

As to her past relationships, the reader only learns about them when Cordelia is talking to Sophie about Mark, and, upon Sophie's revelation and confirmation that they were lovers, the detective asks if they were in love. Sophie responds that she was not sure, but that she thought Mark needed to believe he was, and that she doesn't know the meaning of the word *love*, and the narrator then presents this part of Cordelia's past to us.

> She thought of her own two lovers: Georges, whom she had slept with because he was gentle and unhappy and called her Cordelia, a real name, her name, not Delia, Daddy's little fascist; and Carl, who was young and angry and whom she had liked so much that it seemed churlish not to show it in the only way which seemed to him important. (JAMES, 2005, p. 83)

Before these two men, she had been inexperienced and had seen her virginity as an inconvenience, which is quite open-minded, yet if we consider the feminist advancements of the time, it can be read as a portrayal of the changing times. However, by how she talks about these two men, especially Carl, seems that she had not really formed a bond with them, quite on the contrary: when she seemed to be getting closer to Carl, he left, and it seemed to be for the better in her opinion. Once more we have a reiteration that she lacks these more connected relationships in her personal life, almost overcompensating in her investigations, which is going to be shown in the novel.

While investigating the case, she gets closer to a group of suspects that were friends with the victim, and she overhears a conversation in which they are wondering how to stop Cordelia from following them around, and Isabelle – one of the girls in the group – says "'It is not, I think, a suitable job for a woman.'" (JAMES, 2005, p. 87). When she speaks to the victim's tutor at the college, he affirms he thought the job was actually "'[…] Entirely suitable I should

have thought, requiring, I imagine, infinite curiosity, infinite pains and a penchant for interfering with other people.'" (JAMES, 2005, p. 103). This reinforces the stereotypical image that is strongly related to women detectives, that of (old) ladies who have nothing better to do than nosy around in other people's businesses; an image that is widely embodied in the character of Agatha Christie's Miss Marple. Interestingly enough, Miss Marple is usually seen as one of the "[…] gentle, gossipy rambling old ladies" (CHRISTIE, 2016, p. 95), not usually perceived as a threat, maybe more as a nuisance. Some people may doubt her skills but it's nothing too serious. When it comes to Cordelia Grey and V.I. Warshawksi – which will be discussed in the next section – however, the situation is different. They have to constantly prove that they are competent detectives, and their gender as private investigators can be an issue as male clients doubt their abilities precisely because they are *women* in this dangerous business. This can be a reflection of the production context, with new Acts and laws being established regarding equality in payment and against sex/gender discrimination in the 1970s, women who were rising to the rank of detectives had to fight for their place amongst their male peers.

After some investigating, Cordelia gets back to the cottage at night and finds herself surprised by a "prank": someone made a Mark using a bolster from her bed and a pair of pants, scaring her. She goes outside to get her gun and even though it is not loaded, she "[…] longed for the reassurance of the hard cold metal in her hand" (JAMES, 2015, p. 111). This shows that our detective is most definitely not safe in the process of investigation; she has to take precautions to secure the place using techniques Bernie had shown her and keeping her gun loaded by the bedside table. All these precautions at night, however, seem to embarrass her the next day, with the narrator stating that she felt foolish now in the light of day as the "[…] horror of that moment when her torch had first picked out the dark swollen shadow of the bolster moving in the night breeze now had the unreality of a dream" (JAMES, 2015, p. 113). The light of the day creates a warm and friendlier space for her, offering safety in contrast with the dangers the night had presented to her. During the day, she can realize she is being observed while interviewing people that might be related to the case, and even notice that she is being followed by a black van. The more she investigates, the more vulnerable the cottage seems to her; the hook on the ceiling on which the body had been found had not worried her before, but it starts to bother her to the point that it becomes difficult for her to rationally theorize about the crime; before, daylight in the cottage meant safety, and then daylight illuminates the actual horror of what happened, making her feel claustrophobic in the room at one point (JAMES, 2005, p. 149).

Even if she feels embarrassed at taking precautions, thinking they are not truly necessary, her safety again is risked. As she arrives at the cottage, she is hungry and decides not to get her gun, not worried about anything happening. But she is surprised by a blanket falling on her head and a cord around her neck, suffocating her, and there is an explosion of pain in her chest that causes her to fall backward into a well. She does not see who tries to take her life, she can just look up as the well is closed and as her body gets wet and cold, she becomes determined. The narrator mentions she feels a "[…] saving anger. She wouldn't let herself drown, wouldn't die in this horrible place, alone and terrified" (JAMES, 2005, p. 155); after a moment of desperation, she calculates that it is possible for her to use the small diameter of the well in her favor because she has not been injured in the fall, and "[…] She was alive and capable of thought. She had always been a survivor. She would survive" (JAMES, 2005, p. 155). Whenever there is a moment of weakness in the scene, she shakes herself back up; when she falls again, she whimpers and is disappointed, but "[…] She scourged her mind into courage" (JAMES, 2005, p. 156), she keeps trying to convince herself to fight and to climb up the well, searching in her mind for incentive. The fight at the moment seems to be almost with herself, willing herself not to give up and stay there floating instead of fighting to climb and get out of the situation. This scene seems to show a complete reversal of this trope: the previous scenes that presented threats follow the tradition of showing the detective treading dangerous paths, but few would have the protagonist face such a level of danger and be caught in a situation from which s/he can only escape with external help and sheer luck.

Even though she makes the climb, she cannot move the wooden cover of the well by herself and she ponders that her death will not be considered suspicious because she concludes the murderer will come back and remove the well's cover to pretend it was an accident, after all, "[…] Here was a young, impulsive, over-curious young woman living at the cottage without the owner's authority" (JAMES, 2005, p. 159). In what she considers her final moments, Cordelia just waits, the narrator saying she has found some peace in resignation with what is going to happen and has not even an ounce of interest in discovering who her killer is. She ends up being saved, however, by Miss Markland, who tells Cordelia the story of her own son who drowned in that well – a story that will shake up Cordelia, in that "[…] She would live his agony in nightmares as she would relive her own" (JAMES, 2005, p. 161), and she sends the woman away.

Later she decides to observe the well to discover who tried to kill her. When someone approaches the well, she has her gun in her hand and tries to focus on the situation. She keeps

herself firm, gun in the correct position as Bernie had taught her, but it ends up being just for show: the narrator states that she knows she will / can not fire, but at the same time at that moment she understands what makes one do so. She chases the man, and the narrator once more emphasizes that she still does not try to shoot him. Afterward, when the gun is taken from her, she does not fight it, because yet again we are informed that "[…] She could never defend herself with it, never kill a man" (JAMES, 2005, p. 167); she keeps the gun on her and considers it another level of safety probably due to it having belonged to Bernie. At the beginning of the novel, the narrator mentions her not wanting to give up on the gun easily, and here, after all that has happened in the investigation, she does not fight when it is taken from her, because she learned that *she* does not like the thought of using it.

The scene with the revelation of the true culprit happens when, instead of going to the police, Cordelia confronts the man herself: Mark's father. In this discussion, the reader learns the motive of the crime and why the culprit asked Cordelia to investigate it – he just wanted to know who had put Mark in another outfit, as the body had initially been dressed in lingerie and had been wearing lipstick. The reader also learns that she had suspected Sir Ronald before, but could not believe it, because she could not accept that a human being could go that low, so she asks about love, "'I mean love, as a parent loves a child'" (JAMES, 2005, p. 173). Cordelia had not really considered Sir Ronald as a true suspect because she could not fathom how a father could kill his own son, and the reader, knowing of Cordelia's background and especially of her relationship with Bernie, can understand how she is affected by the truth. The confrontation here is not to result in an arrest, or to merely state what happened: what is at stake is Cordelia's understanding of the man's motives; the questioning of the culprit is about *how* he was able to murder someone from his own family. He threatens to ruin her life if she tells anyone, but before she can do anything, Miss Leaming kills Sir Ronald with Cordelia's gun. The gun serves its intended purpose after all: to protect Cordelia, but she is changed, now repulsed by the weapon.

The two women plan how to make it seem like Sir Ronald shot himself, and Cordelia uses knowledge from a previous case with Bernie to help set the scene. She instructs Miss Leaming on what to say and how to behave, telling her not to make anything up nor to flourish her story so as not to incriminate herself. Cordelia is surprised by her own determination not to let the truth about Mark's death come to light, considering it to be irrational; she is determined to avoid his father's plan of desecrating his body after death being known, and she feels nothing at the fact that Sir Ronald is dead. There is, of course, an official police inquiry, and

> […] the carefully modulated middle-class accent, which in her six years at the convent she had unconsciously acquired, and which in other people often irritated her as much as her own voice had irritated her father, was proving an advantage. She wore her suit and had bought a black chiffon scarf to cover her head. She remembered that she must call the coroner "sir." (JAMES, 2005, p. 189)

She is still sticking to their story and adjusting her behavior to suit it, even modulating her speech and carefully choosing her clothing. These details aid in giving her an air of innocence when talking to the police. When talking about the gun, she mentions that her partner used to own it, and because he died by cutting his wrists, the gun became hers– as if his decision was not to taint the object, but now that it had been fired and killed someone, she wanted nothing to do with it anymore. In the end, Miss Leaming asks her if she will make a success in the Detective Agency, and she says that she will try because it is the only job she knows. But it goes deeper than that, as the narrator informs the reader that she still has difficulty in trying to explain to herself her attachment to the agency due to her affection and loyalty to Bernie. The woman gives Cordelia some advice about money and insists on paying her for the case because it would look suspicious if she did not. Moreover, Cordelia ponders the strength of what she calls female allegiance, considering the two women helped each other despite disliking each other. This affects Cordelia, "[…] There were moments when their secret almost horrified Cordelia by its immensity. But these were few and would get fewer. Time would inevitably diminish its importance" (JAMES, 2005, p. 203). Our detective does not come out of her adventure unscathed. Instead of easily and simply returning to the status quo, she is deeply affected by what happened, to the point that the terms in which Bernie and she used to present and define their business in a circular letter to solicitors would now bother her, thinking they do not match to what has truly happened in the investigation. In the end, after more interviews with Scotland Yard about the case, in which she is well aware of their competence and that they probably suspect that she knows more than she has told, there is a new solicitor at the door of the agency, stating that she is not what he expected, "[…] not the usual kind of Private Eye" (JAMES, 2005, p. 220).

The narrator in this novel constantly brings Cordelia's thoughts, opinions, and feelings to the foreground in a way that the reader has more access to the protagonist's interior, which differs considerably from the narration of *Murder at the Vicarage*. Moreover, there is a higher focus on the investigation story itself rather than on the crime; James's work does not fit the classic and traditional detective novel, and its elements, especially the fact that the detective is

no longer safe and that she, in the end, gets involved in a murder scene and hides it from the police due to her own convictions and morals, bring the novel much closer to the noir tradition.

While the expositional details of the character's background are disclosed throughout the novel, resulting in a paced elaboration of her characterization, the narrative also points to changes in Cordelia's way of thinking as the case – and the sujet - progress. As a result, the expositional scheme establishes Cordelia Gray both as a detective and an individual who is affected by the actions of people around her, especially when those actions threaten her life and safety. Therefore, according to Fishelov's typology (FISHELOV, 1990), she is both textually and constructionally round, because there are elaborate descriptions of her thoughts and actions, and she is depicted with much more depth of emotions, internal struggles, and even background information/biography as compared to Miss Marple, for example. With this combination, Cordelia Gray can be considered a "pure" individual with all her particularities.

2.3.3.2. Sara Paretsky's *Indemnity Only*

Sara Paretsky (1947 -) revolutionized the world of detective and mystery fiction in 1982 when she published the seminal work *Indemnity Only*. In the introduction to the 30th anniversary edition of the novel, Paretsky talks about having grown up reading crime fiction, and her affection for the noir novel. However, she started to become uncomfortable with how women characters were depicted in these novels, more specifically the way in which "[…] women's sexuality dictated their ability to act or to have good moral judgment" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. viii). She mentions the fact that women are usually divided into two main categories, the sexually active usually turns out to be the villain of the stories, and the virginal women with "boyish" faces are the angels; this division takes us back to the ideas of Victorian literature such as presented by Gilbert and Gubar (1984).

The detective V.I. Warshawski was born as a response to these male authors, influenced by the author's living through the second wave of the feminist movement and following the footsteps of women writers who came before her, including P.D. James and the previously discussed novels, which Paretsky affirms had inspired her to see that there could be a role for a woman in the noir that wasn't limited to what had been done so far. A private investigator who "[…] would have a sex life, and her sexuality would have nothing to do with whether she was a moral person. Sex would not stop her from being able to solve problems, either"

(PARETSKY, 2010, p. ix). Paretsky also says she wasn't confident in her writing at the time, so she compensated by sticking to the conventions of the genre, including the fact that V.I. is an orphan and drinks whiskey, fitting into the traditional characterization of the noir detective. Moreover, V.I. is from Chicago, and

> […] she was like me and my friends, doing work that hadn't existed for women when we were growing up. She faced some of the same challenges we did, as pioneers in the professions, but my hero would never put up with the Freds of the world – she hadn't been raised in Kansas to be a domestic angel, as I had been; she didn't care what people thought of her, and she didn't worry about getting fired. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. x)

So, in a certain way, the character could be an ideal stand-in for this woman reader. When Paretsky published *Indemnity Only* in 1982, it was also the first year in her city that women were allowed to be police officers instead of only police matrons responsible for taking care of "women's affairs". This introduction to the novel's 30th anniversary emphasizes how much things have changed for the better since its publication and how some sentences and lines spoken by V.I. can be out of place today, and this is one of the aspects that the following analysis will focus on.

The novel opens with the establishment of the setting, already in the title of the first chapter, "Summertime". But more than summertime, "The night air was thick and damp. […] I could smell rotting alewives like a faint perfume on the heavy air. […] on shore traffic was heavy, the city moving restlessly, trying to breathe. It was July in Chicago" (PARETSKY, 2010). The atmosphere here is already much darker than we've seen in the two previously discussed novels. They open with murders, sure, but here, using adjectives such as thick, damp, rotting, and heavy, the atmosphere of the setting is more charged negatively. What strikes our attention immediately is the narrator, and we will shortly discover that the private investigator, our protagonist V.I. Warshawski narrates this novel. This type of narration for a crime novel goes against the idea of keeping "[…] informational discrepancy between the two perspectives and hence the temporal tensions between the reconstituted order of occurrence and the presented order of discovery – whether the Watson tradition of the detective story, in the interests of the game of art […]" (STERNBERG, 1978, p. 281). The novels we have taken a look at so far in more depth don't have the detective as the narrator; in *Murder at the Vicarage,* the narrator is the Vicar, and in *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* the narrator is heterodiegetic. In the last section of this chapter, we will make further considerations regarding the narrations and narrators of crime novels, but for now, we will continue focusing on the novel at hand.

To continue establishing the setting, more than the city, season, and overall feeling this place brings, we then focus on a building that "[….] At night it looked like a terrible place to have an office" (PARETSKY, 2020, p. 1). Implying that during the day it might look better, but that affirmation would not help build the dark tone. There are mentions of street names and stores, bringing the setting closer to people who know the city quite well, and for those readers who are not familiar with the nooks and crannies of Chicago, the specificities aid in giving an air of veracity and verisimilitude to the story. The inside of the building doesn't look much better than its exterior, as V.I. goes on

> […] the hall's mosaic-tiled walls were chipped and dirty. I wondered if anyone ever washed the scuffed linoleum floor. The lobby must create a reassuring impression on potential clients.
> I pushed the elevator button. No response. I tried again. Again no response. I shoved open the heavy stairwell door, climbing slowly to the fourth floor. It was cool in the stairwell and I lingered there a few minutes before moving on down the badly lit hallway to the east end, the end where rents are cheaper because all offices look out on the Walbash el. In the dim light I could read the inscription on the door: "V.I. Warshawski. Private Investigator." (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 2-3)

So far, we can assume that the narrator and protagonist is a pessimist, and might even be affected by the atmosphere. After *shoving* the stairwell door – and here I emphasize the choice of verb, indicating a strong and even somewhat violent physical action from the protagonist – and going up this not at all enticing place, she enters the office, *her* office, confirming any doubts the reader had so far as to who this narrator is, and enters. The office is not as unpleasant as the rest of the building, neat, and organized, opposite her house, as the narrator affirms. In her description of the office, she mentions some elements and furniture chosen to legitimize her occupation and "[…] make visitors realize that mine was a high-class operation" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 3). But, according to her, the office only had what was necessary, keeping the furnishing at almost a bare minimum because she didn't spend much of the time there, as she quickly confirms by stating that she hadn't been there for several days, out on another case. Due to the general state of the building, the power shuts down when she turns on the air conditioning, and when this happens, she also mentions that she's had to learn how to repair most of the things that could go wrong there, showing she does not depend on others. When she comes back from the basement from a failed attempt at fixing the issue, she finds a man, presumably the anonymous client who had left a message for her.

But before she gets closer, she stands and watches him, noticing that "[…] He held himself aggressively, and when he got no answer to his knocking, he opened the door without hesitation and went inside" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 4); when he states he is looking for the

detective, "[…] his voice husky but confident – the voice of a man using to having his own way" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 4). Right at the beginning, there are already statements about being a woman detective and, even more, a man self-assuredly invading her space by just entering the office at his own will. In talking about who he is and why he is there to hire a private investigator, the man, Mr. Thayer, expresses hesitancy by saying "[…] 'You know, I don't mean any offense, but I'm not sure I should talk to you after all. Not unless you've got a partner or something'" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 6). The fact that V.I. has to reinforce her role and convince the prospective client of her capability angers her, and her answer suggests that this is not the first time she has had to deal with this treatment, nor it will be the last. Upon her silence as a response, the man insists :

> "You got a partner?" he persisted.
> "No, Mr. Thayer," I said evenly. "I don't have a partner."
> "Well, this really isn't a job for a girl to take on alone."
> A pulse started throbbing in my right temple. [...].
> "I'm not questioning your honesty," he said quickly. "Look, I'm not trying to get your goat. But you are a girl, and things may get heavy."
> "I'm a woman, Mr. Thayer, and I can look out for myself. If I couldn't, I wouldn't be in this kind of business. If things get heavy, I'll figure out a way to handle them—or go down trying. That's my problem, not yours. Now, you want to tell me about your son, or can I go home where I can turn on an air conditioner?" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 6-7)

This dialogue is very similar to the one present in P.D. James' novel, as we saw in the previous subsection. *Indemnity Only* was published almost ten years after *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman*, women were entering the police force all over the United States and in the United Kingdom, and still, the protagonist has to reaffirm and defend her place in the business. Even more, the fact that Mr. Thayer says it is not a job for a girl works in a way to emphasize the thought that being a detective/private investigator is still seen as *an unsuitable job for a woman*. V.I. tries to stay calm, and the man agrees to hire her because, as he states, he's running out of options. With this, she needs to state her rates, and considering the negative response she initially had from him, she makes strong statements without giving him a chance to reply or complain, "[…] I charge a hundred and a quarter a day, plus expenses. And I need a five-hundred-dollar deposit. I make progress reports, but clients don't tell me how to do the job" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 9). Her statements leave no room for debate and put her in charge of the situation.

After the meeting, she decides to follow him to get a better look due to the building having no power, and she is surprised by what she sees, as it is not what she expected from their conversation and what he said he does. But then she quickly adds, again emphasizing that most

people would be surprised or find her job somewhat unsuitable for her gender, "[…] did I look like a detective? Come to think of it, most people don't try to guess what women do for a living by the way they look – but they usually are astounded to find out what I do" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 11). And at the end of the first chapter, following this consideration, she goes to Arnie's, seemingly a usual place for her, as "[…] The owner gave me a double Johnnie Walker Black and a sirloin from his private collection" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 11). This sentence by itself establishes a connection to the noir genre and the tradition previously mentioned of traits that the noir detectives present, especially the whiskey-drinking habit or preference. It also serves to establish a resemblance of attitude between V.I. Warshawski and the male detectives, as we mentioned the author herself saw no possibility of a connection between V. and the women characters present in the seminal novels of the genre of the 1920s-1930s. In the second chapter, the reader gets to know a little more about the protagonist and her daily routine, and she starts by again mentioning information about the setting, saying it's a day that promises to be as hot as the previous one, but also that "[…] Four days out of seven, I try to force myself to get some kind of exercise" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 13). She informs the reader of her clothing choices (cutoffs and a t-shirt) and proceeds to go for a run, but also informs us of her reasoning,

> […] When thirty is a fond memory, the more days that pass without exercise, the worse you feel going back to it. Then, too, I'm undisciplined in a way that makes it easier to exercise than to diet, and the running helps keep my weight down. It doesn't mean I love it, though, especially on mornings like this. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 13)

This expositional bit further characterizes the protagonist. We learn more about her approximate age, that she does not consider herself a disciplined person, and that she watches her weight and fitness, something she does not necessarily like but which she may see as important in her profession. The information about fashion choices will appear again shortly in a few paragraphs, as she chooses her outfit to start her investigation in a college. Just like the author's inspiration Cordelia Gray, V. I. Warshawski has a preference for a more sensible wardrobe, and later in the work, more specifically in chapter 9, she will even state her choice on wearing running shoes when she decides it is time for action. For the contemporary reader and spectator of procedural series and crime shows, this might come as a surprise and even a relief (and here I speak personally), for we are used to seeing women detectives and police officers when they're not in uniform going after "bad guys" usually wearing boots with heels or other types of heeled shoes, almost never wearing tennis shoes.

> I put on jeans and a yellow cotton top and surveyed myself in the mirror with critical approval. I look my best in the summer. I inherited my Italian mother's olive coloring, and tan beautifully. I grinned at myself. I could hear her saying, "Yes, Vic, you are

> pretty – but pretty is no good. Any girl can be pretty – but to take care of yourself you must have brains. And you must have a job, a profession. You must work." She had hoped I would be a singer and had trained me patiently; she certainly wouldn't have liked my being a detective. Nor would my father. He'd been a policeman himself, Polish in an Irish world. He'd never made it beyond sergeant, due partly to his lack of ambition, but also, I was sure, to his ancestry. But he'd expected great things of me… My grin went a little sour in the mirror and I turned away abruptly. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 14-15)

More than information on her practical choices, the reader gets to learn a little bit more about her family – or lack thereof. Her relationship with her father becomes clearer a few pages later; he had been a police officer from the 21st district, and she calls the number for it and thinks of how "[…] My dad had been dead for ten years, but I still knew the number by heart" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 21). Both parents expected her to be a working woman and she becomes unhappy at the thought that she may not live up to their expectations. This information may be interpreted either as a token of reproval for her choice of career or as her own judgment that she is not doing great as a detective.

She speaks of her clothes again, "[…] I put on white linen slacks and a black silk shirt – clean, elegant clothes to center me squarely in the world of the living" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 21). When she states "[…] I was tired of being feminine and conciliatory, and made myself menacing enough that I was allowed to speak to a secretary" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 24), it implies that she is aware, just as the detective from the period before her, Cordelia, of the effect her appearance and manners have on how other people perceive her and her capabilities, and she knows how to use this to her advantage

Some pages later, she mentions her outfit again, in "[…] I had on my navy raw silk suit, with the blouson jacket. I looked stunning in this outfit and thought I deserved a little more attention. Must be those sagging triceps" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 48). As a narrator that is restricted in such a way to present her own thoughts and beliefs to the reader, she ends up disclosing some aspects of herself more explicitly than the other narrators, being very self-judgemental and transparent about it. And just like Cordelia, she needs to prove herself, as we can see in the following excerpt.

> "My name's V. I. Warshawski. I'm a private detective and I'm looking into Peter Thayer's death." I handed him a business card.
> "You? You're no more a detective than I am a ballet dancer," he exclaimed.
> "I'd like to see you in tights and a tutu," I commented, pulling out the plastic-encased photostat of my private investigator's license. He studied it, then shrugged without speaking. I put it back in my wallet. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 31)

And then V. describes her process of getting ready in preparation for the action that is to come, as mentioned before. She chooses sensible and practical clothes and items that will aid her, even practicing taking the gun off a shoulder holster so as not to get caught up in the moment.

> I changed out of the green slacks into jeans and running shoes. I got out my collection of skeleton keys and put them in one pocket, car keys, driver's license, private investigator license, and fifty dollars in the other. I fastened the shoulder holster over a loose, man-tailored shirt and practiced drawing the gun until it came out quickly and naturally. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 147)

V. describes to the reader what she chooses to wear once more a little later on in the novel, as she mentions she has showered and "[…] changed into a respectable pair of slacks. A dressy shirt and a loose jacket completed the outfit, and the shoulder holster fitted neatly under my left arm. I put the claim draft in my jacket pocket" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 156). With all these descriptions, we can understand the focus here again is on the process of investigation, and the narrator details this up to the clothing information. This helps create the feeling that we are truly following the investigation alongside the detective, instead of just getting a report through a companion.

She finds another issue when she receives a visit from two men, and one of them is Bobby Mallory, a homicide lieutenant from the 21st district who had been her father's closest friend and with whom she usually has Thanksgiving dinner. But he does not seem to accept her chosen profession, as she mentions that he tries to pretend she doesn't work as an investigator, and even more so in what he says to her,

> Mallory looked around in disgust. "You know, if Tony had turned you over his knee more often instead of spoiling you rotten, you'd be a happy housewife now, instead of playing at detective and making it harder for us to get our job done."
> "But I'm a happy detective, Bobby, and I made a lousy housewife." That was true. My brief foray into marriage eight years ago had ended in an acrimonious divorce after fourteen months: some men can only admire independent women at a distance.
> "Being a detective is not a job for a girl like you, Vicki—it's not fun and games. I've told you this a million times. Now you've got yourself messed up in a murder […]." (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 37)

This passage brings more expositional information about Warshawski's past and her opinion on why her marriage didn't work out. She considers herself independent, confirming that characteristic, and she understands that this is one of the reasons why her marriage failed – her ex-husband wanted to change that about her and, but to no avail, getting frustrated with her and their situation. This overprotectiveness coming from Mallory can be seen as twofold: on the one hand, he feels overprotective due to her being the only daughter of the man who had been his best friend, but on the other hand, it can be read as standard male – and even societal

– reaction to her defying what was expected of a woman at the time, or at least not of "nice" women, as he explicitly states in "Vicki, for two cents I'd kick you in your cute little behind. You've made a career out of something which no nice girl would touch, but you're no dummy. […] you didn't scream or throw up, the way any decent girl would. You looked the place over. […]" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 42) His patronizing tone implies that the detective is neither a nice nor a decent girl, but it also informs us that she indeed has a career in this profession, suggesting that she is good at what she does.

She mentions a memory from her childhood, remembering she had actually seen Andrew McGraw before and he had been in her house, needing help from her dad.

> But he'd obviously remembered my dad. I guessed he'd tried to reach Tony at the police and, when he'd learned my dad was dead, had pulled me out of the Yellow Pages, assuming I would be Tony's son. Well, I wasn't: I was his daughter, and not the easygoing type my dad had been. I had my Italian mother's drive, and I try to emulate her insistence on fighting battles to the finish. But regardless of what kind of person I was, McGraw might be finding himself now in trouble of the kind that not even easygoing Tony would have helped him out of. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 44)

And here again, there is the comparison of her personality to that of her parents and bringing up the issue of her being a woman in that kind of profession. So besides investigating the case and relating to the reader in this novel, V. also ends up learning more things about her parents and the way she is connected to them, revealing this information to the reader as well and filling in some gaps created with the lack of information about her past that is not disclosed primarily in the novel.

When the secretary of Mr. McGraw refers to V. as one of the man's whores, thinking he called one up to the office for the first time, V. has to control herself so as not to give in to the impulse to "[…] brain her with her desk lamp" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 48). This is a character that has been more involved in the world and, closer to the noir novels, is more prone to violence than the other detectives before her.

It is only in chapter 4 that the reader finds out what V.I. stands for, in talking to Ralph Devereux about what he had found in Peter Thayer's work, "'Ralph, my first name is Victoria; my friends call me Vic. Never Vicki'" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 62), and shortly after she completes the information about the I.. "[…] I stood for Iphigenia. My Italian mother had been devoted to Victor Emmanuel. This passion and her love of opera had led her to burden me with an insane name." (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 63). However, this information she keeps to herself and the reader, not answering Ralph when he insists on knowing what the *I* stands for,

emphasizing our privileged position in the novel. Another layer of her relation to her parents is added when she states her name is a burden, highlighting the use of her initials.

When she is further investigating Anita's disappearance at the university, she comes upon a "youth" and asks where her instructor's office is, but when he pretends not to hear, she has to ask again, and she states that she says it pleasantly, but her action shows otherwise. At least there is a contrast between her tone of voice and her body language: "[…] I came around the desk again and sat on it facing him, and grabbed his shirt collar and jerked his face up so that I could see his eyes" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 66). One can see throughout the novel that V. has to constantly fight for her place, either with words or with physical altercations in order to prove herself worthy of her profession in the eyes of others, mostly because she is a woman. In order to survive in this man's world, she needs to prove herself again and again and has had to learn how to defend herself with more than just words.

> I hadn't noticed anyone coming up the stairs behind me, and was turning my key in the lock when I felt an arm on my shoulder. I'd been mugged once before in this hallway. Whirling reflexively, I snapped my knee and kicked in one motion, delivering directly onto my assailant's exposed shinbone. He grunted and backed off but came back with a solid punch aimed at my face. I ducked and took it on the left shoulder. A lot of the zip was gone, but it shook me a little and I drew away. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 76)

The beginning of chapter 5 then, entitled Gold Coast Blues, is very heavy on action. V. is confronted with a criminal who is trying to get her to another location, but she fights him until another man comes and they finally get the upper hand, one of them hits her in the head with his gun and she falls unconscious. Throughout the other novels, we had seen some action, with Cordelia even needing to keep her gun close for safety, but the epitome of violence is reached in this new era of crime novels, with more descriptions of fighting and gun use. This is the total opposite of the idea of the intellectual detective who could solve a case without having to get up from his own armchair, and it is certainly a sign of the times; the 70s is referred to in books and articles about the American police force as one of the most violent times and peak of police corruption, so, of course, this ends up being reflected into the novels. What is new in *Indemnity Only* is that a woman in the center of the violence and is able to hold her own in a physical altercation, and the bad guys even need to resort to two men to take her down, and they make it explicit with "'Earl warned us this goddamn Warshawski bitch was a wise-ass, but he didn't say she was a goddamn karate expert." That was Ribs. He pronounced my name "Worchotsi." I looked down at my hands modestly'" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 80) and when they show Earl's reaction to their almost defeat:

> […] "You let a goddamn dame bust your ribs?" he yelled, his voice breaking to a squeak. "The money I pay you and you can't do a simple little job like fetch a goddamn broad?"
> One of the things I hate about my work is the cheap swearing indulged in by cheap crooks. I also hate the word *broad.* (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 81, original emphasis)

His reaction is stronger in relation to his henchmen's failure towards a *woman* and Warshawski resents the vocabulary used to refer to her. What manages to mess with V.'s emotional state is when Earl himself goes towards her when he thinks she is being difficult and not cooperating; what seems to scare her more is the meaning that underlies his look, but she still tries to hide she is affected by the situation.

> Earl signaled to the doorman, who came and held my shoulders against the chair. Joe was hovering in the background, a lascivious look on his face. My stomach turned slightly.
> "Okay, Earl, I'm terrified," I said.
> He hit me again. I was going to look like absolute hell tomorrow, I thought. I hoped I wasn't shaking; my stomach was knotted with nervousness. I took several deep diaphragm breaths to try to relieve the tension. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 82)

While in *An Unsuitable Job For a Woman* there is an almost veiled threat against the detective, in Paretsky's work the threat is explicit and violent. When Earl is finally convinced that she is going to stop investigating the Thayer case, she is dropped off just outside the front door of the building, and before she gets up to get a cab, she "[….] sat for a few minutes on the stairs, shivering in the heat and trying to pull myself together. I was violently ill over the railing, which cleared my headache a bit. […] I got to my feet, rather wobbly, but I could walk. I felt my arms. They were sore, but nothing was broken." (PARETKSY, 2010, p. 84) The taxi driver "[…] fussed like a Jewish mother" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 84), but she affirms she is all right, that she doesn't need to go to a hospital, what she needs are a "[…] a hot bath and a drink and I'll be all right" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 85). Even though she is injured, she still does not rely on anyone else, so once more, the characterization of her as independent is stressed.

A little later she confesses in her narration that the event had greatly affected her, stating it is still very raw in her mind when she is out on a date with Ralph,

> Nonetheless, the thought of being so helpless, the memory of Tony beating me, like a disloyal whore or a welching loan customer—to be so vulnerable was close to unbearable. Unconsciously, my left hand had clenched, and I realized I was slicing it against the tabletop. Ralph was watching me, an uncertain look on his face. His business and suburban life hadn't prepared him for this kind of emotion. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 92-93)

What seems to bother her is how she felt in the moment, helpless and vulnerable, not much the violence itself. She states he looks horrified when she relates what happened, and thinks she should stop investigating and hand the case over to the police, and she starts feeling angry and just says that it is her job and she will give up her investigation.

> If things came easily in this life, we would never feel pride in our achievements. My mother used to tell me that, standing over me while I practiced the piano. She'd probably disapprove of my work, if she were alive, but she would never let me slouch at the dinner table grumbling because it wasn't turning out right. Still, I was too tired tonight to try to grapple with the implications of everything I'd learned today. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 99)

Once more she mentions parental disapproval, but again, it is something she imagines they would feel based on her upbringing and what she knows of her parents. There is no way for the reader to confirm this. As the novel unfolds, the reader learns more about her and her relation to her family through these small and almost nonchalant instances in her narration. And even more, we learn about her conviction and (sexual) desires, which she makes explicit both through narration and dialogue, a new aspect of the detective novel that emerges in the 1980s after the new waves of feminism.

> "Well, maybe we could do both—sleep and exercise, I mean." The smile in his eyes was half embarrassed, half pleased.
> I suddenly thought that after my evening with Earl and Tony, I'd like the comfort of someone in bed with me. "Sure," I said, smiling back. (PARETKSKY, 2010, p. 99-100)

After the confirmation that they should spend the night together, she mentions Ralph helped steady her going into the house, and "[…] I had a mental flash of sitting on the front steps waiting for my dad to come home from work and carry me upstairs. If I asked Ralph to, he would carry me up. But it would alter the dependency balance in the relationship too much" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 100) and also "[…] It had been a long time since I had had anyone up to my apartment, and I suddenly felt shy and vulnerable. I'd been overexposed to men today and wasn't ready to do it again in bed" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 101). She considers being taken care of like that as being dependent, something she is not, so she decides how to act based on not wanting to feel even more vulnerable.

They go to the bedroom "[…] hand-in-hand, like five-year-olds" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 102). They undress and climb onto the bed, and V. makes some considerations regarding their situation, or better, his as a recent divorcee, as "[…] I'd been afraid that I might have to help him along; recently divorced men sometimes have problems because they feel very

insecure. […] I was too tired to help anyone. My last memory was of his breath expelling loudly, and then I was asleep" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 102) leaving no doubts to the reader of what transpired there. The morning after, she examines herself in the mirror, taking over her injuries from the beating up, and notices he is watching her, seeming disgusted due to how "[…] My incipient black eye had turned a deep blackish-purple, streaked with yellow and green. My uninjured left eye was blood-shot. My jaw had turned gray. The whole effect was unappealing" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 103-104). There is no masking how she feels and looks to the reader. We can affirm then that it is in the act of narration that she shows that she is not afraid of being judged. As readers we may think this makes her vulnerable - because we get to see more about her than she as a character seems to reveal to other characters. So the experiencing I might be more vulnerable because she tries to hide things; but the narrating I is not, for she doesn't fear judgment.

The issue of violence comes up again when she is thinking about her family, referring to her mother by her first name, indicating that maybe they were not as close, especially due to the fact that the mother died when she was a teenager, looking at her own appearance after the altercation and thinking "'Oh, my mother hated it, but she died when I was fifteen, and my dad was thankful that I could take care of myself.' That was true – Gabriella had hated violence. But she was a fighter, and I got my scrappiness from her, not from my big, even-tempered father" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 104). She emphasizes how strong and capable she is throughout the novel, and becomes irritated when men – Ralph, more specifically – try to protect her, as we can see in "[…] all I saw was friendly concern. Was he just having an attack of male protectiveness, or did he have some special reason for wanting me to stay off the job?" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 106) Her way of behaving is still not the "norm" in society, but V. is not the only woman who defies expectations in the novel. Lotty Herschel, V's friend for years and whom she goes to when she needs a place to stay, is one of these women.

> She was a doctor, about fifty, I thought, but with her vivid, clever face and trim, energetic body it was hard to tell. Sometime in her Viennese youth she had discovered the secret of perpetual motion. She held fierce opinions on a number of things, and put them to practice in medicine, often to the dismay of her colleagues. She'd been one of the physicians who performed abortions in connection with an underground referral service I'd belonged to at the University of Chicago in the days when abortion was illegal and a dirty word to most doctors. Now she ran a clinic in a shabby storefront down the street. She'd tried running it for nothing when she first opened it, but found the neighborhood people wouldn't trust medical care they didn't have to pay for. Still it was one of the cheapest clinics in the city, and I often wondered what she lived on. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 108)

She talks of Lotty in admiration, and she is the person closest to family that she has. She realizes she needs protection, so she ponders on the subject of buying a gun while eating a bagel in her car, and we learn even more about both of her parents in the following excerpt and the fact that V. has been involved in a man's death before.

> […] I tried to decide where to get a gun. I knew how to use them—my dad had seen too many shooting accidents in homes with guns. He's decided the way to avoid one in our house was for my mother and me to learn how to use them. My mother had always refused: they gave her unhappy memories of the war and she would always say she'd use the time to pray for a world without weapons. But I used to go down to the police range with my dad on Saturday afternoons and practice target shooting. At one time I could clean and load and fire a .45 police revolver in two minutes, but since my father had died ten years ago, I hadn't been out shooting. I'd given his gun to Bobby as a memento when he'd died, and I'd never needed one since then. I had killed a man once, but that had been an accident. Joe Correl had jumped me outside a warehouse when I was looking into some inventory losses for a company. I had broken his hold and smashed his jaw in, and when he fell, he'd hit his head on the edge of a forklift. I'd broken his jaw, but it was his skull against the forklift that killed him.
> But Smeissen had a lot of hired muscle, and if he was really pissed off, he could hire some more. A gun wouldn't completely protect me, but I thought it might narrow the odds. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 120)

This death had not involved a gun, but now the real danger involved in this new job made her vulnerable and she wants a new protection besides her own body which had worked for her so far. She finds some reluctance on the part of the salesperson in the store on the far south side of the city, but she arrives stating she knows exactly what type of gun she wants and informs she had called about the Smith & Wesson .38.

> The clerk looked suspiciously at my face and took in the black eye. "Why don't you come back on Monday, and if you still feel you want a gun, we can talk about a model more suited to a lady than a Smith & Wesson thirty-eight."
> "Despite what you may think I am not a wife-beating victim. I am not planning on buying a gun to go home and kill my husband. I'm a single woman living alone and I was attacked last night. I know how to use a gun, and I've decided I need one, and this is the kind I want." (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 120)

And there is a brief moment in which she understands the salesman's concerns about her entering the store to buy a gun so suddenly. She looks in the mirror behind the cash register and fails to recognize herself for a moment: "[….] The left side of my face was now completely purple and badly swollen […]. I almost turned to see who this battered woman was before realizing I was looking at myself." (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 124) The word battered implies repeated beating, suggesting a victim of abuse, which she does not recognize herself as.

After the whole ordeal, she goes to Lotty's and finds comfort in being there. Lotty doesn't censure her nor is horrified about what happened. She gives V. medical advice and support in what she needs at the time.

> Lotty was right: I was not in prime condition. The destruction of my apartment had been shocking. I was consumed with anger, the anger one has when victimized and unable to fight back. I opened my suitcase and got out the box with the gun in it. I unwrapped it and pulled out the Smith & Wesson. While I loaded it, I had a fantasy of planting some kind of hint that would draw Smeissen—or whomever—back to my apartment while I stood in the hallway and pumped them full of bullets. The fantasy was very vivid and I played it through several times. The effect was cathartic—a lot of my anger drained away and I felt able to call my answering service. They took Lotty's number and agreed to transfer my calls. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 144-145)

The attack, in violation of a safe space for the detective, happens here. And it is an invasion of her personal space. Yet again, her resentment and anger spring from her feelings of vulnerability and helplessness. The issue with Earl and the invasion of her apartment continue to have an effect on the character and her actions, as she states that "Native caution made me check the stairwells and the front walk carefully before going to the street. I even examined the backseat and the engine for untoward activity before getting into the car. Smeissen really had me spooked" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 158). She's even more cautious because of how she's feeling affected by the threat and attack.

When she talks about Lotty to Jill, she describes her as an "[…] Austrian war refugee, brilliant London University medical student, maverick doctor, warm friend" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 182); upon discussing with her friend what to do with Jill, V. has a moment of realization of her appreciation for Lotty. "'This is the first time I've ever really dealt directly with a killer,' I answered. 'But generally, yes, I do get to the root of the problems I'm asked to look into.'" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 184) Still about Jill, when V. is holding her hand, she thinks "[…] Something about her pierced my heart, made me long for the child I'd never had, and I watched her carefully until she was in a deep sleep" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 186). A moment of vulnerability, again only available to the reader.

Later, when Ralph brings up a discussion about their pasts, he realizes he had never asked V. whether she was ever married. He asks what happened, and she talks about how it was a long time ago, that she thinks they were not ready for it. He asks if she misses it, and her reaction is to get angry, asking in return "'Are you trying to ask in a subtle way about whether I wish I had a husband and a family? I certainly do not miss Dick, nor am I sorry that I don't have three kids getting under my feet'" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 208). It is interesting that she

uses Dick to refer to her ex-husband. It is a common nickname for Richard, but considering her dissatisfaction with her marriage, it certainly adds a negative characteristic to him – that he was *a dick*, a derogatory term used to characterize a man as stupid or unpleasant. Moreover, in another layer of significance, referring to the ex-husband as Dick might imply that Warshawski does not miss men in general, for the term is also a vulgar slang word for penis. He tells her to take it easy, and she forces a smile and apologizes, "'Sorry. Guess I'm overreacting to people who think a woman without a child is like Welch's without grapes.'" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 209) When she opens up to him about her past marriage, it is also the first time the reader is getting more details and information on the gap that was created. She talks about how her ex-husband could not accept the fact that she is independent and would not change, and that was the main reason why their relationship had not worked out.

> "The reason my first marriage fell apart was because I'm too independent. Also, I'm not into housekeeping, as you noticed the other night. But the real problem is my independence. I guess you could call it a strong sense of turf. It's—it's hard for me—" I smiled. "It's hard for me to talk about it." I swallowed and concentrated on my plate for a few minutes. I bit my lower lip and continued. "1 have some close women friends, because I don't feel they're trying to take over my turf. But with men, it always seems, or often seems, as though I'm having a fight to maintain who I am."
> […]
> "With Dick, it was worse. I'm not sure why I married him—sometimes I think it's because he represented the white Anglo-Saxon establishment, and part of me wanted to belong to that. But Dick was a terrible husband for someone like me. […] Dick thought he'd fallen in love with me because I'm so independent; afterwards it seemed to me that it was because he saw my independence as a challenge, and when he couldn't break it down, he got angry.
> […]
> "Well, all this time, Dick was waiting for me to settle down to being a housewife. He was very supportive when I was worrying through leaving the Public Defender, but it turned out that that was because he was hoping I'd quit to stay home on the sidelines applauding him while he clawed his way up the ladder in the legal world. […]." (PARESTKY, 2010, p. 209-210)

With her story, she emphasizes even more her independence and how the fact that she doesn't fit gender expectations was a huge factor in the divorce. And it almost seems like a confession moments later when she tells him of her doubts, and that "[…] There really are times when I wish I did have a couple of children and was doing the middle-class family thing. But that's a myth, […] And I know I'm feeling a longing for a myth, not the reality" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 211-212). What she had only confided in the reader, she now confides in him, creating a connection with his character by showing a more vulnerable side to herself, even showing that she's capable of change and that she wants a more meaningful connection.

> I smiled and squeezed his hand in return. "I know. But—I'm a good detective, and I've got an established name now. And it's not a job that's easy to combine with marriage. It's only intermittently demanding, but when I'm hot after something, I

> don't want to be distracted by the thought of someone at home stewing because he doesn't know what to do about dinner. Or fussing at me because Earl Smeissen beat me up." (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 212)

When V. finally gets to go to the university meeting, a discussion emerges on the issue of women's liberation and oppression in relation to what Professor Harold Weinstein is like and his ideas, "[…] If you tried to talk about how women have been excluded not just from big business but from the unions as well, he said that didn't indicate oppression, merely a reflection of the current social mores." (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 240) V. introduces herself as V. I. Warshawski, and that most people call her Vic, but explains "'It's a nickname,' I said. 'I usually use my initials. I started out my working life as a lawyer, and I found it was harder for male colleagues and opponents to patronize me if they didn't know my first name.'" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 241-242)This brings us further information about her past, how she began her working life, and possibly how she met her husband before becoming a detective. But more than talking about the professor, V. narrates and reports to the reader the discussion the group has about political issues in feminism.

> "They ignore the real issues—women's social position, inequities of marriage, divorce, child care—and go screwing around supporting establishment politicians. They'll support a candidate who does one measly little thing for child care, and overlook the fact that he doesn't have any women on his staff, and that his wife is a plastic mannequin sitting at home supporting his career."
> "Well, you're never going to have social justice until you get some basic political and economic inequalities solved," a stocky woman, whose name I thought was Ruth, said. "And political problems can be grappled with. You can't go around trying to uproot the fundamental oppression between men and women without some tool to dig with: laws represent that tool."
> This was an old argument; it went back to the start of radical feminism in the late sixties: Do you concentrate on equal pay and equal legal rights, or do you go off and try to convert the whole society to a new set of sexual values? (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 243)

After the whole ordeal, Ralph starts apologizing to her; at first, V. thinks it is about the fact that they are injured, but he soon explains: "'No, but I should have listened to you. I couldn't believe you knew what you were talking about. I guess deep down I didn't take your detecting seriously. I thought it was a hobby, like Dorothy's painting'" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 312). This entire time, he had not actually taken her seriously. He confesses he had been falling in love with her, but that she doesn't need him. She says it's not true, but she doesn't know whether that is really true or not. She says she liked him, but they agree that their relationship would *never* work out, and go their separate ways.

She leaves the hospital and goes to the Ritz, the atmosphere of the fancy hotel messing with her mood, making her think that she didn't fit in there, especially when she sees her reflection in the mirror in the elevator, "[…] disheveled, with blood on my jacket and jeans, my hair uncombed" (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 314)

When talking to Anita, she seems to open up about certain subjects.

> "Oh, yes. That's going to take a while. All mourning takes a long time, and you can't rush it along. My dad's been dead ten years now, and every now and then, something comes up that lets me know that the mourning is still going on, and another piece of it is in place. The hard part doesn't last so long. While it is going on, though, don't fight it—the more you poke away the grief and anger, the longer it takes to sort it out." She wanted to know more about my dad and our life together. The rest of the way out I spent telling her about Tony. Funny that he should have the same name as that stupid gunman of Earl's. My father, my Tony, had been a bit of a dreamer, an idealist, a man who had never shot another human being in all his years on the force—warning shots in the air, but no one killed because of Tony Warshawski. Mallory couldn't believe it—I remember that, as Tony was dying. They were talking one evening, Bobby came over a lot at night those days, and Bobby asked him how many people he'd killed in his years on the force. Tony replied he'd never even wounded a man. (PARETSKY, 2010, p. 318)

With this, she helps fill in even the gaps that were left about her past and the relationship with her father and his friends. V. seems to be able to have a closer bond with the reader due to her expressing her thoughts in a way the other narrators could not as much. The final confrontation comes in a violent action-packed scene, which reinforces that in this novel there is no security for the detective and that the case simply will not be solved only through mental efforts. V's character is slowly and thoroughly fleshed out throughout the novel, with information being strategically disclosed. As a result, the effect of recency is more present than that of primacy, as explained in 2.2, as it is her full figure, looking in retrospect, that will stand out more to the reader. This effect is reinforced by the fact that most readers had no previous knowledge of V before reading Paretsky's work, unlike Miss Marple, whose image has long been ingrained in popular culture. V can be considered a pure individual because she is portrayed as a textually and constructionally round character. There is conflict within her, she is affected by events, and the reader understands that due to the elaborate descriptions of an experiencing-I under the microscope of a very critical and transparent narrating-I.

2.4. THE WOMAN DETECTIVE, OR THE WOMEN DETECTIVES?

To conclude this chapter, we will reiterate a few aspects that have been mentioned about the three detectives from our literary corpus. As we have seen in the previous sections, there is not one woman detective; they are built by means of the narrative exposition differently from each other, but there are certain similarities. Perhaps one of the most noticeable and relevant of such similarities is the fact that, at least at one point along their narratives, the protagonists/detectives make remarks concerning their status both as women and as investigators, a trait not to be expected in detective fiction centered on male protagonists.

In the Sherlock Holmes tradition, for example, one may find characters whose abilities or suitability for investigative work are frequently questioned. Watson is a case that comes to mind, often characterized as inferior to Holmes, just as Agatha Christie's Hastings compared to Hercule Poirot. However, the questioning of such characters' skills does not seem to be anchored on gender roles; in other words, they may be faulty male investigators, but their fault does not stem from their male condition. In the novels of our corpus, tough, the women are not taken seriously initially precisely because they are women who are detectives: Miss Marple for being an elderly lady in a small town in the beginning of the 20th century, using her connections to the private sphere to help solve the cases; the other two having to prove and ascertain their skills, even to those who hire them, constantly trying to debunk the belief that being an investigator is not an appropriate job for a woman.

The characterization of the three detectives is carried out through different narrative strategies. In *Murder at the Vicarage*, Miss Marple is characterized only through the Vicar's exposition of events, his own opinions, and what he reports of other people's thoughts about her. As a result, the effect of primacy is dominant, because from the beginning he presents his biased views and there is no other point of view to contest them – most of the other characters seem to agree with him, or at least from what he presents to us, at least until a certain point in the novel. By then, however, her description as a gossiping old lady who meddles in everyone's business in the village has already been strongly established, which makes it difficult for the reader to change that view of her.

In *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman*, Cordelia Gray's characterization is done through an extradiegetic narrator and Cordelia herself as the focalizer, i.e., it is through her eyes and mind that the events are filtered. As the exposition of the events of the fabula is distributed throughout the novel, the effect of recency is dominant. It is only in retrospect that we as readers may reach a comprehensive image of the character, piecing together what we have learned about her little by little.

In *Indemnity Only*, it is V. I. Warshawski herself that is the narrator, using the reader almost as a confidant to her deepest and most vulnerable confessions. Her exposition also happens gradually, distributed throughout the novel, with pieces of information being released either through the reporting of her thoughts and impressions or via dialogue with other characters. Accordingly, her characterization is constructed gradually as well, and the effect of recency dominates due to the accumulation of information by the end of the novel. It is interesting to note that Ralph once refers to her as Miss Marple (p. 294), but at this point in the narrative readers already have enough elements to conclude that the parallel is restricted to their activities as investigators and not related to personal traits. Still, the reference seems to highlight the fact that people still have difficulty taking her – or any woman - seriously as a detective.

Therefore, the analyses of the protagonists indicate that P. D. James's and Paretsky's novels, not belonging to the classic mystery novel but to the noir tradition, share some aspects that paved the way for the construction of a paradigmatic female investigator for contemporary detective fiction. Of course, each one of their protagonists has their particularities, but we can identify aspects that would later be reiterated in other novels and also television. Beyond the much-debated influence of literature on TV and other audiovisual media, what we intended to show and emphasize here is that these elements have become a staple of detective fiction portraying women, one which runs across different decades, media, and narrative styles. The television series we will discuss in the next chapter is not a direct adaptation of any of the novels herein analyzed, yet it displays these common elements that – it is our thesis - have been appropriated and reiterated by other television shows in turn.

There is not *one* way of being a woman, so one cannot expect to find one model of a woman detective. Yet, there are marked similarities in the female detectives from the 1970s onwards, especially in that they differ from the previous standard set by Christie's Miss Marple, more of a literary type than a full-fledged individual. What seems to be one of the most relevant elements in P. D. James's and Paretsky's novels, especially in *Indemnity Only*, is the abundant and explicit use of violence. As previously stated, Cordelia and V. are detectives whose lives are put at risk during the investigations, a trait that became even more recurrent in detective fiction from the 1980s on. The characters need to be able to handle themselves physically in a fight, but they often suffer physical violence – that will have psychological effects – at the hands of perpetrators or accomplices. These women know how to use a gun, but they will hesitate to do so; however, they do not hesitate to engage in physical fighting for self-protection. Though this increase in violence may be attributed to the inescapable influence of the noir in detective

fiction, rendering the differentiation between female or male detectives almost irrelevant, as suggested by Roxane Gay (2021), our contention is that gender roles remain a central theme in detective fiction. A hard-boiled detective is rendered so only when he happens to be a male hard-boiled detective, yet his gender does not seem to be an issue; when a woman is the investigator, no matter how hard-boiled she may turn out to be, she is always a *woman* detective.

These women do not have ongoing close bonds to family members – parents are usually deceased, and any familial bond with other characters is tensioned and put to the test, which often results in characters finding themselves losing people who were close or getting closer to them in their private lives. Female detectives are also more liberated in their personal lives, engaging in sexual relations and drinking more. But while they are free and liberated with their personal lives, when it comes to the workplace or professional sphere, they have to defend their right to be where they are; other characters will question and doubt their abilities as detectives because of their gender, no matter how young or old they are. They find impediments to their investigation in characters who refuse to talk to them and prefer to hire male detectives. But these women are also highly independent, not relying on anyone else but themselves to solve the crimes and also to defend themselves. Interestingly, when they have to rely on other people, they build closer connections with women and trust them to reach their goals, even if they dislike each other (as is the case of Cordelia and Miss Leaming).

The psychology of these characters is revealed to us through the narrative device of focalization (GENETTE, 1980). It is through their point of view that we have access to the events and the process of investigation. This access, however, tends to be skillfully played with by the authors to create curiosity, suspense, or even surprise concerning the protagonists' minds and background; the expositional information about the characters is delayed and distributed (STERNBERG, 1978) as a general rule, which results in gradual and more complex characterization. Besides that, the narratives focus much more on following the investigation process than on presenting the crime itself, which allows us to learn more about the characters by observing them in their element. While the traditional detective novel has its pinnacle in the final confrontation and arrest of the culprit, without further delays or inquiries, novels of the new paradigm, such as P.D. James's and Partsky's, do not value this revelation so much, with the detectives leaving the case while there is still an inquiry going on, with the arrests of culprits being only referred to by the narrators rather than thoroughly reported.

Having established this new paradigm of literary female detectives, we now proceed to our investigation of the portrayal of women detectives in television, particularly of investigator

Jane Tennison in *Prime Suspect*, a detective who personified the traits of the contemporary woman detective.

3 "CALL ME BOSS, GOV, ANYTHING BUT MA'AM"

3.1. CRIME TELEVISION

According to David Bianculli (2016), there are five series that are key to the evolution of the crime genre in television: *Hill Street Blues* (NBC, 1981-1987), *NYPD Blue* (ABC, 1993-2005), *The Sopranos* (HBO, 1999-2007), *The Shield* (FX, 2002-2008), and *Breaking Bad* (AMC, 2008-2013). He considers the genre one of the most complex in its evolution and development because while the initial programs had a clear delineation of good and bad/evil sides, they slowly began to question this duality and present morally grey characters both from the "good guys" and the "bad guys" side. Alongside these seminal works, one could also include *Dragnet* (NBC 1951-1959, 1967-1970) as a landmark; it began as a radio series that later was adapted to television created, produced, and starred by Jack Webb in 1949 for the NBC network, and it had a running time of 30 minutes, following the cases of detective Sergeant Joe Friday of the Los Angeles Police Department. The franchise needs to be acknowledged as a staple of the crime genre because it brought to the air some elements that are recognizable as being typical of crime shows, especially its opening narration: "Ladies and gentlemen: the story you are about to hear is true. Only the names have been changed to protect the innocent". Moreover, its proposal was to be a dramatization of real crimes, and the show, by portraying the realities of a police investigation, ended up improving the general public's opinions about the police force at the time (BIANCULLI, 2016).

Noticeably, all the series aforementioned feature men as the main detectives. Adding to the list of series that are key to the establishment of the genre and later its evolution (and that are not direct adaptations of literary works) and more relevant to this research are *Decoy* (Syndication, 1957-1958), *Police Woman* (NBC, 1974-1978), *Charlie's Angels* (ABC, 1976-1981), *Cagney and Lacey* (CBS, 1982-1988), and *Murder, She Wrote (*CBS, 1984-1996). Even listed in the Guinness World Records as the first female tv cop star, Beverly Garland played Patricia Casey Jones in *Decoy*, the first television show to ever star a woman in the main role of detective. As the title indicates, she was an undercover officer, but she was the sole protagonist of the series. *Police Woman* features another undercover officer as the protagonist: Sergeant "Pepper" Anderson, portrayed by Angie Dickinson. This time, she is part of a team, but the character is still the protagonist and focus of the series. Even though *Decoy* was the first

series/show to feature a woman as an officer in a leading role, *Police Woman* is still the first drama with hour-long episodes to have done so.

The premise of *Charlie's Angels* is that after graduating from the police academy, three women officers who had been designated to desk jobs and traffic control choose instead an opportunity in which they will be more active, working as private detectives for the Charles Townsend Agency. These women are Jill Munroe (portrayed by Farrah Fawcett), Kelly Garrett (portrayed by Jaclyn Smith), and Sabrina Duncan (portrayed by Kate Jackson) – in the second season, Jill Munroe is replaced by her younger sister Kris Munroe (portrayed by Cheryl Ladd); in the fourth season, Sabrina is replaced by Tiffany Welles (portrayed by Shelley Hack), and in the fifth season, Tiffany is replaced by Julie Rogers (portrayed by Tanya Roberts). This show follows a procedural structure, with episodes featuring a case to be solved and the "Angels" going undercover to solve it.

In *Cagney and Lacey*, we follow the day-to-day of Christine Cagney (portrayed first by Meg Foster in season 1, and then by Sharon Gless in seasons 2 through 7) and Mary Beth Lacey (portrayed by Tyne Daly), two detectives from the New York police force. It is the first series to have two women as the main detectives in the "buddy cop" system, which is when the two protagonists are very different from one another personality-wise and need to work together in order to solve crimes; in the series, Cagney is a single woman whose focus lies solely on her career, while Lacey is married and has two sons. Barney Rosenzweig, the producer, in an interview with the Television Academy Foundation, says that the idea for the show emerged to make up for a lack in the cinema industry. His girlfriend at the time, Barbara Corday, started to introduce him to the feminist movement and one book in particular struck his attention: Molly Haskell's *From Reverence to Rape: The Treatment of Women in the Movies* (1974), more specifically the idea that there had never been a buddy movie for women. He says he could not sell the idea and script that Barbara Avedon and Barbara Corday had written to anyone in the movie industry at first, and then he took it to television. So the series, more than just featuring two women in a protagonist role, actively brought women's issues to the foreground; after all, as the slogan of the series even said, the show focused not on two cops who happened to be women, but rather on two women who happened to be cops – connecting to the ideas brought by Heidensohn (1992), the series portrayed police*women*, not *police*women.

In *Murder, She Wrote*, Jessica Fletcher (played by Angela Lansbury) is a writer of mystery novels and an amateur detective who sleuths her way into solving crimes initially in the fictional town of Cabot Cove in the United States of America and later on, also going to

other places. Jessica is a retired English teacher and widower, an older woman, who meddles in the cases the police are investigating poorly; the police force usually wants to arrest the most obvious suspect and not delve further into looking for clues or making connections, and she is the one who will truly investigate matters more deeply. Its success in television was such that after the show ended, there were movies, video games, and even a series of books having Jessica Fletcher as the protagonist, including novelizations from the episodes and a spin-off series.

It is in April of 1991 that the series *Prime Suspect* first airs on British television on ITV, created by Lynda La Plante, and consists of seven seasons with a total of fifteen episodes. The series stars Dame Helen Mirren in the role of Detective Chief Inspector (DCI) Jane Tennison, and it focuses on her journey as one of the first women of London's Metropolitan Police force to rise to the rank of Detective Superintendent[11]. This series became an important milestone for women detectives on television due to the characterization of Tennison, which will be discussed in more detail in section 3.3 of this chapter.

The series mentioned so far are all considered to be crime dramas, and the definition and the establishment of *drama* permeate television scholarship. It is in the 1950s, especially in Great Britain, that television begins to replace cinema as a dramatic institution; the high costs of producing cinema relegated it to a small dominant part both socially and economically, while television had a lower cost and could be aired to more people in a much faster way, representing, for the time, new cultural possibilities in a dimension never seen before, with drama becoming part of everyday life in industrial societies (WILLIAMS, 2004). Raymond Williams (2004) mentions the distinction between serials and series; serials present an action that is divided into several episodes, while the series presents a continuity of characters instead of an action but in both modes, there is a certain attachment to a specific network – or as will be discussed in the subsection 3.2, viewers can create relationships to characters themselves. Serials usually present a high number of specialized themes, such as police shows, and, as Williams (2004) states, they were popular before the advent of television, but they became much more popular. Williams (2004) also states that there has never been such attention to crime and sickness before – thinking about all the crime and medical shows there are up to date. This idea of serial and series also relates to the terms we will adopt here, serial remains the same, be we will refer to series as episodic, according to Jason Mittell's definitions (2015); however, television programs can alternate "[…] between episodic installments and mandatory temporal gaps between

[11] One rank above that of the DCI, according to the current promotion ranking in the Metropolitan Police website.

episodes — it is these gaps that define the serial experience" (MITTELL, 2015, p. 27), and it is this possibility of alternation that enables viewers to consume a program on a regular basis and engage more actively with it.

According to Seabra (2016), in television, drama is a term used to refer to anything that basically is not a comedy, regardless of its subgenre, in a way to portray human conflicts and their developments with a more serious tone, usually aired weekly. To him, a drama can always be defined by an event that alters the initial status quo, as a transformation that justifies the storytelling. The more detailed definition, according to him, depends on the subgenres, as the drama series is a combination of its general characteristics with the subgenre specificities (such as the medical drama, the firefighter drama, the courtroom, etc). One of the most recognizable subgenres of drama is the procedural (SEABRA, 2016), an episodic series that presents and solves a case in each episode – and it must, according to Seabra (2016) involve a victim, a mystery, an investigation and a solution all within the same episode. The episodes of these series can either look for the perpetrators or, if these are already known, focus on the search for their motivations. Moreover, there are certain elements that are unchangeable, such as the characters' personalities and the setting; it is expected that the characters be predictable from the first time they are introduced, just like the characters in literature (BAL, 2009), for this would create stability since the spectator always knows what to expect and that it will never change (SEABRA, 2016). By looking at the underlying structure of the episodes, further considerations regarding *Prime Suspect*'s genre definition will be noted in 3.3, particularly whether it fits the definition of procedural series within the crime drama genre or not.

3.2. CONSIDERATIONS ON TELEVISION CHARACTERIZATION

In her seminal article from 2007 entitled "Anatomising Gilbert Grissom – The Structure and Function of the Televisual Character", Roberta Pearson proposes a six-part taxonomy to analyze television characters, using Gilbert Grissom (William Petersen) from CSI: Las Vegas as an example and object of her proposal. According to her, the structure of a televisual character is composed of psychological traits and habitual behaviors, physical characteristics and appearance, speech patterns, interactions, environment, and biography. I will go a step further and, building on her idea, propose we also acknowledge the considerations and sense-

making of the spectator alongside the identified data for a functional taxonomy of television characters.

The spectator then is going to make assumptions about a character's psychological traits based on a realist model, a process of integration and interpretation that is analogous to the recognition of flat/simple and round/complex characters from literature. The function of connecting the traits and behavior to more realistic characteristics is to create a character that is "lifelike", which also depends on the use of common cultural tropes identifiable by the viewer.

According to Pearson (2007), the performance of an actor is one of the most important elements in the creation of the meaning of a television character, for "[…] all television characters (are) conflated with the actor who embodies (them)" (p. 44). This converges with the idea that actors themselves can be considered texts (MAST, 1982, p. 292-293) because they carry intertextual meaning from one work into another (MITTELL, 2015), that is, a viewer's knowledge of an actor's filmography and the typical roles they portray can influence, add meaning, create expectations, and even aid in the understanding of an audiovisual character. Even more than their acting, though, in genre films or other audiovisual works, some actors are chosen because their physical appearance suggests certain internal traits and behaviors (VERSTRATEN, 2009). Every physical detail is relevant to the construction of meaning in the portrayal of a character, which includes facial expressions, gestures, posture, style and color of outfits, speech patterns and mannerisms, accents, degree of formality, type of vocabulary, and usage or not of slangs, and tone. From gathering the information of internal and external traits, the viewer can make inferences about the character and notice, for example, how a change of tone or degree of formality can be used to emphasize certain emotional states at the moment and also the relation between two or more characters.

On the topic of character interactions, Pearson (2007) affirms that characters are also in part defined by their relation to other characters, and the television series, due to its potential to last for a while in different seasons can promote opportunities for an ensemble of characters to interact and show varied facets of themselves. The viewer, grasping these interactions, can ascertain the nature of the relationships and, in understanding the purpose or how they operate within the narrative, can even assign roles or functions to characters. The matter of interactions is extremely important in dramas that predominantly portray workplaces, such as is the case of the object of this analysis because one can pay attention to the issue of rank and hierarchy within the professional setting. In these cases, it is interesting to observe how a character behaves in

professional and/or personal interactions and the contrasts and similarities in the characterization in these different situations, especially if or when there are other characters that belong to both scopes.

Regarding the setting or environment, because the focus of the action in some series is on work-related issues, a great part of the screen time of such dramas shows a workplace that helps in the construction of the characters. According to Pearson (2007, p. 46), in police dramas "[…] cops are defined by their seedy, shabby offices", quite a generalization, which makes us reflect on whether *Prime Suspect* fits or deviates from this, considering it is labeled as a police procedural drama or crime drama – this discussion will be presented at the end of the next section. But more than just the workplace's impact, the central idea that she presents regarding the environment is that the location can influence and alter how a character behaves, showing different versions of themselves according to the setting, adding to the idea of a human being-likeness (PEARSON, 2007).

The last segment of Pearson's taxonomy is divided into two main functions. One of the purposes of the biography of a character is to enhance the reality effect of the human being-likeness, and the other purpose is to provide plot resources, that is, the biography ends up aiding in providing elements to move the plot forward (PEARSON, 2007). The biographical elements that can be grasped about a character can help further develop the traits that had already been established and also introduce some contradictions that are common in non-fictional human beings. A character's backstory can be hinted at from the beginning in varied ways (dialogue, voice-over, fleshed-out scenes, pictures, and other smaller details in shots, etc), but it can take some series time for it to be revealed in a more explicit and significant manner.

The six elements of the taxonomy are woven together in order to create a character that is convincingly close to reality, and this happens aided by the use of cultural tropes and the influence of ideologies. To Pearson (2007), one of the key elements in the construction of a character and to differentiate them, especially in dramas that focus on a workplace ensemble is gender; the other key element is race. She considers them to be fundamental elements precisely because characters can be coded within certain cultural tropes and/or stereotypes.

In opening "Understanding Characters", Jens Eder (2010) states that audiovisual characters can provoke several discussions about their creation, experiences, and interpretation, but these are usually done in a way in which subjective intuitions by the viewers or critics are at the foreground. According to him, we also need to use specific procedures and systematic

categories to aid in our discussions; most proposals of character analysis focus on specific aspects according to their theoretical bias, such as feminist studies focusing on gender and cultural studies focusing on class and ethnicity, but he argues for an integration of these propositions in order to enable us to analyze characters in a systematic manner at the same time we consider the viewer's experience and reactions. One of the first controversial issues Eder (2010) brings is the very definition of character, because the course of analysis one will take depends on their definition of the character's mode of existence, that is, if the characters are signs, abstract objects, etc. He goes on to define characters as beings that are distinguished from other elements of the world because they have an intentional inner life, that is, they have thoughts, emotions, perceptions, or motives to act in the world. More than that, Eder considers films to be "communicative games of the imagination" (2010, p. 18) in which film – or audiovisual – characters then can be defined as "identifiable fictional beings with an inner life that exist as communicatively constructed artifacts" (EDER, 2010, p. 18). Characters then are these collective constructs that depend both on the production by the filmmakers and the viewer's interpretative process.

In the minds of viewers, characters exist as mental models, which are multi-modal representations that combine several forms of processing information into a unity; to Eder (2010), creating these models is necessary for the emergence of characters, and it is part of the possible reactions viewers have. There are five levels of reactions that a viewer can have that are related to characters, and they are the primary perception of images and sounds, the creation of the mental character models, the inference of indirect meanings they present, the creation of hypotheses about causes and consequences, and the aesthetic reflection on both the modes of presentation and on how we react as viewers (EDER, 2010). Our analysis of *Prime Suspect* will be guided by these levels, starting with general perceptions, descriptions, and commentaries on the episodes, followed by considerations of our main character, Jane Tennison, including a detailed analysis of her characterization.

In order to thoroughly analyze the character, we will consider Pearson's taxonomy (2007) alongside Eder's proposal of the clock of character. This clock is divided into four parts: character as artifact, character as fictional being, character as symbol, and character as symptom. When closely looking at characters, we can focus on one of the four aspects at a time, moving our attention from one to another, with the possibility of going clockwise or anticlockwise. We have chosen to start with character as artifact and proceed in clockwise order. When we look at a character as an artifact, we focus on how and by what means it is represented

in the work, assigning properties, and looking at its dimensionality – or if it is simple or complex, static or dynamic. When we look at a character as a fictional being, we look at how it behaves in the storyworld and how it relates to other characters, also paying attention to the representation of its inner configuration. When we look at a character as a symbol, we investigate what possible meanings it conveys, and what themes, allegories, and/or messages the viewer can grasp from it. And, at last, when we look at a character as a symptom, we consider the causes and effects that are possible in the process of communication, that is, the relation between the production and our reception and reaction, and the effects that the character can cause within the narrative.

We brought these considerations regarding audiovisual characters' characterization and construction first because, for most people, what truly drives their will to watch and follow a television show are the characters that are part of it (SEABRA, 2016). And even more than that, viewers can engage with programs via parasocial relationships in such a way that it becomes a long-term relationship. The viewer's engagement occurs through what Jason Mittell (2015) explores as practices of recognition, alignment, and allegiance, building on Murray Smith's ideas.

Recognition is one of the most important elements of engagement; it is through recognition that viewers can establish differences between characters and objects – and even between figures who are just background extras – ad even more, understand the differences in roles, whether they are the main or lead character, a protagonist or antagonist force, secondary or supporting characters, tertiary recurring figures, guest characters, and extras (MITTELL, 2015). Considering the series that will be analyzed shortly, its case and similar procedurals usually have a rotating cast, especially when it comes to its victims and criminals, but still there is an attachment to certain characters (especially the leads) and their relationships – even to the point of creation of spin-offs, prequels, and sequels.

To explain the connection that we viewers feel towards certain characters, whether within the storyworld or outside through parasocial relationships, we use the notion of alignment. Still according to Mittell, this process is made of two elements; with attachment, it means we follow the experiences of certain characters – in *Prime Suspect*, for example, the series attaches mainly to Jane Tennison, our detective, and also to the main suspect-, but we also have access to emotions, morality, and thoughts. The longer we spend time with characters, the more we engage and participate in the process of attachment. In audiovisual media, with the exception of the use of voice-over narration, the viewer's access to a character's subjective or

interior state happens through the integration of the exterior markers that have been accumulated, that is, we can make inferences from the elements of the taxonomy presented above.

Because as viewers we engage with a dynamic system in television, it is always possible for characters to go through changes, no matter how stable and cumulative their experiences are. To deal with these possible changes, we access the process of allegiance. It is through allegiance, a moral evaluation, that we can become more emotionally connected to them and invested in their stories, and even connect to their beliefs.

Considering that the television system is dynamic and cumulative, our identification is built little by little as the episodes unfold. It's no different from other narratives; one has to reach the completion of the narrative arc to be certain of which aspects of the fabula are exposed (Sternberg) and which ones are not informed and end up forming gaps which we may fill by inference and hypotheses. But in serial narratives, this process tends to be more noticeable because it's longer, episodic, and may be full of ups and downs.

to truly understand and make considerations about characters, we need to consider more than just one episode of a show. In this dissertation, our analysis will permeate all episodes of the series, in a way that we can detail the main character from beginning to end, studying the different arcs and thoroughly comprehending what elements are stable and which elements have changed through the course of the seven seasons.

As we mentioned above, Roberta Pearson stated that characters rarely change, what mostly happens is the accumulation of experiences and markers through the process of elaboration. *In Expositional Modes and Temporal Ordering*, Sternberg (1978) states the same about Odysseus: the character is complex from the beginning; what changes is our view and understanding of him as exposition reveals more and more about him along the *sujet*, which only happens when exposition is delayed. But to better understand the changes that characters can go through, Jason Mittell (2015), in his seminal work *Complex TV*, presents ways in which we can identify the different types of changes.

Transformations can be explicit through a change in wardrobe and/or haircut, or even can be explicitly stated through dialogue or speeches in the series; however, they must be cautiously considered as changes because we need to identify if they are indeed modifications in the character’s interior state or if they are just superficial and maybe temporary. Moreover, complex characters, according to Mittell (2015), have to present exterior markers in order to

reaffirm their inner states, and dialogue sometimes is not enough to portray that. One of the possible ways for that to happen is through overt actions because it is through what they do and how other characters react to it that we can gauge our own allegiances to certain characters, and if there isn't a highly moral and ethics change, our allegiance is still sustained.

Sometimes, what changes is that character's perspective and opinion on themselves that not necessarily will be explicitly shown through actions. These changes then will usually be perceived by the viewers through slight differences in performance choices rather than actions; this happens in a process of comparison in which the viewer activates their knowledge of what had happened to the character so far and how they had behaved up to that point, and then comparing and contrasting to the current situation, especially to those elements that they know to be the ones to have provoked the change. If the character feels different, the change has taken place, even if the situation and other characters' perceptions of this particular character haven't changed. Likewise, a character's situation or the way s/he is perceived - may be altered without any change on his/her part.

Other times, we might initially think that a character has changed or evolved, but what has actually happened is that our own perception as viewers has changed. Jason Mittell (2015) calls this situation character elaboration, making a reference to Pearson's ideas (2007) discussed previously, and elaboration occurs when the process of revealing relevant information about a character occurs through the course of its episodes. This slow unveiling of aspects helps the viewer understand more what is behind the character's choices and behavior, and it usually happens through flashbacks in such a way that some figures that might seem simple and static can be elaborated into more complex and dynamic figures. We can also establish a connection with Sternberg's proposals (1978) regarding exposition: in elaboration, it means that the expositional gaps related to the characters are distributed and delayed, resulting in the understanding of characterization in the process of retrospectively looking at the work.

When changes do occur, there are four possibilities according to Mittell (2015): growth, education, overhaul, and transformation. He argues that sometimes these terms are used interchangeably, however, in differentiating them and proposing different changes in each of these categories, it becomes easier to identify the possible different character arcs. The first process, growth, happens as the viewers follow – and are usually aware of - the process of maturation of characters; that means, as viewers, we can identify this process in programs in which there are coming-of-age narratives and/or in which the characters are young and we are

going to follow their journey throughout the ages, or also when adult characters go through a major transition in their lives.

The arc of education happens when a character who is an adult changes due to a major life lesson. Usually, this is a process that will be commonly portrayed on a smaller scale in an episode; in the case of episodic series, this life lesson will rarely be effective beyond that episode, as the narrative must return to the status quo by its end, but in the case of serials, this process can be part of a much longer arc that will result in acceptance of a situation and/or their past, or even in the development of abilities and skills that will influence their behavior. These characters who go through education processes are usually compared to others who do not change in a way to enhance and emphasize their arcs. What is important to keep in mind here is that while they might change their behavior due to education, their core morality will remain the same, just as our allegiance remains the same.

A much more drastic change happens when characters go through an overhaul, that is, a sudden change that is usually connected to supernatural or fantastic situations that change their bodies – and minds – and contrasts them with the viewers' memories. The overhaul can last for a single episode or small arc, in which the character will return to their original state by the end, or even last for a larger number of episodes as a more important arc that will be essential to the character's identity. What makes this change interesting is that our expectations, understanding, and even recognition of these characters as viewers can be played with in such a way that we – momentarily – no longer know exactly which version of the character we are experiencing. Sometimes, the fact that there is a switch of character can be hidden from us and later revealed to create an effect of surprise, resulting in the viewers having to think retrospectively to actually understand what happened and forcibly having to reinterpret the events.

The last arc of change Mittel (2015) proposes is named transformation, and it tends to match what one might traditionally think of when considering a character has changed: it involves shifts in their beliefs and morality, in their attitudes, and in the character's own sense of self, which is going to result in different ways of acting and will have repercussions that last for a long time. This arc is more immediately noticed by consumers when the narrative work at hand is finished. In examples of *Buffy the Vampire* and *Breaking Bad*, Mittell (2015) highlights that the characters' gradual shifts occur over multiple seasons, becoming more fleshed-out characters and that the viewer can understand this arc only through what he deems a broader view, just as Sternberg pointed out that we only know the whole exposition when the process

of reading is over. The analysis of Detective Jane Tennison will be possible because the series is finished, which is not the case with provisional works that aim at discussing ongoing works.

Mittell (2015) also affirms that it is neither a flaw nor a bad thing if a television series does not present much character change; according to the author, one of the main aspects that draw a lot of people to watch television programs is the fact that there is a desire – even if unconscious – for characters that are stable in their traits and personalities, our connection to them happens precisely due to this consistency. If they are inconsistent and their actions do not seem to fit their personalities, there is the possibility that viewers will not identify or engage with them. Our investment as viewers is in a web of relationships that can shift and change, but the characters themselves must remain somewhat stable and, if there is indeed an arc of change, there still needs to be some recognition.

Part of the process of following a series over the course of its seasons is that we as viewers start to learn how it works, that is, there are certain operational and storytelling norms and rules that are specific to each audiovisual work; Mittell (2015) gives the example of the series *Lost*, in which the viewers learn to decode the intrinsic norms and storytelling parameters of attachment: most episodes are focused on a specific character, including scenes of flashback, flash-forward, time-traveling, or flash-sideways, depending on the season. As we learn the particular codes of a series, we can begin an almost unconscious operation of decoding its functions and structures in a way that builds expectations and even create theories and predictions regarding what can happen next, that is, there is a stressing of the narrative universals of curiosity, suspense, and surprise (STERNBERG, 1978). If we think about crime television and procedurals, there are some generic[12] codes that we expect to indicate how the episodes progress: it starts either with showing a crime happening or with the detective(s) learning about a crime, then we follow the investigation procedures closely aligned and in allegiance with the detectives, and, by the end of the episode (or arc) the crime will be solved resulting in the arrest of the culprit(s) and the storyworld will return to the status quo. Though the focus of this dissertation's analysis is the character of Jane Tennison, the next section will also present some considerations regarding *Prime Suspect*'s codes through a conscious effort of understanding the underlying structure of each episode, the seasons, and the series.

[12] By generic I mean belonging to a specific genre.

3.3. DCI JANE TENNISON

3.3.1. Analysis and Commentary on the Episodes[13]

3.3.1.1. Season 1, “Price To Pay” Parts 1 & 2

We are going to deter ourselves with more detail in this season because it is the one that starts to establish and characterize Tennison to the viewer. The opening of the episode is with a title card, a simple black background, and white text. First, only "Helen Mirren" appears written, and then it changes to Prime Suspect, with no other initial credits. This already gives an indication to the viewer, showcasing who is truly important here, and it is interesting that there are no other initial credits. We can assume that she is the one in the foreground of the series, as no other actors’ names are mentioned there.

The episode – and the series itself, in this instance – begins with detectives at the crime scene, all men. Here, the crime has already happened, different from other contemporary procedurals in which the viewer sees part of the crime being committed as a cold open. However, this opening scene of the series is very much a procedural one, with the detectives around the body, gathering evidence and clues to solve it. They identify the victim as "Della Mornay, prostitute"; this seems to indicate that the only fact about the victim that matters is that she is a prostitute, as it is the only information about her besides her name that they divulge early.

Image 1 - The detectives at the first crime scene

The men gather around to sing happy birthday to the son of one of the detectives, John Shefford, on the phone, and he promises his wife he will be there for the birthday party the

[13] With the exception of Season 4 and 7, all the other seasons’ episodes are described and commented on together because the version of the series to which we had access places episodes 1 and 2, or “Part 1” and “Part 2”, in the same audiovisual file, with no marking or indication of the division.

following day. It is only in retrospect that the viewer understands the significance of this scene, of John Shefford making plans after missing his son's birthday due to work, knowing he will die the next day.

The initial morgue scene in the series is very interesting and it sets the tone for the upcoming crimes. The body is exhibited on the screen in the morgue, with a few people around the naked dead body, going over the details of her death. While there are male and female doctors or at least medical assistants there, all the detectives are men. When showing the scarring on her wrist due to a binding of sorts, the mortician does so by raising her hand and having her naked breast as the background in the shot, instead of just showing it while still on the table. The camera also shows the puncture wounds on the torso, and yet again no qualms about baring it all for the viewer. Deborah Jermyn (2003) states that *Prime Suspect* caused a shift in the portrayal of victims' bodies, showing them with a much closer focus and in graphic – and sometimes explicit – detail, which will culminate in the way the bodies are explored for evidence in *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation* (JERMYN, 2007). The viewer can notice that Bill Otley and John Shefford, the two main male detectives in these initial scenes, exchange some looks that seem suspicious and complicit, leading us to believe that they are hiding something.

The first shot of a female presence in the series related to the police force – that is not the dead body – is of a blond woman in her car arriving at the police station. Shortly after, we see her in the bathroom with three other policewomen in uniform as a male detective invades the women's toilet. There is no clue as to who she might be, yet the viewer knows she is Detective Chief Inspector (DCI) Jane Tennison either with the extratextual information that Helen Mirren plays this particular character in this series or looking and thinking about the episode in retrospect.

Image 2 - Tennison and the policewomen in the toilet

What is interesting about this scene is that she is dressed in gray while the other women officers are in their black and white uniform, and she is the only blonde person in the scene, in a center position in the shot, while the other women are brunettes. This seems to establish early on a difference in roles between Tennison and the other women in the precinct and, to the viewer that watches the series for the first time not knowing anything about it, this differentiation can subtly indicate that she is the one who will have a more important role in the series amongst the women characters.

In the following scene, she is already in the elevator when the two detectives of the case and the guy who invaded the women's toilet enter. They do say "Excuse me, ma'am", but seem to pay no attention to her as she is almost pushed to the back. She listens to the conversation yet avoids looking directly at them, looking to the side at what might be the panel of the elevator. When she reaches her floor, she asks them to excuse her, and she has to pass through uncomfortably between them; the men look at her as she leaves. It is possible to interpret this scene as a symbol of her own journey in the program, as the characters' disposition in the shot as Tennison being in the background only observing and listening while the men detectives have their own space and can be as loud as they want, and to get where she needs, she will have to squeeze through them, causing a feeling of defamiliarization with her presence as she looks for her space by having to almost force them to move aside so she can go her way in a way that can imply that they might not recognize this space – the police precinct as detectives – as belonging to her as well.

Image 3 - Tennison in the elevator with the male detectives

She stares out of the window, watching the detectives get into the car. This scene helps establish to the viewer that she is an outsider to the happenings of the precinct especially when it comes to the hands-on investigations, and we can interpret that as if she is longingly looking out, wanting to belong and be part of the active investigations. Shortly after, she answers the

phone as DCI Tennison, and it's the first time the viewer learns her name, as she states she will be in the court during the afternoon.

She questions the lady officer about what time the call from the case came because she was on standby during the whole previous night, and by reading between the lines, we understand that she is questioning the fact that even though she was available and on call, she didn't receive the notification of murder; instead, the detectives picked up John Shefford from a club at about two in the morning, and she seems discontent with that information.

Getting home with a bag of groceries for dinner, Tennison starts giving instructions, almost orders, without waiting much for a response from her partner, telling him to "Use the best China, I want to make an impression", and how she appreciates how much Peter misses his son. We soon learn that her partner, Peter (Tom Wilkinson), has a son with his ex-wife, and the boy is going to stay with him and Tennison for the first time. Due to arriving home late and having to rush preparations, Tennison ends up staining her blouse with chocolate, and that is how she meets her partner's ex. As Tennison invites the kid into the house and into the kitchen with her, Peter and his ex-wife exchange a few words, including her stating her impression of Tennison, saying she is not what she expected and that she thought Tennison would be in uniform – and we can only guess what he told her about Tennison if that is her expectation. Tennison heard what she said, and when Peter closes the door, she tells him that "Should've worn a flat hat for her. She wasn't what I expected either. She's very... beautiful", to which he responds "You're beautiful, talented, and covered in chocolate". In this scene, the viewer witnesses a different and lighter side of Tennison; this Tennison with a romantic partner, being light-hearted and having fun as they take care of his son, kissing before going to the kitchen again, joking around.

The next scene introduces the events that will disturb the status quo of the police station, setting things in motion for Jane Tennison to start rising into the ranks and being in a more prominent position in the investigations. While discussing the case in the Detective Chief Superintendent (DCS)'s room, DCI Shefford has a sudden heart attack. We see Tennison arriving at the station just as they are taking him out on a stretcher to the ambulance; this scene marks Tennison replacing Shefford in the police force as head of the investigation. As the news that Shefford has not survived the heart attack hits the station, the camera pans around the Incident Room – the headquarters of their investigation within the station – and we can see there are only men there, talking to each other, pens behind their ears, files on their desks, but unbeknownst to them, that is about to change.

The viewer sees Tennison walking on a corridor seeming determined, with no hesitation in her steps. She pauses to adjust her hair and collar and knocks on the door of DCS's room, walking in and sitting for a conversation. She mentions she is not sure if this is the right time or when it is going to be the right time at all, offering to take over the murder investigation as Shefford is no longer there. She argues her case by stating that she does not actually have to tell him that she *is indeed* qualified to handle the investigation, but emphasizes her desire to do so by stating and reminding him that she has been waiting for this for over 18 months, and that she has had to handle more paperwork than she did in the station she used to work at where she spent five years dealing with investigations of sex cases. In response, the DCS tells her he will not be making any decisions yet because he has to see the wife of the dead detective in the afternoon, clearly seeming to tell her between the lines that it is indeed too soon for her to be asking for the job. Tennison understands that, but she asks "When is the right time? Look, I'm the only officer of my rank who is continually overstepped, sidestepped, whatever. Just give me the chance to prove that I can...". The DCS says that she does not have to prove herself to him, but there is a bigger issue at hand: the public's opinion of female police officers. She argues that that is not a good enough reason, even going so far as to call him by his first name, and saying that she is sick and tired of the Metropolitan Police survey being thrown at her face as a reason for her not being given the role she deserves according to her rank. This survey, as per her speech, states that the general public would prefer to be helped by a male officer 90% of the time, but she argues that it will continue to be like that until women are given the chance to prove that the survey is biased and, according to her, an "outdated load of old bullshit". The DCS's response to that is that the time is not right for her to "thrust your women's rights down my throat". She only thanks him and leaves, unhappy with the situation and with his response. This is one of the first obstacles she will have to face as a woman of her rank in the precinct, having to fight and argue her case that she deserves to head the investigation because of the discrimination and the reason why she has only had to deal with paperwork so far is due to her gender, so she does need to call him out on it.

Before making an official decision, we follow as the DCS makes a phone call to see who else is available to take responsibility for the case in other precincts. In the end, he goes to talk to the Commissioner about this issue, and without Tennison being in front of him, he can be honest about what he truly thinks about the situation, saying that he is not only thinking of himself.

> "You know how the men feel about having a woman heading a murder squad. [...] it's opening the floodgates. Give her this case, she'll expect more. There's a few of her

> rank coming up. I just don't think I want to take the responsibility. Once she's in it'd be tough getting her off. Then the media might get hold of it."

Having Tennison as the lead of the case would result in more women taking more prominent roles in the station; she would set a precedent that the DCS is not ready to handle, and when he implies that the men would be uncomfortable with a woman leading the case, he is also including herself in this. If he was not uncomfortable with the idea, he would have already given the case to her. The Commissioner responds by saying he talked to her old chief, and that he had said that Tennison deserves a break due to all the punishment she took in the previous station; they are not explicit here, but we can read this punishment as her being overlooked for certain cases and other situations due to her being a woman. The Commissioner asks if the DCS is prepared to take the risk of having a female murder squad officer, putting the decision on his shoulders. The DCS realizes that "the balls" are in his court, and the Commissioner says that the Flying Squad[14] supposes she has them – balls.

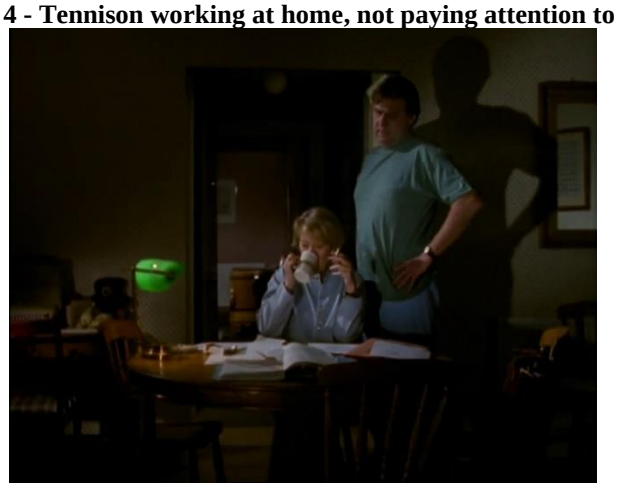
There is chatter in the station, with detectives talking and trying to guess who is coming to their squad to lead the investigation, naming a few different men from different places, even one from Reading, Tennison's old precinct. There is not a single woman's name that is even considered for the job, but soon they will be surprised. The DCS asks Bill to gather the detectives in the Incident Room, and we make the association of what is about to happen when we see Tennison leaving the DCS room confident and happy, even cheering – she has gotten the job. When the DCS informs the men the case will be taken over by DCI Tennison, some men laugh as if not believing what they were hearing, and the room buzzes with clear discontentment. Bill says that the group feels that an outsider coming to lead the investigation at this point is not necessary, but they were just discussing who they thought was coming to head the case. Without a doubt, they consider that a police*woman* coming in at this stage of the case is not necessary, even stating explicitly that they neither need nor want her. Even more so: Bill says that he will give "that tart[15]" the best he has got, implying he will not make things easy for Tennison leading the case. Apparently, to him, this is more than just about Tennison replacing his partner, John Shefford; it is the fact that a woman is replacing him that is the biggest issue, and he will act as an antagonistic force to her.

[14] A group of detectives who did not belong to any particular precinct and quickly reached crime scenes, especially robberies and more violent crimes.
[15] British slang for prostitute.

Tennison immediately starts going over the clues that they had gathered so far with a female police officer. She is looking at the crime scenes, cigarette in hand, taking notes, unfazed by the details in the pictures that portray the gruesome body. She goes over the inventory of the case as well, still aided by female police officers. She seems to suspect something about the victim's identity, because she asks for two sets of prints, one being the victim's, and the other being from Della Mornay's original file. She also asks for a squad car and a driver, wanting to visit the corpse that night. She also demands one last thing: "I want John Shefford´s team, all of them, in the Incident Room tomorrow morning at 9 o´clock sharp." Even though she is officially the lead of the investigation at this point, this is not *her* team yet. She does not feel like she is their leader, which can be why she is getting help initially from other female officers from the same precinct.

At night, she leaves with the car and the driver, who is the detective who was against her joining the team, and said that they did not need her. She heads to the morgue without hesitation, having no qualms about looking at the corpse of the victim, while the detective who is accompanying her is queasy at the sight of the dead body. Tennison continues to work on the case even while at home, with Peter bringing her something to drink while she is focused on the files, not paying him any attention.

Image 4 - Tennison working at home, not paying attention to Peter



The first scene with the entire team shows Tennison giving out orders, even though the men are clearly unhappy she just gives out orders without hesitation, and the other woman officer just looks at her. She is assertive in stating what she wants to be done as the next steps of the investigation, including getting a proper identification of the body. The moment she steps out of the room, she lets out a breath in what we assume is relief at having given orders, closes her eyes, and smiles, then lights up a cigarette. Otley still plays an antagonistic role to her character, because in demanding the tasks from the detectives, especially the fact that they need

to identify the body, it means that Shefford did not do his job properly. He complains about it to another detective, saying "If she badmouths him I´ll make sure her knickers get screwed off her skinny dyke arse", and the detective asks if he truly thinks she is one – a lesbian. Otley responds with "Do me a favor, what bloke would fancy that?" So not only he seems to antagonize Tennison on a professional level, but he is also now making assumptions and trying to make the other detectives turn on her; this results in the detectives of the case belittling and criticizing everything about Tennison whenever she is not around them.

Regardless of the opposition of the other policemen in the squad, she takes control of the investigation, deciding to interrogate the main suspect herself because she says that they do not have enough to arrest him yet. The suspect – George Marlow – is bothered by Tennison's presence, asking why she is there and if the other detectives sent her to soften him up and to have a female presence in the case. Even the suspect questions the decision to have a woman lead the case and has a problem with talking to her. When they discover the true identity of the victim, the victim's father demands to know who is in charge of the investigation and refuses to speak to Tennison, demanding another officer whom he knows because he does not want to talk to a woman. So far, Tennison has encountered strong opposition to her role as lead investigator, well, strong male opposition, because all the men involved in the case, whether detectives, suspect, or victim's father, demand for another officer who is not a woman – with the exception of the detectives, the other men do not know if she is qualified or not to be leading the investigation, yet they refuse to easily cooperate with her.

It seems that the detectives do not even know what to call her initially, referring to her as "sir". The first time it happens, she reacts to it by asking "My voice suddenly got lower, has it? Maybe my knickers are too tight? I like to be called guvnor or the boss. I don´t like ma´am. I´m not the bloody Queen. Take your pick." And the detective answers with "Yes, ma´am."; when he does so, he is just out of frame so the viewer cannot make any interpretations regarding his expressions while saying it. Based on everything that has been done to her so far, we can assume his answer insisting on calling her ma'am even though she has explicitly stated that she is against it is on purpose to antagonize her.

When they find the victim's father, he demands to know who is in charge of the investigation and refuses to speak to Tennison, demanding another officer whom he knows because he says he does not want to talk to a woman officer. She insists on the questions but the man is agitated and the other detective berates her on it, saying "Jesus Christ, let the man cry, he's heartbroken" as if she is insensitive to the situation. This is the second scene (or third,

considering when she asks to replace the deceased detective) in which other characters comment on her lack of empathy for the victim or the situation.

She then realizes Otley has been messing with her. He is displeased with the situation, asking how much more evidence she needs to convict the suspect and implying that he – or Shefford – would have already arrested the man. Another fact is that he insists on calling her ma'am, even though she has explicitly stated that she does not want it, even using the word bitch to refer to her when talking to others.

Image 5 - Otley and the other detectives

As she is leaving the precinct in a scene, the suspect who was released because she did not agree that they had enough to charge him thanks her, saying he knew she would be able to get him off the hook. Otley passes by them and says there is another victim and they must go to the crime scene, saying it is the exact same M.O. (*modus operandi*).

In the office, while she is looking for a pencil, she opens a drawer and a file on Della Mornay. The camera zooms in on an ashtray filled with cigarettes, emphasizing this habit of the character. She also finds a small notebook with a few pages torn off with more information, and this heightens her suspicions.

At home, when she is in bed with her partner, he states that he hardly ever sees her and when he does, she is exhausted. He asks what is the point, because whenever the phone rings in their home, it is as if he does not exist, and she is always buried in case files. She agrees with him, saying things will get better soon and she will prove it, taking off her clothes under the sheets and getting up on top of him. She starts kissing him, but they are interrupted by his son arriving in their bedroom.

With the emergence of another victim, there is another scene in which the scopophilic aspect is present: the body is exposed to the viewer during the autopsy, showing with detail certain aspects that are relevant to the case.

Later, at the house, Tennison and Peter are talking, he says that she did not go to the court to play tennis with him, she forgot, and this conversation is interrupted by the phone ringing with the news that she is going to go on television to discuss the case. She says: "Crime Night. I'm going to be the first female DCI on Crime Night. Oh, bugger! It's Dad's birthday, that night", and Peter asks if they can change the night. She explodes with him, saying that of course it is not possible, because it is live television. He responds, "I meant your father's birthday party" and he leaves, seeming disappointed in her. She smiles and picks up the phone, presumably to call about changing the date of the celebration.

The tv show and reconstruction of the crime scene on Crime Night focus more on the people involved around Tennison than on Tennison herself, we see reactions from Marlow, the victim's parents, and Tenison's family – even Otley is watching at the bar instead of being at the table with the other detectives who are about to watch a boxing match. He asks "How did she swing that one, the bitch", clearly displeased, also asking "Who the hell does she think she is?" That animosity is not going to change anytime soon.

Tennison arrives just in time to sing happy birthday to her father, but as soon as she says hello she asks for the taping of the show. Someone was supposed to set it up but they did not, and she gets angry because she wanted to watch it over. Her beeper rings and she takes the call, leaving her family uncomfortable with the situation and her reaction to it. In the end, her partner recorded it, and he is in bed while she is focused on rewatching her speech. They fight, because he asks "I mean, anything you do is important, anything anyone else doesn't? Is that right?", to which she responds "I know I must be hell to live with right now, but, you know, I've waited a long time for this". This is the first big opportunity in her career, and we see the process as she becomes focused solely on the case and starts not paying attention to her personal life. We see how she is focused on the investigation to the point that she is eating chips, talking about the news, and all the while in the background there are photos of the victims' lacerations.

Bill Otley complains about her yet again; he thinks she did not act properly on television, asking "It's because she's a woman, isn't it? If a bloke, any of our lot, had done that cock-up on telly, Marlow's friggin' registration number and no stolen car report, eh?" To him, she gave too much information, but the DCS gives him a piece of advice that is actually an order: he

must get along with her and help with the case. He is unhappy about it, and we see his main justification for going against her is the fact that she is a woman. Shortly after we see a piece of a newspaper with an article about Marlow's case with her picture, and she is circled in the newspaper and it is written "Super sleuth"; this undermines her rank within the force because she is an official investigator, yet it is the first time we see her laughing with the men in the room, even joking around. She does not hesitate though to call Otley out, because he asks her "Any word on what their readers' survey came up with, ma'am? For or against female DCis on Homicide?", and she replies "Oh, you're a biased load of old chauvinists. And there's thousands more like you", meaning that his attitude is nothing new and is not affecting her. She does stay overtime at the precinct, and Maureen asks why she will not go home and rest like the others, and Tennison affirms she has got more to lose than the other detectives. Her place at that station and as a lead investigator seems to rely on this case, so her personal life comes in second at the moment, which leads her to arrive late at home and miss dinner with Peter's friends. They fight in the sequence,

> "Oh, Peter, I'm sorry."
> "So am I, Jane. Just once I wanted you to do something for me. I mean, this is important to me. My business is going down the tubes. I have to go."
> "Don't you want me to come with you?"
> "No, I don't!"
> "Well, thanks a lot. You know, I broke my neck trying to get here."
> "It's always you, isn't it, Jane? You, you, you. You don't care about anything else. No, I'm wrong. You care. You care about your lads, you care about your rapists and your tarts. Well, I've had it up to here." […]
> "Look, this is a very big case for me. My career is on the line."

Neither Peter nor Tennison are willing to compromise; her case is important to her career, and the dinner was also going to be important to his career, and in this he states that she does not care about his situation, but the opposite is also true: this is her first truly important case that is going to make her career, but she is still expected to act the same outside of the station with him. after this fight, in a conversation with Jonesy, she mentions: "At least when you get home, you get your dinner cooked. I get home, I have to cook it myself", referring to not only the fact that Peter and she fought, but also commenting on the traditional gender expectations. She gets home late and she sees that Peter's clothes are no longer in the closet; as soon as she looks and seems to get sad, the phone rings and she finds a letter on top of the answering machine, but her focus is still more on the case.

Tennison decides to take Otley off the case because he is hindering her investigation, however, shortly after she is the one taken off the case. It is after this that for the first time she is called "guv" by one of the detectives as if she has their approval now. Even though they keep

calling her at the administration desk, she continues to work the case, saying they'll just have to find her while she holes up in the office. It is the other female officer who is usually seen with Tennison, Maureen, who finally figures out the connection between all the victims while Tennison is “hiding” from her superiors. Because her superiors are still looking for her, the detectives in the Incident Room know where she is and lie about it: she has their support now. When she arrives at the precinct, the DCS is in the room discussing the case. He asks to see her for a moment and says that "They backed you 100%, refused to have Hickock take over. That was on my desk when I came in. Every single man's signed it. Did you know about it?”, to which she responds “No. No, I didn't”. She gets emotional and almost cries, choking on her breath, understanding that she now has an in with the detectives and has been “approved” by them to lead them in the investigation. The resolution of the case is successful, and she states that it was not luck, all the detectives worked really hard. They surprise her at the end, now truly being welcoming to her, bringing her flowers and champagne to celebrate a successful end of a case.

Image 6 - The detectives welcoming Tennison to the team

3.3.1.2. Season 2, “Operation Nadine” Parts 1 & 2

The episode opens with a voice-over, while "Helen Mirren" is written in white over a black background, the voice-over begins with "I´m Detective Chief Inspector Jane Tennison, attached to Southampton Row Police Station. We are in the interview room at Southampton Row."

She's interrogating a suspect named Robert Oswald, questioning him whether or not he had consented to perform sexual acts with a victim, and when he states that he knew the girl

wanted it "rough", he describes the girl's looks as a justification, but when stating them, he describes exactly how Tennison looks like in the scene: "[...] blonde hair, and she was wearing a red blouse. And a tight, tight, black skirt, like for you." This can read (or rather, be seen) as an attack on Tennison herself.

This interrogation scene is interpolated with a crime scene in what seems to be a predominantly black neighborhood. We can see two male detectives entering a house, and a woman on the street Nola recognizes a detective and asks about the possibility of it being her missing daughter, Simone Cameron, stating her discontent about how the detective never tried to find her daughter. In the procedures of the crime scene itself, there are only male officers.

While the interrogation scene continues, so does the suspect verbally attacking Tennison, saying how she's loving it and calling her a "cock teaser" to the other male officer that is in the room with them, insisting that "What she say I did to that bitch is just turning her on". In this scene, the lighting highlights Tennison, always appearing by herself centralized in the shot in a close-up while sitting down, being shown in juxtaposition in reverse shots to the suspect, while the other detective is standing up against a wall and half-obscured by shadows. She responds by saying that the thought of a woman being humiliated doesn't excite her, trying to confirm it does so for the suspect. He ends up saying that some women mean yes when they say no, and she catches him there, insisting on "she said no", and trying to get him to confess to the rape. He tries to get away by saying that he meant "some women" and not that particular girl, angrily accusing her of putting words into his mouth, and the other detective stops the interrogation. As he leaves the room, we can see they were being filmed and broadcast into the room on the side. This room is filled mostly by men, but we can see a couple of women there too. He comments on how DCI Tennison asked unconventional questions and that they cannot threaten or bully suspects under PACE[16]. Tennison emphasizes that the next day there will be a session on interviewing victims of rape, which might demonstrate so far how she has been conductive of some shifts in paradigms for policing in that area, training other officers. The viewer then finds that Oswald is actually a Detective Sergeant (DS), and we can see there is some tension between Tennison and Oswald in the elevator, something in their dialogue seems to be subtle and in between the lines due to the fact that there are other people with them.

We're back to the crime scene and they discover the body is that of a woman, or yet, "Looks like it´s a female, [...] It´s wearing a bra." Upon this discovery, they decide to call

[16] Police and Criminal Evidence Act of 1984, which is a code that was created to regulate the police force and protect citizens' rights.

Tennison to the crime scene. Tony affirms she is still on the course, and the other detective answers that she is not anymore, and when we see Tennison again, it is in bed with Oswald, kissing and caressing him. She mentions what he said in the interrogation scene, "Now what was it you were saying about white women liking it rough?", to which he gets out of her embrace and responds angrily that that wasn't him and he doesn't think like that. They're drinking and she suggests they empty the mini bar of the room they are in, wanting to start with champagne, when the phone rings. She tells him to not make a sound while answering and gets the call about the body her colleagues uncovered and will have to leave to command a murder investigation and will miss her lecture tomorrow. Oswald doesn't seem happy with her departure, and when she asks what the problem is, he asks, "What about us?", and she asks back "What about us?". He interprets that as if she doesn't want to be with him anymore; this seems very similar to episode one when Peter, her ex-partner, questions her about their relationship and how her career seems to be the priority. He says he doesn't like being treated like "some black stud", interpreting their affair as her using him. She disagrees and tells him to leave, and as he steps out of the door, David, the officer who was leading the course sees Oswald leaving the hotel room. Just as Oswald is getting into the elevator, he calls Tennison "Bitch"; she doesn't see or hear that, but the viewer does.

David tells her he doesn't know anything about rape victims, meaning he can't give the lecture in her place, to which she answers "Then it´s time you did. Attitudes like that mean only 8% of rapes are ever reported. There are my notes." The case she will investigate has had some attention due to some unsolved crimes in the area, and David is worried because the case is politically sensitive, and that while she is a liberated woman, she can't trust "our Afro-Caribbean friend", showing the case has tensions not only because it could be related to an unsolved missing person case with a previous suspect but also due to racial biases and prejudice against the Afro-Caribbean community.

In this episode, we learn that she is trying to stop smoking, a habit that was heavily shown in the first episode; whenever she was working on the cases, she had a cigarette between her fingers, but now she is trying to change that.

The DCS gets a phone call while she is in his office and asks her how his boss knows what happened in her course. She appears startled, maybe suspecting it is about her affair because she seems relieved when he says it is about her not being there due to being pulled to work on the murder investigation. We will learn, however, that he does know about her affair.

She will find out that the DCS is about to be promoted, and she goes after what she wants, asking if Kernan will recommend her for his post once he is promoted.

It is interesting that there are other women on her team now in this season, but they appear only in the background of the Incident Room; the detectives that are truly in the foreground and involved in the case are the same men from the first episode. It almost seems that there is space for only one woman to be truly active in the investigation, the others must remain with smaller jobs in comparison.

While the first season focused mostly on the issue of Tennison finding her place as a woman in that specific historical context, the second season and the ones that follow will usually bring a social issue that is going to permeate the investigation. In this season, there are discussions on racism. Burkin, part of her team, is one of the officers who are explicitly racist, “They hate us! I ain´t so keen on them. One less on the streets isn´t no loss. [...] If they don´t want to be part of our country, why don´t they go home?" But while he is racist, Tennison is the one who is going to go to community liaison meetings to try to handle the situation better and reassure the public that she intends to bring justice to the case. They mention the Derrick Cameron case and how he was forced to make a confession, raising the question “Is it possible to expect justice in this country if you are a person of colour?” Tennison will certainly try.

Image 7 - The community liaison meeting

It is Tennison that will talk to the person who used to own the house the body was found at. In the first episode, she was the one to talk to the prostitutes to try and gather some more information for the case, and here it is she again that begins the inquiry and, considering some other officers’ behavior facing racial bias, it seems appropriate. She is going to be the connection between the victims and the police force, acting as an intermediary and mediator between them for these social issues.

Then she visits the morgue and once more the camera focuses on the dead body, only this time only bones remain. Just like the previous scenes in which she was at the morgue inspecting the corpses, she doesn't show any indication of being disturbed in the picture. Oscar informs her of the possibility of a medical artist making a clay sculpture of the for them to try to identify the victim, and when the doctor says it will take about three weeks for it to be ready, she is incisive in saying she will pick it up in three days. She is the one clearly in charge. Oscar says he will talk to the artist, suggesting that maybe the timeline could indeed be quickened if she modeled in the nude for the artist, and all that she says in response is "That´s sexual harassment", to which his response, "What isn´t these days?", shows that there have been indeed some changes in behavior within the police force.

Kernan enters the Incident Room and introduces DS Robert Oswald, a black man, who is introduced to the team to assist in Operation Nadine (what they titled the investigation) and immediately there seems to be tension in the room, and clearly, Burkin purses his lips in discontentment, confirmed shortly after by his statement, "Bad enough policing them, let alone working with them." The racism that permeates the episode is not only in relation to the victim and the community but also present in the police force itself.

When Tennison arrives, she stops in what we assume is shock at seeing Oswald and after a few seconds gathering herself she calls Tony out of the room, questioning why he is there. When he says Kernan brought him, she immediately goes to their boss's office, questioning why he added someone to *her* team without her knowledge. It does make sense in the situation, as he states after having talked to the Community Liaison Officer, that "A black face prominent in this inquiry, an antidote to the Burkins of this world." They are aware that Burkin is a problem, but Kernan doesn't want to get directly involved to avoid any scandal that could hinder his promotion. She is agitated, aggravated, and complaining to her boss that he pulled rank in not notifying her first, stating that Oswald and she didn't get along well during the course, strongly stating that she doesn't want him on *her* team; the viewer, however, knows the truth and can interpret that she is having that reaction due to their poorly ended affair, especially after having seen him cursing at her behind her back. She confronts Oswald in her office and he says that there weren't many options – amongst black officers – to join the case, and he doesn't like being the token there. For this initial conversation, she is sitting at her desk and he standing, a clear physical barrier – her desk – between them. She gets up and gets closer to him, and in doing so, the conversation also gets more personal: she demands "Don´t you dare tell anyone.", to which he responds, "Jane, what do you take me for?". She isn't happy with the way he talks

to her, calls her by her name, and tells him not to call her that. Calling her by her name would imply some closeness, and he replies with “Give me some credit. What happened, happened. It´s gone. Long since forgotten about. Let´s not give it another thought.”, then leaves the room rapidly, clearly not happy with the situation either. She gets home and listens to her answering machine, having a drink of what appears to be whiskey, another habit of hers.

Throughout this episode, because this is a team that has accepted Tennison, they do not hesitate to call her “guv” instead of “ma’am”, and she does not have to keep correcting them this time, showing how in the first season they kept doing on purpose to pester her.

Image 8 - Tennison and her team

Another interesting aspect of this case is that Tennison is so focused on getting to the culprit that in some situations, such as when one of the suspects suffers a heart attack, she is more worried about losing the case than about the person in front of her. With the focus on the case, when Oswald goes to her house to inform her of some discoveries, he goes to her kitchen to cook for her when he sees that she has been having frozen dinners. She confronts him, asking what he thinks he is doing, and he says that if she wants to come out on top of everything and be the best, she needs to eat better, and they end up fighting because he has been taking more space than she wants.

When her main suspect is dying, she goes to him and says “I’m a catholic too”, trying to get him to confess. “I think we all like to believe in something,” she seems to try to bargain with him, stating he’s dying and nothing will happen to him, and he can talk to her, all the while Oswald keeps following Tony, stalking him after he gets off work, because he does not think Tennison has the right man. After getting home from the hospital and having gotten a confession, she establishes some limits for the first time: she does not answer her phone and turns off the lights, in turn turning off the case in her mind.

Because of an issue with the case and Oswald's actions, Tennison's boss confronts her, suggesting her personal feelings cloud her judgment – he knows she had an affair with Oswald during the course and she denies, saying he's been misinformed. She goes against the boss' orders and tells Tony's parents the truth, that he took his own life in the cell. Tony's mother starts assaulting Tennison in response, hitting her. Tennison is yet again taken off a case but this time around another office takes over the investigation: David Thorndike. He is the second person that affirms that Tennison allowed her personal feelings to cloud her judgment, and Tennison's boss informs his superiors that Tennison is a good detective, but the man says that she has a problem with judgment. Even her personal life is threatened here when another suspect has pictures of her and Oswald and threatens to release them to a newspaper.

The commander announces that Kernan has been promoted to Chief Superintendent, and says he will also announce his successor. We can very subtly see a movement in Tennison's face, one of expectation, and upon the announcement of Superintendent Thorndike, she looks down and seems to almost sigh discreetly before taking her finger to her lips, clearly displeased she wasn't the one to succeed Kernan. She walks by Kernan and asks him in passing "So I didn't even merit an interview?", and asks to speak to Thorndike, who is now her boss, saying it can't wait. "You'll have my formal request for a transfer first thing in the morning", and she leaves without them exchanging any other word apart from his agreement. Thorndike seems to smile, sighing and reclining back a bit, as if he's won more than a promotion: he messed with Tennison. We see Tennison leaving the station quietly without speaking to any of the officers in her team or even anyone at all, just exiting the precinct as the season ends.

Image 9 - Tennison leaving the station

3.3.1.3. Season 3, "Keeper of Souls" Parts 1 & 2

The series begins with the setting of the crime. When the scene is discovered and starts to be investigated, an ambulance and the police arrive at the scene; someone was killed in a fire in an apartment. This first scene of the process of investigation establishes that Bill Otley is back in this season.

Image 10 - Bill Otley

We see Tennison watching a lecture on serial killers from the back, smiling, and then we see her in the car with the man. “Are you always impressed with you?” she asks as she drives, as a response to his lecture. He says he is going to be away for two weeks and asks in confirmation: “You’re coming with me?”. She says that she is starting a new job on Monday and he doesn’t seem happy about it and she even says sorry. There seems to be some tension between them because of it. She asks for him to sign a copy of his book, and he insists again asking why she will not come with him. She says that she does not want to get hurt again, and he says it does not make sense. What we learn then is that they used to date in the past, but she thought things were moving too fast and from what she says that there wasn’t anyone before him, it seems that he was her first boyfriend. She made a decision and ended things with him in the past, not talking it through because she says that he would have made the decision for her – he wanted to marry her and have a family, but she ended things over the phone, and he accused her of doing the same thing again now in the present. As the argument escalates, she affirms that she should not have started seeing him again, but maybe she could not stay away. She tries to leave his hotel room and he tries to kiss her as she is leaving, insisting on it even though she says she mustn’t. for the contemporary (woman) viewer, this scene is uncomfortable for his insistence on trying to kiss her even though she refuses. Her new job is heading the vice squad, and she mustn’t stay with him – apparently, for Tennison, there is no conciliation because the man does not seem to accept that she can’t drop her job and just follow him on a book tour.

At her new job, she is shown her new office and she says she doesn't like the view. She immediately asks Norma Hastings for a list of all the officers on the squad. We then see Otley interrogating Vernon/Vera, because it was in their apartment that the murder happened. While Otley interrogates and starts working on this murder case, Tennison is informed that she is the lea of Operation Contract, an operation that cleans the streets from rent boys and other similar cases with the youth.

Tennison had a problem trying to open the drawers on her desk, and as she meets Otley, he jokes "I was seeing if I could get your drawers loosen". The double entendre here shows us that apparently, he has not changed, making a crude reference to loosening Tennison's underwear as a synonym for loosening the drawers of her desk. She immediately asks to see him in her office, saying "Right, sergeant, I'm not going to take any crap and I'm not going to let you stir things up. Either you're going to work with me or will have you transferred", showing to him that she will not accept his behavior anymore, especially now that she is in charge. He comments that he was out of line in their previous case working together and that he knows she did a good job. At this point, there seems to be enough cordiality established for them to work together without him hindering her investigation like before.

She meets the man from before at the train station before he leaves, but she is not there to really rekindle their relationship – she is there to ask for his opinion about the case she is leading. We discover then that he is married and has four kids, and she was aware of that. She attempts to justify her actions by saying that they both got what they wanted, a career for her and he got a family. He says he loves her, and she replies that she knows; there is not really a connection besides sexual from her side.

In this investigation, there is another attempt at taking Tennison out of the case, but this time because there are higher-rank officers who are involved with the boys. She interrogates the suspects and Vera says she likes how Tennison talks to her – Tennison refers to her as Vera, while all the other detectives talk to her as Vernon, showing again sensibility to talk to people who are involved in the case but are not at that point suspects. One of the suspects, Jackson, doesn't object to her questioning him. When they approach Jackson at the station, there is one male detective and a woman detective going after him, and this time we see women being more active in the case rather than just sitting in the background.

After Tennison talks to her boss about the case, she is out of the door and she overhears him talking on the phone about how she would be suspicious if they took her off the case and

that she knows nothing, so now she is indeed suspicious and observant. The superior officer at the station has called for assistance, DI Brian Dalton, and Otley and the other detective just look at him, serious, and not welcoming.

In this episode, we see Tennison constantly chewing gum in an effort to stop smoking. She brings some other detectives to the case who worked with her previously because she starts suspecting foul play in the precinct. There is banter in the Incident Room, and Tennison smiles; she does not join in of her choice, but she is also not excluded.

A tape has gone missing from her office. When Dalton leaves, Otley says he can't work with him, and that he and Tennison would make better partners to talk to the kids. She asks what he thinks about Dalton, "I don't know why he's on board, do you?", she appears to be suspecting Dalton, but asks anyway if Otley took the tape. She sees their boss talking with Dalton, and while rescheduling an appointment has an idea. Calls Dalton in – informs about Matthews having aids, and that he should get to a hospital. The boy bit him enough to draw blood. He is shaken by it and she comforts him, showing empathy.

Tennison starts feeling shaken through the episode and schedules an appointment with a doctor. She goes to the appointment, the doctor says he supposes it's nothing, it's just that she works too hard. She asks about the biting situation and asks for some leaflets and looks worried about Dalton, says she's asking for a friend.

She receives orders to not pursue a suspect, and her superior makes it clear that she is not in charge of the investigation, but she does so anyways, showing her conviction. The entire season shows this tension between Tennsion and her superiors, because she wants to pursue and investigate all plausible suspects in the case, and the man they don't want her to investigate is one she highly suspects.

She gets the news from the doctor, that her blood pressure is up, and she cannot smoke or drink anymore because she is pregnant. She looks conflicted and smiles but seems worried, difficult for us viewers to read the subtleties in the character's expression in this scene. We do know that at some point she did not want any family, and considering she is focused on her career, one might assume it is still true.

One of the detectives comes out as gay when they're talking about the clubs and he knows more information. Tennison calls him to her office, he asks if she's going to fire him but no, she wants more information on which club would be likely to be frequented by police officers and how to deal with it. He suggests getting the officers in drag to go there unnoticed

and she laughs. The officers seem to have a problem with the detective being gay, but she again is the one to be the mediator in sensitive situations.

Tennison confronts Dalton after one of Parker's victims in another city tries to kill himself. She says she knows he's reporting back everything in the investigation, and asks when he is going to come clean about what he is doing. She calls him by his first name, smiling, saying they are mates and he can tell her what is going on. He does tell her that he needs to report if the investigation crosses another investigation, blackmail of an assistant deputy commissioner – he tells her the same name the boys identify. As she starts pursuing that line of investigation, she is warned again to drop it because the man is friends with people who could hinder Tennison's career. She learns that there is an opening for Superintendency, and she wants that, but she is also not going to leave the case alone.

Dalton apologizes about how he didn't have any say in the matter of reporting back to other people and says he doesn't know where he is, he is in limbo and can't sleep. He hasn't told his girlfriend and is scared to have sex with her because of the possibility of him having contracted HIV and really opens up to Tennison, crying, and apologizing to her. She comforts him, saying he should talk to someone who understands, and she's gotten some contacts to help him.

Otley opens her office and sees the scene, saying he's got Parker-Jones in room two. She is not happy but he says he couldn't contact her and they wanted to move on with the case, "I know what you're doing, and you're just not good enough", she tells Otley because she didn't want Parker-Jones brought in yet because *she* was not ready for him.

After that, the bosses are waiting for her. The commander says if she doesn't stop investigating Parker-Jones there will be disciplinary action and she says "You take it, sir, and I will fight you every inch of the way […] I take full responsibility. If you take me off this case I won't go quietly." No matter what she will not give up her sense of justice and righteousness.

While in the investigation process, she still has to deal with her own news. She calls her doctor because she has decided to have an abortion. Otley arrives as soon as she finishes the call, and she asks for a moment or two by herself. She cries, by herself in her office, back to the viewer, and almost falls in on herself. We can see the decision seems to be difficult for her, but we can imagine that in wanting to be Superintendent, her personal life yet again has to be sacrificed.

Image 11 - Tennison crying

As the case develops and more suspicion falls on Vera, Tennison calls her Vernon for the first time, very confrontational and angry, not being sensitive to the situation anymore as she was previously. With suspects, she has no qualms about being strict and firm, but with victims or relations, she can be cordial and much more understanding.

In the end, she cannot make Parker-Jones confess, so she goes another route to have justice. She leaves evidence with Jessica Smithy, giving her the "name keeper of souls". The camera zooms in on the photographs, implying that the journalist will drag Parker-Jones in the news, and justice will be made by another hand.

3.3.1.4. Season 4, "The Lost Child", "Inner Circles", and "The Scent of Darkness"

This season is set apart from the others by presenting three different cases instead of one case divided into two episodes. The first episode, "The Lost Child", presents a case of a missing child. The episode begins with the alarm ringing, but Tennison was already awake. She sits and remains in silence. The bell rings and she's ready, but it is not an easy process – she is getting her abortion right at the beginning of the episode. As the mother of the missing child is taken into the hospital with the head injury, there is a parallel with Tennison going under for her abortion.

Image 12 - The mother of the missing child

Image 13 - Tennison at the hospital

When at work, she asks about Thorndike and the officer says he's left, she just takes his name off the door and gets in. It is her room now, Superintendent Tennison. The title of the episode then has the double meaning, pertaining to the child who is missing, and now Tennison's' lost child due to abortion.

She needs more officers but Mike - her boss - won't give them unless it's a murder investigation. She seems to get emotional when she goes to the victim's house; she doesn't turn on the lights initially, we just see her in shadows. She picks up the teddy bear on the floor. In this case, she has an issue with the father, because he does not approve of career women like her because according to him they are selfish. She is very affected by the case, even almost crying in front of the detectives in the investigation room when one of them says it's a wild goose chase. In another scene, we see her in her office, head on her hands, shaking her head.

Tennison opens up to the mother in the case, saying "I couldn't have done what you did. You had a child, all alone". The woman talks about expectations about women having children, how it is wonderful and fulfilling, and how they weren't considered real women unless they

had babies. Tennison hears from her that she was brave for doing what she did, deciding for herself that she should do what she did.

Image 14 - Tennison comforting the culprit

After the woman confesses to trying to suffocate her own child, she keeps hitting herself in the head, and Tennison just gets closer to her, trying to comfort her while she says she is sorry. At the end of the case, Tennison gets to her house. Again in shadows, the only light coming in from the windows, and just sits on the sofa while the credits roll up.

Episode two's crime is the murder of an older man, Denis, in his own house. We see Tennison starting to drink a little more, and we find out she has been assigned desk jobs, and is thankful to help with a murder investigation, but DCI Peter Raymond is the one in charge, or was until she arrived. She arrives already giving orders, "You do have an incident room I presume. I want it up and running by 9 o'clock tomorrow morning", then gives the instruction to call two officers from AMIP to join her team, and Richard is one of them. She asks about a DS Cromwell, "I thought he was supposed to be here", ad she is surprised when a woman answers "She is. Morning, ma'am, D.S. Christine Cromwell".

Image 15 - Tennison drinking while on the phone

Yet again in an investigation, there is some tension between Tennison and the main woman detective in the team. Cromwell says that she understood DCI Raymond would be the lead in the investigation, and Tennison responds “Not from me, you didn’t”; Tennison fought for her place and rank and it seems that now that there is space for other women, she does not give them much space to grow nor opportunities to investigate out in the field. There is also tension between Tennison and Raymond, he enters the interrogation room in the middle of her inquiry. When the other detectives talk about Tennison in this episode, they mention how she has no personal life apart from the job and it is clear to them just by looking at her. There is also a comment on her physical appearance, on how she has got nice legs but being superintendent is not a job for a woman.

Image 16 - Tennison and Cromwell

When the detectives are going after the suspect, they are hostile, which goes against what she wanted in the first place. She asks them “What happened to community policing?” There is an issue with people’s trust in the police in a lower-income community; this time the series is going to deal with socio-economic concerns and the police treatment of certain communities.

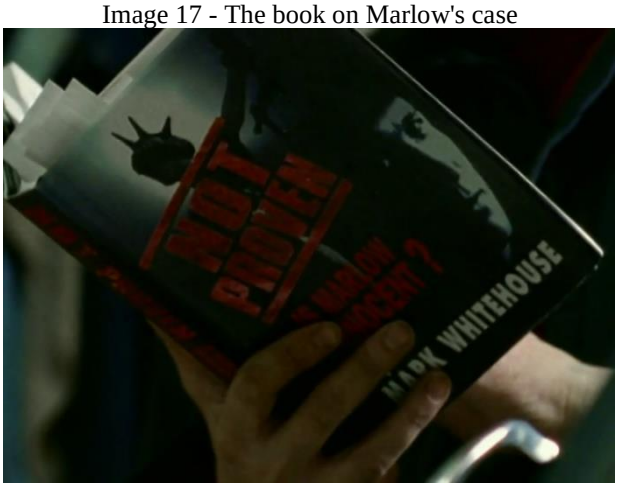
There are a few more instances of Tennison drinking in this episode, offering a detective a drink, and ordering a whiskey and soda at the pub where the detectives in the team are. There is an implication in a conversation that Tennison is not having sex almost as a justification for her behavior in the investigation. Tennison’s behavior regarding drinking and eating in this episode is slowly becoming more extreme compared to before, we see her buying alcohol and frozen food, and we can observe that from this moment onward her relationship with alcohol is going to start to decline. And in the end, she has a cigarette with Cromwell even though she had stopped smoking, falling back again into old habits.

Episode three brings back the case from season one; the whole case is going to be put to the test when new victims emerge. The first time Tennison appears in this episode she's in an interview, saying a WPC has been constantly overlooked and been put back in uniform. Her superior says that the woman can't work with a team and can't take a joke, but Tennison insists that she can, but she will not put up with bad attitudes, implying that that specific team's jokes might be offensive.

Tennison meets a man – Patrick Scholfield – outside of a theater, and both try to lie but they were both late for the date. They go to his house, and she talks about work even in the bathtub with him; she mentions that one culprit got away free, and she wants retribution. Both are in the bathtub, and she keeps talking about work, how one walked away free and she wants retribution. She arrives home smiling after the night at the crime scene, calling for Patrick, but he is no longer there.

She calls Richard Haskins, the detective we've seen in the other cases, to meet her at the morgue. There are familiar elements to this corpse from a previous case, the biggest one being the clamping of the arms, but for now, she wants to keep it under wraps. Haskins reassures her, if there was any doubt in her mind, that she put away the right man. She still gets back into Marlow's old case files, looking at the pictures, comparing with the new corpse, and it is Marjorie Miller, an older woman, a widower from a cop. Tennison suspects a copycat killer because someone wrote about Marlow's case defending the idea that he was innocent, and the new corpse was tied with the exact same knots he used. She notices that everything she saw in the mortuary was detailed in the book, so it would not be difficult for someone to copy.

Image 17 - The book on Marlow's case



We see her at home with her partner and still working on the case while he watches a comedy show on television, and she tries to share some ideas with him. When he does not

respond, she turns off the tv, but he says that he just wants to sit there and relax, not discuss work. She says she needs to get a thought out, and that she suspects that someone wants to prove Marlow innocent. She is back to smoking; this is one habit that is going to fluctuate in between seasons but it is always going to appear some way or another.

She leads the case and one of the detectives in the team calls her "ma'am", apparently not knowing her. She just responds with "Don't call me ma'am", and then she notices they've all read the book. She is assertive in saying that there's no place in the investigation for people who question Marlow's guilt because *she* was the one to put him away and she *knows* he is guilty and will not accept being questioned. She demands that no details of methods leave the room.

She's in bed with Patrick, saying for them not to go to work today, just to take a walk. She hugs him and says she means it, and then immediately says that she can't, but that this is the " […] first time in my life I've had the feeling I don't want to get up and get to work. I don't want to screw up another relationship. This is the first time in my life I've felt like this. Tell me it's not going to happen." This is certainly a change from past relationships, in which she had no doubts that her career was a priority.

Tension is high in this case because the detectives want to follow the line of the possibility of Marlow being innocent, while Tennison states vehemently that she has already solved it and they're wasting their time. When she gets home that day after investigating the lockup, she pours herself and Patrick a drink and sees the book on Marlow on her desk. She questions him, and he says he bought the book ages ago when it came out before they met, and now he's reading it. She says "In it, I'm caricatured as a cold person obsessed by her career and turned on by murder. That description would turn any man off, except a therapist. Is that why you're interested in me?", and he jokes that "no, because you're paranoid". She angrily says she has no doubt she put away the right man. In the middle of the night, we see Patrick taking files off Tennison, who is asleep on the sofa and covered by them.

The detectives in the team complained about Tennison to their superiors and how she was not investigating. Mike takes her off the case because he's getting under pressure from up high. "You're vulnerable to accusations of not having an open mind"; from what we have seen so far, she is one of the few in the places she's worked at who actually does have an open mind for everything. Mitchell will replace her as superintendent in this particular case, and Mike asks for her to look at budgets. However, when it comes to it, Mike defends Tennison. They're going

to investigate the case again and look at her files. Mike says he's certain they've put away the right man, but someone's leaking information.

Patrick confesses he picked up her case files and looked and may have found something interesting. He notices there was mention of perfume, and the perfume was listed in the lockup items, also found in Della Mornay's handbag, so whoever's doing it must have inside information. She doesn't accept that she might be wrong, doesn't even entertain the idea, and even Patrick seems to believe that it might be someone else. It's starting to get on the news as well that she's been taken off the case. In the midst of everything, Tennison discovers that Scholfield has a file on him; he had been profiling her before they met. Everyone seems to be against Tennison, but Mike tells her in confidence that she's being investigated internally, to see if her methods in the case were not inappropriate. When Tennison confronts Patrick about the file, they fight, and then he says that she can't separate private life from work and that she takes everything as a personal attack.

Commander Trayner calls her and she is suspended from the case because they find out that she visited Marlow in the prison. Haskins keeps her updated because the investigation is a mess, there is too much to cover with too few personnel. He found a clue about one of her ideas, she goes with him even though she is suspended, and the DCI told him not to follow through. They go to their suspect's house and the man runs away, while Tennison stays in the house and searches. The DCI on the case is following the possibility of it being a police officer who had access to the club with the first victim and would justify a young girl getting into the car and being his second victim. In the end, it was a guard in the prison who got closer to Marlow, and Marlow tries to convince him to kill the third victim – the guard had already kidnapped the victim.

Mike talks to her at the end and states that her removal was correct at the time. Her behavior was a serious breach of procedure and discipline and the decision to suspend her was the correct procedure, and he emphasizes that her behavior after the suspension was a serious breach of procedure and discipline, also stating that "Your standard of behavior is not what is expected of a senior police officer." However, due to her results, the board will only reprimand her. She was going to resign but after she only got scolded, she decided not to do so. She states that she "saw them sitting there deciding about my future and thought I should be there making those decisions, I fought the bloody battles."

Image 18 - Tennison's evaluation

She resigns herself in the fact that she will just have to work with Traynor and Thorndike. Right at the end, they are at a police gala, and she invites Thorndike for a dance. She confronts him about what he did, but they part ways saying that there are no hard feelings. The men at his table laugh, and the episode ends with Tennison throwing wine at Thorndike.

3.3.1.5. Season 5, “Errors of Judgement” Parts 1 & 2

The series opens with Tennison drinking out of a mug with white covers around her, and boxes in her apartment, as she takes her drink from the balcony. We follow her searching for a shoe while eating, then getting down to her car while finishing eating her toast. She checks the time on her watch as she drives looking for a place it seems, or someone. The camera shows us what she is seeing, building after building made of red brick. She rehearses what seems to be a speech, “I believe the police should, er, liaise with the community, they should be a part of the community.” Just as she finishes the sentence, right behind her, a car is robbed by a young man, but she just looks and follows on, doesn’t do anything. Seems to be quite contrary to what she has been saying, that they should be a part of the community yet she does nothing about that crime – or she does not feel like she is part of that community.

Image 19 - The opening scene

Her speech was part of a community outreach program, as we see her speaking to a group of students in a classroom who don't seem interested at all in what she has got to say. "I've been a cop for about 22 years. I wanted to be in the police force – about their age. I think people get on a train they don't know the destination, and they finish where they don't want to be." She asks them what kind of life they want, and one of them says "Get hammered", but another boy says "Respect", and the whole group manifests at that, almost mocking him. They said they want computers, and she asks one quiet boy what he wants and he says "law and order". She asks his name, and he responds that it is Campbell, and asks if he doesn't think they have got law and order. He says that no one gives a shit about anything, and she says they will talk later, but it does not happen – or at least it is not shown to us at this point. And to juxtapose her affirmation that they do indeed have law and order, this scene is followed by one in which some men knock on a house and tell the woman to open the door so they can use the kitchen, they've got guns, baking powder, and some closed packages.

We then watch from the room a police interview with the press talking about the reduction in crime in the area, especially armed crime, just as she arrives in the room. She complains to the man about not being given anything of importance or significance to do, as she says she is bad and hates doing speeches at schools. He says that in his day "lasses stopped at home, mangled the kids, and fed the washing."

> I... I don´t know what you´ve heard about me, but... That bloody Jane Tennison, she´ll be storming into your nick, the balls of your best officers trailing from her jaws, spraying people with claret, calling people masons, threatening resignation. Er... well, I... I just wanted to tell you I… I-I´m not a complete maniac. […] No, I´m a good cop.

By what she says, it seems she is worried about being stuck to talking at schools and not having a real case due to what people have been saying about her, and Ballinger says that he heard that about her – that she is a good cop – just as he gets a phone call about a fatal shooting.

She meets a big drug dealer involved in the case, Clive Norton “The Street”, and takes the young man to the hospital with him. The Street knows her name already, saying he’ll give an interview later and that they will work together on this one, as this is one of his boys.

When visiting one of the suspects in the hospital, she tells one of the detectives: “And Henry... don´t call me ma´am. Call me boss, guv... Just call me anything but ma´am”. She does not like the team there and wants to choose her team for the investigation, but her superior, Ballinger, says she doesn’t know anyone and that she will eat what is on her plate.

She informs The Street that Nazir, the man who was murdered, was a drug mule, questioning if that is why he was killed. He was in the park with his dogs. She challenges him, telling him that if he wants her to go he can just say so, however, she will not go. “I won´t actually go, but I know saying so will make you feel like a big boy”, to which he responds, “Just because you don´t come, Jane, don´t take it out on me”. Would he say anything like that to a male officer? She laughs and just replies that he is the connection, and she is close to putting him away in prison for life.

She has to insist on questions with the detective team, establishing shorter deadlines on the processes because they seem to be incompetent. When she finds out the DI went to see the girlfriend and found out about what Nazir was doing, she is clearly unhappy with how things work in the precinct. The DI tells her she didn’t know Tennison was going to see the Street, and she replies with: “I mean, are you lot incapable of the basic procedures of investigation? You have to keep me informed. I have a mobile, use it.” The detectives shake their heads as she leaves the room. She stays late at the office drinking while going over information on the cases. There seems to be a gang war, and in a conversation with her superior, she does not agree with him in just letting the two gangs go against each other and solve their problem. She states that she wants law and order for everyone, and it is her job to catch the bad guys. In this conversation at a pub, there is a moment of tension between them after she asks if he is flirting with her. As she goes to the toilet to alleviate some of the tension in the air, she passes by the group of detectives who are working with her on the case, and they are mocking her, with DI Devaney saying

> For God´s sakes, are you physically incapable? I want a dry martini straight up and I want it now. I don´t want an olive. Any sign of an olive, you´re back in uniform. You lot can laugh. In the Met, we wouldn´t be having this conversation. Me, I´ve screwed my way to the top, and I may be 50, but I could bloody well do it...

They do not seem to take her seriously, commenting on her drinking habits and even speculating mockingly that she is only in her rank because she might have slept with her

superiors to get promotions. Tennison talks to Ballinger about the situation, and Tennison – and the viewer – learns that the detective who was saying all those things actually "[…] came straight into my office to ask if she could work under you. It isn´t just your reputation for snottiness that precedes you. You´re a role model, Jane. An icon in the force". Besides the bad aspects of her reputation that the detectives were mocking, she still is considered a good detective who inspires others. Ballinger invites her to his home to have coffee, saying his wife is away most of the time, and they end up sleeping together. In a later conversation, he says the night was amazing and wants to repeat it, and she smiles as she leaves his office.

Image 20 - The detectives talking about Tennison

On another night, Tennison calls his house and his wife answers; the viewer will later learn that it was to inform him of what they had planned for that night: meet an informant. She gets the file on The Street to read over before heading out to meet the informant. She gets ready, putting on a bulletproof vest under her shirt. Because of what happens in the scene, with The Street calling the man, she suspects there is someone from the police working or informing the other side, and that is why The Street has never been arrested before. She wants to win this case and arrest him no matter what because she states that there is no point in coming second. Due to this suspicion of having a mole in the precinct, she gets closer to Gerry, one of the detectives, for the duration, and she gives him some advice: "You wear my colours, Gerry, you´re going to lose your friends". This emphasizes to the viewer yet again how she has no one else besides an eventual sexual partner.

She talks to Ballinger about the possibility of there being a mole, and how she suspects Devaney. He says that they can make errors of judgment, and she says she will do one right now, kissing him, and they end up having sex again. She is deeply affected, however, when she finds that Ballinger was the mole and has been working with The Street.

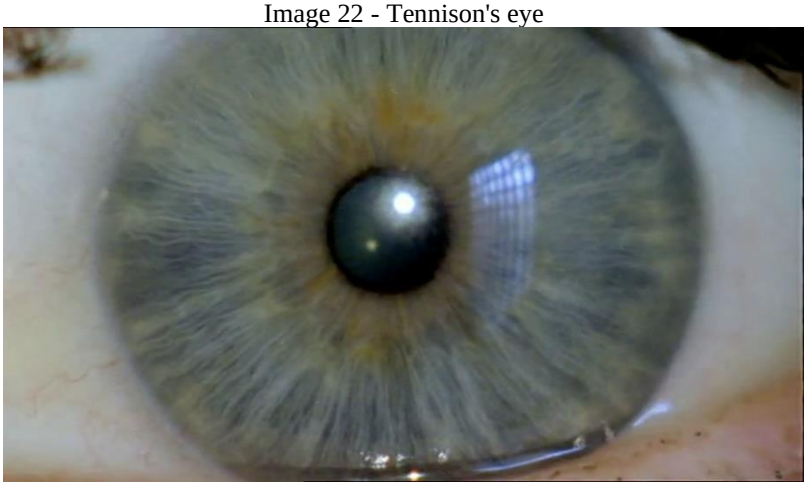
Image 21 - Tennison, Ballinger (back), and "The Street" holding a gun

Ballinger ends up saving her from getting shot, saying he would never let The Street hurt any officer, but she still does not agree with his methods of trying to deal with the crime situation in the city. In the end, in Ballinger saving her from getting shot, The Street is killed by backup sharpshooters that had arrived at the scene. It is clear that their relationship has indeed ended there, with no future possibilities due to their disagreement on morals.

3.3.1.6. Season 6, “The Last Witness” Parts 1 & 2

The season begins with a construction crew finding a woman’s body on a building site, and right from the beginning the series establishes a connection between the procedures the victim’s body is going through as part of the investigation and Tennison’s own medical procedures.

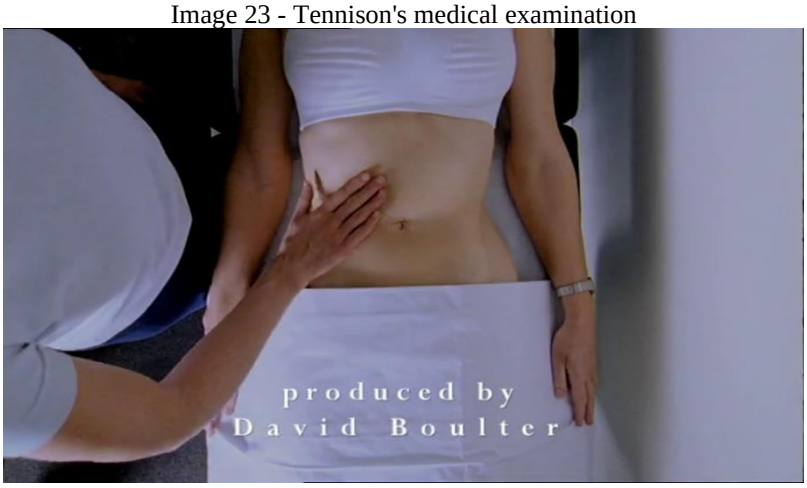
Image 22 - Tennison's eye



There is a shot of an eye blinking with the title card of the episode, and we soon learn Tennison is doing a general checkup. The way Tennison’s body is displayed to the viewer is

similar to the way the corpses of female victims have been looked at before, through a gaze that presents the female body to be scrutinized, especially when there is this parallel between the victim and the detective. During the checkup, the doctor asks if she exercises, and she says “Not enough”. She admits to consuming alcohol four to five times a week but does not say the amount. The doctor asks if she smokes and she replies negatively, but immediately after there is a shot that shows us Tennison smoking.

Image 23 - Tennison's medical examination



What is extremely interesting about the beginning of this episode is that there is a different focus to the procedural aspect: we follow step by step of the preparation, as the detectives are suiting up with a blue suit, wearing a hat and a mask, covering their shoes, and we had not seen that so far in the series. This season aired in 2003, and we cannot help but to speculate that this aspect was influenced by the production and initial release of *CSI* in the year 2000, a series that focuses much more on the details of the procedures in the investigation. Throughout these two episodes that compose season six of *Prime Suspect,* there is more emphasis on the procedures of the investigation.

We see Tennison in a room being asked some questions about her career. We learn that she has been an officer for 30 years, that she is currently 57 years old and she has been Detective Superintendent for seven years at this point; she is in a review to talk about her retirement options, how she would take no penalty for retiring now after having done her 30 years. She argues that she is currently at the command of three murder teams, composed of 80 officers and 24 murder cases and there is no question that she is able to keep working and the best option for her is that, not to retire.

Shortly after the scene is juxtaposed with Tennison in the position of giving an employee a review, saying that she does not think the murder squad is the correct place for Lorna because

she does not do extra hours. Lorna argues that she is a mother of two and she has a perfect attendance record and does all the necessary hours, and if Tennison would go against her, she would argue for discrimination – Lorna is a black woman. In the end, Lorna remains in the squad and then complains about it to other detectives, asking what the etiquette on retirement presents is, implying everyone knows about Tennison's review, or at least the possibility of her retirement. One of the detectives defends Tennison, saying she can be difficult, but she would never demand anything from them that she would not ask of herself. We have seen Tennison working from home several times before, and this time she is at home drinking whiskey and sees one of her detectives on television talking about the current situation of the investigation.

The scene in the morgue of the legal examiner going over the body of the victim in this season is much more explicit than in the previous seasons. We see the body with the skin on the torso cut open, ribs exposed, and blood running down. This scene can be juxtaposed with Tennison's medical checkup: the camera that zoomed in on the hands, the feet, and the torso of Tennison now does the same to the victim's body – a woman. Tennison arrives to follow the autopsy, in the room with the medical team instead of in the gallery above with other detectives.

Throughout the episode, she is unhappy with the media coverage and says that it's not anything on Simon, but she is taking over the investigation due to the current hysteria on immigrant issues, and the case would benefit from a Senior detective. Because five days have passed and there is no lead in the case, Simon discovers their superiors had discussed and approved Tennison taking over.

Image 24 - Interrogation of a suspect

We see a little more from Tennison's personal life this time around; she visits a man, asking how long he has been back, and he asks if she wants a drink. His phone rings when she

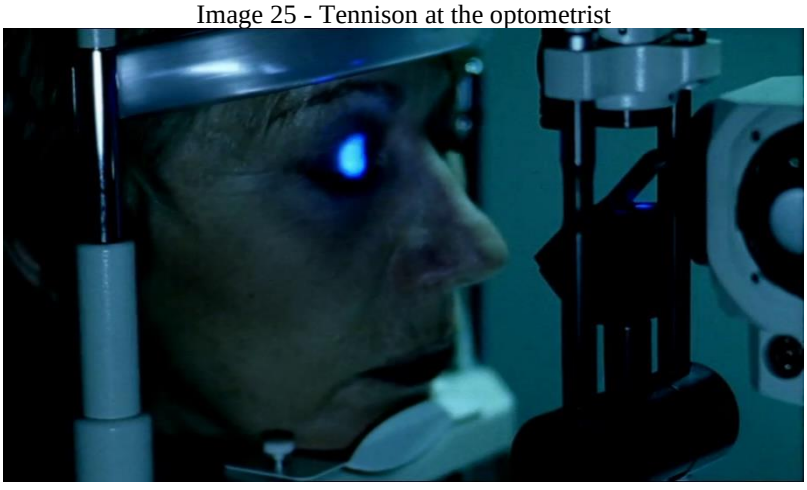
is about to ask for help with the case, and she rolls her eyes. So yet again she asks someone in her personal life for help with the case.

The case deals with immigrants and refugees from the Yugoslav Wars, and she calls out one of the detectives and reprimands his behavior for lack of sensitivity to the victim's sister's situation of being an illegal immigrant, even offering him a course on how to deal with sensitive issues especially relating to immigrants' situations. Once again, the series is going to present a case in which there are contextual issues that are going to influence the way crime is solved.

She meets the same man again, and he says that the phone call was to end something, and she confesses to him that she called him up to help just as an excuse to see him, but that she is not good company at the moment. She exclaims that she stole the investigation from a junior officer, asking him how pathetic it is that she has done that. This man, an old acquaintance, is going to help her with some details of the case, while they also have an affair for the duration of the episodes.

We follow Tennison through a visit with an optometrist, and yet again the camera zooms in on certain body parts, this time her eyes; he puts a dye in her eye to be able to examine it better, and the camera zooms in extremely close and in detail, with a scopophilic gaze. Once again the issue of her age is mentioned – she is aging and her body is starting to show some signs, and this will even lead to a conversation with her dad when she visits him for the first time in quite a while.

Image 25 - Tennison at the optometrist



She talks to her father when the government intelligence tells her to back down, asking for advice because she does not know what to do, especially after having seen the site of the massacre and the video of it. Her dad talks about his experience in the war discovering a concentration camp, and she has two moments in which she seems to want to comfort him, as

the camera zooms in on her hand extending and then clenching, as if controlling herself, restraining from physical touch and comfort.

Image 26 - Tennison and her father, with an older woman in the background

When she interviews her major suspect – and the one the government told her not to pursue – she is dressed differently, sharply, wearing a dark suit with a white shirt. There is a problem, however, and the DS takes her off the case and calls on the detective called Simon, who says he is too busy, but there is no choice. She is forced to take a week of leave.

She is at her partner's house, drinking with him, but still talking about the case. She opens a package of cigarettes but closes it, not picking up any, now showing indeed she is not smoking – at least at the time. When she is forbidden from attending Jasmine's funeral, she asks the man for a favor to go in her place, tell the victim's partner that she is sorry. Kasim, the second victim's partner, asked questions and he answered, which in turn led to Kasim going after the culprit who was going to get away with everything. "What you´ve set into motion goes against everything I believe in. Everything I stand for!" She wanted actual justice to be done to him, not revenge, which leads to them fighting and ending their affair.

She asks Simon for help to talk to the suspect's wife alone. She affirms she is sorry that he was taken and emphasizes this was against her ideas because she believes that her husband is entitled to have a fair trial, no matter what he has done. She states "Well, we are trained not to become personally involved, but I do... I just feel this overriding sense of responsibility to protect your two children from your husband." This is what she says, but then we discover she had been wearing a wire or recorder and got the wife's admission that she knew about her husband and that he brings war criminals to justice and therefore is protected by the British government. She manages to get him arrested for the murder of the real Milan, whom he murdered some years ago.

3.3.1.7. Season 7, “The Final Act” Parts 1 & 2

The first episode of the season opens with the simple title card in black and the lettering with Prime Suspect in white. We see two people running, then the title of the episode, then Tennison waking up with a gasp on a couch. As she wakes and the camera moves, it shows us that on the coffee table, there are two ashtrays filled with cigarettes, some cigarettes on the table, a glass of whiskey, a glass of wine, and a bottle with some liquid still on it, maybe whiskey. She looks at her clock, stretches, and winces in back pain. And finds the telephone on the couch, as if she did not remember how she ended up there.

Image 27 - Tennison's situation with drinking and smoking

She looks in the mirror, raises her hair, and sees bruising on her forehead. The toilet seat is up, the bed is unmade, and she looks around in confusion, then sits on the bed running her fingers through her hair. She is looking for something in her bag, then she goes to the kitchen, gets a bottle of vodka and a glass, and pours herself a drink. She opens and looks in the fridge and it is almost empty. She drinks the vodka and goes to work, driving.

Image 28 - Tennison pouring vodka on a glass

The detectives greet her, calling her “guv”, just as the viewer knows it is one of her preferred choices. They fill her in on the situation, the case of a 14-year-old missing girl. She is not happy that they had not clued her in during the night when it happened, and when she starts giving out orders, she has trouble remembering the name of one of the detectives, DC Wood, and as she leaves, the other detective gestures and comments that they suspect she has had a few drinks.

We learn that Tennison is about to retire and move to Florida in a conversation between her and DCS Mitchell while she is getting water from the cooler. She smiles while talking to him but as soon as he leaves, she drops her expression.

Tennison visits the family herself, and talks to a friend, and the headmaster of the missing girl – Sallie – is also there. While visiting a care home and interviewing people who knew Sallie, she gets a phone call and says that she can’t be there, writing down the ward number, and she tells a boy that her father has been taken to a hospital. Another important discovery in this scene is that one of the detectives tells her that Detective Cox did call her the previous night and talked to her for about three minutes, as it is registered in the precinct call log, but she does not remember the call at all. They were at the pub, Tennison and this detective, and she does not remember leaving the pub or anything else. He berates her, saying she has got to take care of herself.

She visits the house of Sallie’s friend, and the mother offers her wine and a cigarette, but she does not accept anything, just wants to talk to Penny. In trying to talk to Penny and get her to give information, Tennison tells the girl she was addicted to cigarettes at the age of 16, another piece of information that is entirely new to the viewer.

She goes to the hospital to visit her dad and we learn that she is retiring in a month. The doctors said everything is failing in his body, and he asks for a favor. He asks if he would recognize her nieces in the street because she does not visit, and when her sister arrives, she greets Tennison by saying “Hello, stranger”. Tennison goes to her dad’s house and calls Pauline, she asks why Pauline did not tell her that their dad has cancer, and Pauline replies that Tennison is always busy. During this conversation and while perusing some objects at the house, she is drinking, a bottle in one hand and a glass in the other. She finds an old police hat, turns on music on an old player, and starts dancing, shortly after she falls into bed. She arrives at the hospital early next morning to talk to a doctor to discuss her father’s situation, and she demands a second opinion. She visits her dad while he is asleep and leaves the picture that he wanted her to get on the table beside him, and leaves quickly, crying.

She drinks in the middle of the day during the investigation, alone in her car while eating a sandwich. Afterward, she picks Penny up from school in the rain and they talk a little. She was 17 when she joined the force. It was the power and the stupid thought I could do something good. They almost get into an accident and Penny says, “You’re drunk, let me out”. In the next scene, she is interrogating Sallie’s dad because he lied about the time he got off work, and when he says he had one beer in his car, she pursues that, telling he reeks of alcohol; however, it is she that smells.

DCS Mitchell says he wants her to take sick leave before her retirement, and that it has been bad before. She says she goes to AA meetings as required, but there is no way to prove it. She says she will go when she is retired. She says she will retire after she gets the murderer. She ends up going to a meeting that night, and she sees a familiar figure: Bill Otley. It’s been 10 years since they last saw each other. He confesses that he had been drinking at the job and built resentment towards her, being a chauvinistic asshole, and apologizes to her for everything he did to her. I couldn’t handle a woman being my boss. He gives her his contact, saying she shouldn’t do this alone – trying to recover from alcoholism. She then visits her add again, trying to take him to see someone else about his disease but he does not really want that and is in pain. In their conversation, we learn a lot more about Tennison and her background.

“You know, you pursued your career. You followed your lights. That meant you had less to do with other people. You feel bad about that, but why should you? It's what you had to do. I never wanted you to join the police. But I’ve always been proud of you, Jane. You've always done what's right. Not a lot of people can say that... About their lives.”

With this, we start putting the pieces together about her history, how she was an angel as a child, as mentioned in the previous episode, and that changed when she became a teenager and then with her resolution and conviction, she joined the force at an early age.

Tennison goes to another AA meeting before attending Sallie's funeral the next day. She is moved by Penny's eulogy and talks to her afterward, telling her about her dad's situation, and says that she cannot be sad at work. Penny says that Tennison seems lonely, and Tennison agrees.

She is called to the hospital, and she cries while holding her dad's hand while he is unconscious. In that moment, she says "I love you, Dad. I love you. I've always loved you, even when I was... when I was too busy to stop and see you", one of the only times in the series in which there is a moment like that. Otley arrives; she has called him because she did not know who else to call, and they hug.

Image 29 - Otley hugging Tennison, her father unconscious

They go to the hospital cafeteria to talk. Right as she is leaving the hospital, she comes upon a suspect. He thinks she is after him, calls her a bitch, and repeats it. She pushes him and just as she goes to arrest him and he pulls out a gun, and when Penny arrives at the scene, in the confusion and altercation, the suspect shoots Otley, ending the episode.

Image 30 - Otley is shot in front of Tennison

The next episode begins with Otley being rushed into the hospital and Tennison following, blood dripping on the floor. Otley does not make it. She puts his picture on a board. When they are watching the CCTV footage, she turns around when the gun is shot. The police go after Curtis, and in his sister's apartment, they find Sallie's bag. When they go back to the precinct, DCS Mitchell calls her into his office because he noticed in the CCTV footage that Tennison pushed the suspect.

> "Even the smallest thing, she doesn't tell anyone. I mean, ordinary, human... Did you know her father was ill? […] no. Old-school, that's Tennison. On the force, what, 30, 35 years? Battered, burnt-out. Dinosaurs. What do they do when they leave? They drink themselves to death, that's what."

Here we have a character who knows Tennison that she does not have any connections at work, and had not told anyone about the fact that her dad was not only sick and dying but that he had died the previous night.

Tennison is even more determined to find out who murdered Sallie because this is her last case, so close to her retirement. She goes home with a brand new bottle of alcohol, puts it on her coffee table, and contemplates, not opening it. The next day is her father's funeral, and just as she is leaving the house the camera focuses on the table, the bottle more than half drunk. Even at her father's funeral, she sits alone, isolated, away from her sister and nieces. After the funeral, she is at the pub with her sister and one of her nieces, Carol. They end up fighting, and Tennison keeps on drinking, and the bartender caresses her hand, flirting, but she does not want anything. She gets up and the chair falls down. She leaves the pub, not walking straight, and goes directly to her car. She stays inside for a moment then leaves.

She takes a cab to pick up Penny from school, still drunk and takes the girl home with her. Penny asks why she never had any kids, and she says she nearly did once, but life was

complicated. She shares some books with the girl, saying that Penny reminds her of her when she was younger. Tennison gets a glass of whiskey and mistakenly calls her Sallie. Tennison wakes up the next morning on an armchair, alone, Penny no longer at her house. She goes to an AA meeting, and this time the man in charge of the meeting asks her to read the preamble, but does not say anything else. She goes to work and the investigation proceeds.

After they arrest Penny's father, she tells the detective, Danny, that Tennison wanted her to drink whiskey and insisted on it, but she refused. Penny confronts Tennison and says that she does not remember because Tennison was too drunk when offering the girl whiskey. Talking to Danny, Tennison says Penny stole her heart, which is why she took her to her dad's house and tried to get closer to her. After the accusation, which Danny decides not to take to Mitchell, even though Tennison says he should, she goes to another AA meeting, and this time, she speaks, saying that she has not had a drink that day and thinks that is a good thing.

Tennison's time is coming to a close. When she talks to Taff, she tells him not to hire a stripper for her retirement party, and she says she had a good run, after all, she had "Dozens of convictions, three commendations. Two for bravery, one for excellence". Taff says she was the first female DCI, and she replies with "First Jane Tennison, DCI"; maybe she refuses to be linked solely with the fact that she was the first woman to reach that rank in the Metropolitan Police. Taff says that he is sorry, calling her ma'am jokingly, and she replies back "Don't call me "ma'am." I'm not the bloody Queen", as this line makes a full comeback around the last episode.

Penny breaks into Tennison's father's house, drinking and listening to music. Carol, Tennison's niece, gets to the house, and Penny attacks her with a knife, demanding that she calls Tennison. They arrive and take Penny to the station, and she refuses to talk to anyone but Tennison. She ends up confessing after she realizes that Tennison had an abortion, and all she wanted was to kill Sallie's baby, not Sallie. Tennison closes the case with the family, and Sallie's dad, who fought with Tennison throughout the case because he had been under suspicion, thanks her, shaking her hand, all the while the detectives are getting ready for her retirement party, but she does not attend.

Image 31 - The retirement party

After the handshake, she leaves the building, sees the stripper they hired, and just keeps on walking, not looking back, that part of her life is now over.

Image 32 - Tennison's face as she leaves

3.3.2. Detailing the character

The scene in which the camera pans around the Incident Room in the first episode is very telling. The group that works in the Incident Room has specific (male) dynamics, camaraderie amongst the police*men*, and work organization, and Tennison is an outsider arriving to shake that status quo, which will end up influencing the system itself, especially when the room that was only frequented by men who seem to hold a grudge and animosity towards her slowly welcomes her and another female officer, Maureen, who in the beginning is seen only in uniform. In the first scene in which Tennison appears in the first episode, she is dressed in gray and, with her light hair, she can almost blend in with the background or go by unnoticed. This contrasts with later scenes when she wears colors in her blazer, going for blues and reds as she gets more settled in her new role leading the case and the men on her team. She

still is usually opposed to the other women who become part of the investigation team, who dress with more muted down colors rather than Tennison's strong and dark colors. As the series progresses, she starts getting dressed in neutral colors. In the last two seasons, we see her wearing red lipstick in a few scenes. Still regarding her appearance, she keeps her blonde hair short.

Even though there are a couple of women also involved in the investigation, in the first episode only one other has more prominence as she aids Tennison with some discoveries; the other women seem to be there in the background only, just as she was before, and we always see her solving the case with the other male detectives. This happens for a few episodes, and then she interacts more with women but still has male detectives as partners in the cases. There is an issue with a detective who is a mother and can't do overtime like the others – men – and Tennison ends up delegating other functions to her instead of actively being in the investigation as she does not put in the same hours as the others. When she forgets a detective's name due to alcohol influence, it is a woman's name she forgets, and not one of the male detectives in her team.

The characteristics the viewer is able to identify and construct into a fully-fledged pure individual are presented to us via a manipulation of exposition and time in which the information is delayed and distributed throughout the entire series. As for Tennison's speech, it is assertive, especially because in the beginning she must fight for her place amongst the other detectives and then later on she has a higher rank in the police force, and she is always the lead of the teams. There is also a lot of swearing in her speech, and there is usually a reiteration of the fact that she does not like to be called "ma'am", only "guv" or "boss".

Regarding interactions in the series, we do not see Tennison with any friends, nor does she mention any; in the last season, it is explicitly stated that she is alone and has no friends. Her family appears in the first episode and then again only in seasons 6 and 7, reinforcing the idea that she is not close to anyone at all. There is a strain in her relationship with her father and sister and after her father dies, there is an argument and her sister and niece leave the pub where they were having drinks after the funeral. These family members state explicitly that she is not close to any of them, she does not contact them apart from rare occasions when her sister sends pictures. When it comes to romantic relationships, the first season starts with an already established relationship between Tennison and Peter; there is not any information about when they started dating, but we can assume it is not very recent due to them living together and the step of her meeting his son. The relationship falls apart in the same season, as she becomes

more invested in the case and prioritizes her career and the solution to the crime; they fight more and more, and by the end, she is alone. The other romantic relationship appears in season four; she meets Dr. Schofield during the case of the first episode, on a professional level, then on episode two we see her calling him and in episode three they are in a relationship, and we can assume some diegetic time has passed between the episodes to consolidate their relation. They argue, however, when she discovers he had opened a file on her during the investigation, which leads to their relationship falling apart. All the other moments of personal relations with men in the other seasons are of a sexual nature only, including one with a colleague in season two and her superior in season five.

The relationship with her colleagues is always strained. At first, the detectives do not accept her due to her being a woman leading them replacing Shefford, and later on, it might be for her position as DCS, being their superior, or simply because it seems that the detectives – especially in the later seasons – do not like her. More than once throughout the series there is a scene in which detectives are dinking together at a pub or bar and she is not with them, and there is one moment in which she is at the same pub with her superior and she overhears one of the detectives talking about her. The one detective she becomes closer with at the end is Bill Otley, the detective who was responsible for instigating his colleagues to unite against Tennison and make her work more difficult. He makes amends by the last episode of the series after they meet by chance; he apologizes to her and we can see the beginning of a friendship when Tennison calls him to be with her after her father's death, but the possibility of being his friend is taken from her when he is murdered right in front of her. It is said explicitly that she is lonely, both by characters and by Tennison herself, that she has got no one, and also does not tell anyone else about what is going on with her life.

Regarding her environment, she does not frequent many places other than the case locations, the police station, and her house (or hotel, if the case takes her to another city). Her house or hotel rooms are usually depicted in low light; when she gets home from work, she takes some time to turn on the lights and when she does, there are always parts of the house still in darkness. In addition, case files usually cover almost every surface available, as if her house were an extension of the police station and there were no place nor time for her to truly disconnect from the investigation. She lives for the job.

Her biography is a mystery until almost the end of the series. In season one, we learn that she has been overlooked for promotions several times even though she has the necessary qualifications, and that is it. It is only by the end of the series, in seasons six and seven, that we

learn a lot more about Tennison's past from her father and herself. Her father mentions that she was an angel as a child, but as she grew up and became a teenager, she started to give them more trouble. He mentions that after the turned 12, she started being "anti-this" and "anti-that", more certain of her beliefs and convictions. He also states that he admired her and was proud, however, he did not agree with her choice of becoming a detective. We learn from Tennison, in a conversation with a young girl, that she joined the force when she was 17, and there is no mention of college education or anything else.

There are some habits and behavior that are consistent throughout the series; she takes files of the cases home and works overtime – and expects the same from the detectives working in her team and punishes them by leaving them out of the action and stuck to a desk job when they do not dedicate themselves in the same manner. Related to this, she never disconnects from the case – both physically and mentally, as she takes the files home, and talks about the cases even with her partners and dying father. She smokes, just like many detectives who work alongside her, and even though she tries to quit, using patches and chewing gum, she always comes back to at least one cigarette, rarely refusing one when offered. The fact that Tennison drinks is present since the first episode, and it is an aspect of her habits that escalates over time, to the point it starts affecting her job and having other people talking about it, portraying her as an alcoholic by the end of the series. Interestingly, it seems that her smoking lessens as her drinking slowly increases, replacing one addiction with another.

The change arc we follow is one of both growth and transformation. We follow the character's natural process of maturation and growth through the seasons, as she starts as a detective and rises in the ranks of the Metropolitan Police, being the first woman in the universe of the series to do so. However, due to her constant loss of relationships, family issues, and even the density of the cases, we also follow her through a transformation, in which her career starts to decline as she becomes an alcoholic and it influences heavily in her behavior during the investigations, even to a point of compromising the process, having blackouts, and drunk driving with a teenager in the car, putting both their lives at risk. As the seasons progress, the series deals with several cultural issues such as sexism, racism, and immigration, situating its events and protagonist as symptoms of a certain socio-cultural context; while the first season is right at the beginning of the third wave of feminism, more recent seasons inserted into a post-feminist context (MCROBBIE, 2004) consider that some discussions based on gender are not relevant, as the idea of post-feminism assumes that feminist achievements are taken for granted in the sense of not being an issue anymore. It is in this post-feminist context that Otley

apologizes to her for being sexist and hindering her work when she worked with him. And in being the mediator in every episode between the police force and the communities in which the crimes are being investigated, at the same time that she reproduces and reinforces problematic behaviors by hindering certain detectives from going into the field (a black detective and women detectives), Tennison symbolizes a self-awareness of these institutionalized prejudices and is someone who attempts to constantly improve the situations, calling out her colleagues on racist and prejudiced remarks.

These categories from Pearson's taxonomy (2007), namely the habitual behaviors and psychological traits, the appearance, speech patterns, interactions in the world, environment, and the character's biography, all allow us to identify Tennison's paradigmatic traits that, in turn, resume, reiterate, and modernize or update those identified in the literary detectives.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

In this dissertation, we were able to investigate and identify the existence of a set of characteristics that is common to women detectives in the development of crime fiction in literature, and we showed how this pattern of characterization – not only the characteristics but *how* they occurred – culminated in the paradigmatic character of Jane Tennison of the television series *Prime Suspect*. While Christie's *Murder at the Vicarage* belongs to the traditional and classic era of detective fiction, James's *An Unsuitable Job for a Woman* and Paretsky's *Indemnity Only* presented generic characteristics from the noir novel as proposed by Todorov (2013), and so did – and were – their protagonists. Miss Marple has a more static characterization, while Cordelia Gray and V.I. Warshawski present a dynamic and more detailed characterization. Moreover, *Prime Suspect* will also present characteristics from the noir genre, including the sense of oppression through the usage of muted down colors, the use of a hand-held unstable camera, which adds realism, an ominous atmosphere, and certain characters such as Shefford representing the noir hero that is "[…] bluntly spoken, fundamentally proletarian, and contemptuous of all social pretensions" (CREEBER, 2001, p. 154). And in the noir women are usually femme fatales or victims; in *Prime Suspect*, even though Tennison is the lead detective in the case, she is constantly referred to as a "tart" (prostitute) by Otley, and misogynistic comments permeate the precinct until she is accepted as one of their own (JERMYN, 2003).

Considering the manipulation of exposition and temporal ordering (STERNBERG, 1978), for Miss Marple the effect that predominates is the effect of primacy, due to an intradiegetic narrator whose influence and biased statements from the beginning of the novel influence the reader in such a way that, no matter how much he changes his appreciation of her, we still see her pretty much in the same manner. With Cordelia Gray, the narrator is extradiegetic and her exposition is distributed and delayed throughout the novel, meaning that the effect of recency is the one that is more predominant. The same goes for V. I. Warshawski, while the protagonist is also the narrator, the expositional information about her is similarly distributed and delayed, resulting in the predominance of the effect of recency as well. As for Jane Tennison in the television series, expositional details about the character are also distributed and delayed throughout the entire series, highlighting the process that a character will be complete for the reader only at the end of the process and looking at it in retrospect.

We were able to identify not only these structural elements, but also other aspects regarding habits, behavior, and relationships that have become staples of crime fiction that portray women in a protagonist role in different historical contexts, media, and narrative configurations. *Prime Suspect* was chosen for analysis here precisely because it is a series that we understand as paradigmatic. But one of the elements that are common to all the works is that these women were doubted in their abilities because of their gender, especially because they defied traditional roles and expectations. They are in a traditionally masculine world, yet their abilities allow them to solve the crimes with the same level of efficiency and they have to constantly reaffirm and prove their worth in the investigations.

Throughout this dissertation, we observed that literature has established a pattern for the characterization of these women detectives that has evolved alongside the feminist movement, which has, in turn, been translated to television and culminated in *Prime Suspect*. The characteristics of this pattern are that these women do not usually have strong bonds with other people, and when they do, these bonds are tensioned and used to harm the detective and try to get them to stop investigating; they are usually orphans of at least one parent or have an estranged relationship with at least one of the parents; these are independent women without a fixed (sexual) partner, with the possibility of getting involved with someone that has a connection to the case; they must state over and over that they are more than capable of investigating the crime due to characters questioning their abilities because of their gender; the setting will influence the mood and feelings of the character in a scene; there can be a blurring of morality of certain actions in que quest for the truth and justice to get the culprit; the detectives face constant threats and physical danger; they investigate the cases by themselves, talking to all parts possibly involved in it or who knew the victim; they enjoy some habits such as drinking and smoking; fashion and outfit choices are mentioned and can be relevant to aid in the investigation, with the use of tennis shoes instead of high heels, for example, or knowing how to dress to manipulate an interview in their favor. The television series reiterates this and adds that a male superior or boss can be a candidate for a sexual or romantic involvement with the woman detective; the habits of drinking and smoking are constantly present on screen, sometimes escalating to a point of addiction; the crimes are going to be part of a larger issue due to the socio-economic or historical context; there is an almost constant confrontation with male superiors in the fight for their place or promotion, but this will lessen as the feminist movement continues to the point of post-feminist in media (MCROBBIE, 2004); the women detective can work with others, now in a precinct with other officers, but there will be one or

two officers who will be closer, yet not one considered a friend in the workplace; they work long hours, often taking cases home to continue working on them incessantly until the case is solved. Attesting the paradigmatic position of *Prime Suspect* and Mirren's portrayal, these characteristics can be seen later on both in series with women as main investigators or in an ensemble cast, such as *The X-Files* (Fox, 1993-2002, 2016-2018), *CSI* (CBS, 2000-2015), *Cold Case* (CBS, 2003-2010), *Veronica Mars* (2004-2007), *Bones* (Fox, 2005-2017), *Criminal Minds* (CBS, 2005-), *The Mentalist* (CBS, 2008-2015), *Elementary* (CBS, 2012-2019), *The Fall* (2013-2016), and even *Marvel's Jessica Jones* (Netflix, 2015-2019). With this, it is shown that narratological studies of a functionalist nature not only allow to illuminate characterization aspects but also lend themselves to narrative analysis in different media.

In the process of the analysis of the literary and audiovisual corpora, while looking at the narrative details closely, it was possible to see how the manipulation of exposition and certain information – which include focalization, descriptions, qualifications by the narrator and/or other characters, elaboration by the piling up of information one has gathered by the end of reading/watching – in each medium help construct a character. Of course, the sociocultural and historical context of production and reception are relevant to the analysis of a literary or television production, but we wanted to emphasize here how narratology can contribute to the study fields that permeate this dissertation, notedly that of literary (and character) and television studies. By identifying some underlying structures, especially ones that are common in texts from the same genre, we can build on these more concrete textual (or audiovisual) elements and complement the analysis with other theoretical frameworks that might be deemed necessary or relevant for the work. We hope to have filled the gap in research that takes into consideration almost every other aspect of the works and refuses to look at the narratological aspects. We also hope this dissertation has helped promote such analyses; in our research for the bibliographical review, narratological details are overlooked in favor of other types of analysis and while that is not a problem, we wanted to show how narratology can contribute to current literary and television research that focus on character studies.

ANNEX

Prime Suspect Episodes

SEASON	EPISODE	TITLE OF EPISODE	ORIGINAL AIRING DATE
1	1	Price to Pay: Part 1	April 7th, 1991
	2	Price to Pay: Part 2	April 8th, 1991
	Jane Tennison is assigned to the Southampton Row Police Station in London after being looked over in promotions and cases and after the senior investigating officer in a homicide investigation passes away. In her line of investigation, all clues point to George Marlow as the culprit of several murders that are connected to his wife. Even though Tennison and her team got a confession from the suspect, in his trial, he pleads not guilty.		
2	1	Operation Nadine: Part 1	December 15th, 1992
	2	Operation Nadine: Part 2	December 16th, 1992
	The second season's main case is investigated in a tense environment of racial issues in an Afro-Carribean community. The remains of a teenager, a girl, are found in the backyard of a building that was previously occupied by the main suspect in the case, David Harvey. New clues arrive and the case takes a turn when Jason Reynolds is connected to the victim and the previous suspect. Even after a successful closure, Tennison is yet again overlooked for a promotion.		
3	1	Keeper of Souls: Part 1	December 19th, 1993
	2	Keeper of Souls: Part 2	December 20th, 1993
	Starting in a new department, Metro Vice, Tennison works with DS Otley to investigate a murder that she believes is connected to the operation of cleaning the streets of the area of rent boys. Once more she is hindered from investigating the case properly and with freedom, being warned to drop the investigation, especially when her team makes the connection to a pedophile ring that has links to a high-ranking officer of the Metropolitan Police.		
4	1	The Lost Child	April 30th, 1995
	The first episode of the season portrays now Detective Superintendent Jane Tennison dealing with a case involving a missing baby while coping with her own recent abortion. The main suspect in the case is a former child molester who lives in the area of the kidnapping – then discovered murder – but the case		

	turns out to be more complicated as the truth is unveiled and the child's own mother confesses to the crime.		
	2	Inner Circles	May 7th, 1995
	In this episode, Tennison investigates a murder in another jurisdiction. The death of the victim, the manager of a country club, is at first suspected to just be related to sex, but a deeper investigation connects the crime to a political scandal within the local government.		
	3	The Scent of Darkness	May 15th, 1995
	At the closing of the season, George Marlow's case is reopened after a series of murders take place that are too similar to those investigated in the first season. While the detectives in the precinct investigate the case, Tennison is removed from the case for vehemently objecting to the investigation due to her belief in Marlow's guilt.		
5	1	Errors of Judgement: Part 1	October 20th, 1996
	2	Errors of Judgement: Part 2	October 21st, 1996
	Tennison is transferred to Manchester, and there, her team investigates the death of a drug dealer in a community dominated by gangs. The main suspect, a gang leader that is known as "The Street", seems to always be aware of the investigation and knows the next steps. In her attempt at proving "The Street" is guilty, she uncovers the truth that her boss is a mole and has been feeding information to the gang leader.		
6	1	The Last Witness: Part 1	November 9th, 2003
	2	The Last Witness: Part 2	November 10th, 2003
	At an older stage in her career and life, Tennison is handling several cases at once with her team, yet she decides to take the position of lead investigator of a Bosnian refugee murder. As she investigates, her team uncovers a connection with crimes in the Yugoslav Wars and goes to the extreme of visiting Bosnia, even though she was warned not to do so. She reconnects with an old flame while in the investigation even after being suspended.		
7	1	The Final Act: Part 1	October 15th, 2006
	2	The Final Act: Part 2	October 22nd, 2006
	The final season portrays Tennison's descent into alcoholism while investigating her last case before she is forced to retire. The team investigates		

	the disappearance of a teenage girl which soon turns into a murder case. While dealing with the investigation and uncovering that the girl was pregnant, Tennison must also deal with the death of an acquaintance and, shortly after, her father's death.

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