Global Crime, Forensic Detective Fiction, and the Continuum of Containment

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Forensic novels seem to be at odds with the bulk of contemporary Western detective fiction. The former, which apply forensic techniques to criminal investigations, ostensibly carry on detective fiction's generic directive to find solutions and thereby reassure readers. The latter is undergoing a renaissance due, at least in part, to the twinned influences of globalization and literary postmodernism. These forces trouble detective fiction's mandate to solve crimes, bring criminals to justice, and assure readers of their stability. However, the degree to which forensic novels align with and deviate from Western detective fiction's current trajectory reveals how a particular genre uses one particular element, the clue, to adapt itself to the challenges of globalization.[1]

In his seminal essay "The Slaughterhouse of Literature," Franco Moretti tracks the invention of the clue and its evolution into a central component of detective fiction. In explaining why "the majority of books disappear forever" (207), Moretti suggests that the genre's ever-adapting treatment of clues in the nineteenth century represents the literary marketplace selecting the formal traits it prefers (211). So, too, does forensic detective fiction's recent massive popularity emphasize its readership's fascination with its dominant formal feature: the interpretation of forensic evidence. Forensic detective fiction presumably works to reinstantiate detective fiction's traditional function of reassurance and containment in the face of destabilizing elements such as postmodernism and globalization.[2] The subgenre's *modus operandi* appears to be delimiting the field of potential solutions through ever-more-minute investigative techniques, ruling all extraneous potential impossible as the only true solution emerges thanks to the wonders of forensic science. As Moretti makes clear, though, clues do not function uniformly throughout detective fiction, even in a subgenre with an almost hyperbolic relationship to the clue. Three current American authors,

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Patricia Cornwell, Jeffery Deaver, and Kathy Reichs, write forensic detective novels that respond to global crime by aligning their treatment of clues along a continuum of threat containment. Cornwell's novels take up the genre's traditional project vigorously, using forensics as a technique to refute the uncertainties of globalizing forces, while Reichs establishes forensics as a tool that often raises questions without answering them and permits a multiplicity of meanings. Deaver falls in between the two, acknowledging the limits of technology to interpret data while expressing hope that forensics can provide some measure of security. Together, these authors allow for an examination of the degree to which forensic detective fiction reacts to the forces of globalization that affect the genre at large as they attempt to mediate the new challenges of twenty-first-century global crime. The forensics laboratory in these texts provides a space for investigation not only of evidence but of the status of evidence in a global context.

The notion of global crime is a relatively new one for detective fiction,[3] which until the late 1970s portrayed crime as something to be solved and ultimately attributed to an individual. Moretti reinforces this point in *Signs Taken for Wonders* when he argues that "innocence is conformity; individuality, guilt" (135). For Moretti, detectives function because crimes are ultimately unique and traceable to distinct individuals. Economic globalization, however, brought changes such as the decentralization of authority and an attendant lack of responsibility for actions and crimes. International corporations fall under the jurisdiction of no one government, and as such can rarely be prosecuted for far-reaching crimes. Criminal actions have escalated in scale and scope, to have a global reach that moves authors to view national identity as affected by forces outside the nation. Detective fiction demonstrates to its readers that they can grapple with the new landscape of global crime by altering the way crimes function in fiction and establishing the new criminality as the problematic the detective investigates.

Due to the expanding reach of global transgressions, Moretti worries about a "featureless, deindividualized crime that anyone could have committed because at this point everyone is the same" (*Signs* 135), but globalization instead presents crimes that are deindividualized not because of uniformity but because, strictly speaking, corporate crimes require multiple criminal entities and cannot be committed by individuals. Globalization transcends national and geopolitical boundaries, and global crimes elude solution because of the inability to effectively allocate responsibility in crimes of a global scope. In this new landscape, detectives may not be able to locate the entity or entities responsible for crimes, leaving no single individual accountable and rendering justice, or the very concept of a solution to a crime, impossible.

For many readers, forensic detective fiction differs from its precursors in the hardboiled, cozy, or procedural styles because, as Kerstin Bergman points out, "the underlying assumption is […] that the truth concerning what happened can be revealed" with total certainty since "science is the key to finding the truth" (89). Cornwell, Deaver, and Reichs all follow this formulation to a point, as each demon-

strates that, alongside technological advances, the detective is a necessary figure for interpreting the data technology produces. Yet while some forensic novels, such as Cornwell's, cling to the notion of scientific certainty[4] and, by extension, promise that forensic examination provides stability in an unstable world, novelists such as Reichs and Deaver respond to the postmodern crisis of facticity by resisting the notion that even the most sterling forensic markers definitively yield answers, thus broadening, rather than foreclosing, the range of possible solutions. Forensic evidence for Deaver and Reichs produces, not a single truth, but an unstable, postmodern multiplicity of meanings which cannot in and of itself lead to stability and reassurance; the detective plays the essential role in parsing and packaging one version of the truth based on one version of the facts. Across the work of these three novelists, forensic clues may or may not lead to global crime's containment.

Patricia Cornwell: "Laid Bare before Us"

Cornwell mitigates the uncertainties of globalization by reasserting the primacy of the body as a knowable object. In so doing, she turns body into data, clue into fact, and thereby posits data as reliable means of containing contemporary crimes. This interpretive strategy obviates any indeterminacy, contingency, or questioning that postmodernism and globalization might imply. As Katherine and Lee Horsley put it, Cornwell's use of the body "produc[es] the text's sense of obsessive and intimate contact with the unspeakable 'real'" (9). When she reifies the body as a dependable, definitive resource, Cornwell allows it to bring a measure of security and stability to even the most heinous acts. As a medical examiner charged with autopsy duties, Cornwell's detective Kay Scarpetta takes bodies as her primary site of investigation, and Cornwell foregrounds the importance of the body in her formulation with some of her titles, as in *The Body Farm* and, more tellingly, *Body of Evidence*. For Scarpetta, the body equals evidence and evidence equals fact; no matter how much she may dissect or fragment the body, it remains secure, always physical and always evidentiary, a counter to the uncertain identities globalization produces. Joy Palmer notes that "Cornwell's novels are among those narratives that point to an escalating and spiraling cultural fascination and growing anxiety over the truth-status of the anatomical, traceable, and irreducibly material body" (54). Cornwell combats these anxieties precisely by maintaining that the body remains a fixed, ever-useful, ever-truthful tool.

For instance, Cornwell's fifth novel *The Body Farm* trades on the conceit that the function of studying dead bodies is "to help the living" by learning more about "time of death" (317) and the effects of various environmental conditions on human corpses. While Peter Messent believes that the "prevalence of mutilation, desiccation, decay, and earth in Cornwell" point to the "symbolically disturbing core of her fictions" (133), her use of facilities like the Body Farm demonstrates her reassuring use of laboratory science to alleviate social anxiety over the state of the contemporary

body. Any crime committed against a body, in her formulation, necessarily leaves its trace on that body. This bedrock principle—that, with the right amount of research and a precise attention to detail, the body will present the solution to that crime—undergirds Cornwell's Scarpetta novels.

The Body Farm establishes the body as a site of legible evidence as a result of the traces the outside world inevitably left on a young girl's corpse. In order to determine the source of an unfamiliar mark on the girl's body, Scarpetta instructs the technicians at the Body Farm to place a corpse on top of a variety of objects to see what telltale marks they leave behind. At the conclusion of the experiment Scarpetta says, "The pattern left by an iron drain was easy to recognize […] the marks left by coins fascinated us the most, especially one left by a quarter. Upon close scrutiny, I could barely make out the partial outline of an eagle left on the man's skin" (325). Scarpetta's "close scrutiny" allows her to confirm that these markings match those found on the murdered girl, indicating, after a few twists and turns, that the girl's mother murdered her. The truth may be gruesome, but it is conclusive, and the body in Cornwell does not fail to reveal it. Beth Head believes that "given the excess of dismembered bodies and necrophilic officials in Cornwell's forensic fiction, 'identity, system and order' become unrecognizable, as all forms of normality are persistently destabilized" (41), but in fact the reverse is true: Cornwell includes corpses, however gratuitously, to restabilize identity, system, order, and normality because bodies consistently yield truth. Cornwell utilizes the body to establish it as a site of truth but also to push back against the postmodern sensibility of "normality" as a concept "persistently destabilized" by a contemporary world. Cornwell's bodies reinstantiate the normality that postmodernism uproots.

Cornwell uses the genre's hallmark, technologies of forensic detection, to render bodies ever-more-knowable.[5] *Port Mortuary* features a range of technologies suggesting a menacingly technologized global future, from corpse-retrieving war robots to miniscule surveillance flybots, but Scarpetta's control over technology assuages these fears. In this novel, Scarpetta's primary investigation comes with the assistance of a CT machine rather than a scalpel. Using her voice to direct the device, Scarpetta commands, "'Auto and smart MT, noise index eighteen. Point-five segment rotation, point-six-two-five detector configuration […] Very thin slice ultra-high resolution. Ten-millimeter collimation'" (162). Instead of using her own hands in autopsy, Scarpetta can instruct machines to provide her with "ultra-high resolution" images of the body. Investigating the body via machines, or as Palmer calls them, "the specular instruments of scientific detection," leads to the result that "the body's evidentiary […] status" becomes "increasingly fetishized" (55). The deeper the investigative tools allow the detective to delve into the body, the more it seems finite and fully discoverable. With the help of computer imaging, "Bones are as vivid as if they are laid bare before us, and organs and other internal structures […] begin to rotate slowly in three-dimensions on the video display. […] We enter the body through the tiny buttonhole wound, traveling with a virtual camera as if we are in a microscopic

spaceship slowly flying through murky grayish clouds of tissue" (*Port Mortuary* 165).[6] Scarpetta reasserts the need for an expert, authoritarian gaze because viewing the body as if in "a microscopic spaceship" demonstrates that the more minutely science can view a body, the more material, containable, and discernable its secrets become. Scarpetta's faith in the science of the body allows no room for doubt. Messent argues that if postmodernism leads to fragmented subjects, then autopsies place the bodies in Cornwell's text in danger of losing all meaning (133), and a fragmented body, or even a whole one, would seem to take on this risk in tandem with the possibility of being read multiple ways, especially as it is studied. Scarpetta treats her subjects, though, as if the more fragmented a body becomes, the more facilely it can be definitively examined. Counter to postmodern anxieties about representation, Cornwell's novels treat bodies with what Misejewski call an "insistence on coherent identity" (12). For Cornwell, the body remains ever legible, and technology renders it ever more so.

Cornwell carries her perspective of the efficacy of technology in crime solving over from individual crimes to global acts of violence. In *Scarpetta*, she praises New York City's response to terrorism, writing that "after Nine-Eleven, the city decided to build […] a fifteen-story DNA building that looked like a blue-glass office high-rise. Technology […] was so advanced, scientists could analyze a sample as small as seventeen human cells" (86). Cornwell's lauding of the advanced technology and the structure itself indicates a post-9/11 containment strategy that combats global terrorism by spending money on high-tech laboratories. As with technology's application to the body, Cornwell's strategy in dealing with crimes as broad as terrorism is to break them down into the smallest, most discrete components possible. In *Port Mortuary*, Scarpetta muses, "bioterrorism. Chemical terrorism. Domestic terrorism. Industrial terrorism. Nanoterrorism. Technoterrorism. Everything is terrorism if I stop to think about it" (380). For Cornwell, nanoterrorism is the operative term, which is to say that all criminal acts can be broken down to the microscopic level, resulting in crimes with clearly identifiable (and hence punishable) perpetrators. Ironically, though Scarpetta's techniques for transforming bodies into data revolve around dissection, fragmentation, and breaking down, Cornwell rarely represents criminals as anything other than whole, centred, and individualized.

Indeed, though while Gerard Collins contends that "the killers of these novels are largely unseen and unknown" (166), virtually every novel Cornwell writes features an individuated perpetrator or perpetrators whom she eventually brings to justice.[7] Cornwell confronts this conception of crime head-on in *Predator*, featuring a study of serial killers' brains to search for physical differentiations from healthy brains. Underlying this study is Cornwell's insistence that every piece of information about a body must be materially represented somewhere in that body. As Messent incisively notes, "to consign crime to the world of pure evil and individual moral monstrosity […] is to explain it as a psychopathic and freakish exception" (131); in proffering this explanation, Cornwell makes evil a medical, and therefore a knowable and contain-

able, condition. In listing terror organizations in *Port Mortuary*, Scarpetta highlights not shadowy networks but rather entities that can be examined on the "nano" level. Global crime becomes simply another question of analyzing evidence. In thinking about forensic detective novelists as situated on a spectrum of containment strategies, Cornwell is on the concrete end of the spectrum, characterized by a firm belief in the detective's ability to use the body as a site to contain global crime and quash uncertainty.

Jeffery Deaver: "Data Have No Borders"

The novels of Jeffery Deaver, another popular forensic author, employ many of the same stylistic and plot features as Cornwell's, but use data to emphasize the need for interpretation rather than to instantiate the body as a site of truth. In so doing, Deaver aligns his work more closely with postmodern questions than does Cornwell, while at the same time retaining forensics as a tool for successfully combatting global crime. Tom Nolan points out that Deaver is richly connected to the traditions of mystery writing (38), and in making his protagonist Lincoln Rhyme a quadriplegic, Deaver hearkens back to the ratiocinative model of detection popularized by Poe and Conan Doyle and made most explicit in Rex Stout's character Nero Wolfe.[8] In Deaver's work, as bodies interact with the world, they imprint themselves upon it through impressions, leavings, and displacements. Forensic technologies interact with these traces, transforming them into the data which lead back to bodies. Unlike in Cornwell's work, in Deaver's fiction the data generated by bodies do not indicate a definitive truth, but rather take the shape of an interpretive matrix. Further, Deaver takes principles of physical crime and applies them to the kinds of digital crime fostered by globalization, assaying the level to which forensics can contain global crime.

The ways in which detectives analyze evidence provide Deaver with a platform from which to lobby for the detective's importance in a world of crime run amok. In these novels, the postmodern multiplicity of meanings presented by forensic evidence cannot in and of itself lead to stability and reassurance; just as for Cornwell the body serves as guarantor, in Deaver's work the detective reassures readers by parsing and packaging his version of the truth based on his version of the facts. Deaver's novels do portray a reassuring version of New York City vulnerable to terrorism and yet saved time and again thanks to forensics, but it is the detective's ability to adapt to and interpret crime that permits this representation of stability. For Deaver, the novel's individual plot points demonstrate a level of uncertainty, but the clue's form provides solidity and containment.

Deaver's detective Rhyme focuses on the minutest details, as does Scarpetta, but he interprets them far more widely. This focus on detail is not new; forensics in detective fiction as portrayed from Sherlock Holmes on centres on the minute and the trace. Holmes and Rhyme share a particular affinity, though, for that mass assem-

blage of the small, the database. Holmes has a monograph on 140 different types of tobacco ash; Rhyme's own tobacco database provides a crucial key in *The Burning Wire*, leading to the discovery that the sought criminal was an obsessive-compulsive hoarder who must live in a certain type of house. Indeed, Rhyme's notoriety comes from his own obsessive collecting of the minutest residues from all over the country to assemble into databases. For Rhyme, dust, "solid particles less than five hundred micrometers in size and made up of fibers from clothing and upholstery, dander from human and animal skin, fragments of plants and insects, bits of dried excrement, dirt, and any number of chemicals" (238), coats the city and can be, in the aggregate, among the most valuable form of data, but only when properly interpreted. When assistant Lon Sellitto wants to use traces of World Trade Center dust to pinpoint the perpetrator's location to downtown Manhattan, Rhyme reminds him that the dust in fact covers the five boroughs: a lesson in the value of the detective, but also a stark reminder of the new fear of terrorism that blankets the city, literally in this instance, post-September 11. Andrew Jakubowicz and Helen Meekosha argue that Deaver uses Rhyme's disability as "a device to distinguish Rhyme from the mass of other detectives" (2), but his wheelchair-bound condition also forces Rhyme to contemplate data from every angle; since he cannot visit the crime scenes himself, he must restrict himself to evidence. As a result of the uncertainties fostered by globalization, Deaver's texts demonstrate, the detective's most crucial role is to look beyond what a given data set says on the surface and to explore its multiple meanings. The eighth novel in the Lincoln Rhyme series explores this tenet through the direct application of Rhyme's skills to an immeasurably vast collection of data.

Deaver's *The Broken Window* focuses on data mining, the Orwellian process of compiling information about any given person's commercial, financial, educational, professional, governmental, and legal affiliations in order to analyze and market that information. This procedure turns a person's personal details into a commodity to be sold on the global market. Rhyme and his team discover that a data miner has framed multiple people for murder by mining a wealth of information about both victim and patsy, and then planting evidence to support his misdirected theory of the crime. Deaver uses murder as a way to push the concept of data mining to one of its logical extremes, but also to lay bare the myriad threats (and, potentially, beneficences) that the new level of information available makes possible, making a case for the utility of the detective in an age in which any and all information is for sale.

Deaver spends a fair portion of the novel explaining what constitutes data mining and how it functions in order to illustrate how much of a threat this new kind of global crime poses. As early into the century as 2008, Rhyme's nurse Thom declares "it's *the* business of the twenty-first century" (175) because it is not only comprehensive but also predictive. In addition to the readily available information about a person's lifestyle that data miners cobble together from the Internet, radio frequency identification chips, or RFIDs, present in ID and credit cards can be used to track a person's movements and habits (166). This technology allows data miners to "predict

what consumers are *going* to do and guide […] clients to take advantage of that," such that data miners are "not just predicting the future" but actively "trying to change it" (227) to the advantage of their clients. The technology illustrates the kind of possibilities created by globalization, with data mining engendering both massive invasions of privacy and worldwide commercial possibilities.[9] Naturally, it is nearly impossible to police and requires a great deal of skill to correctly interpret.

As a consequence of this monitoring practice, Deaver posits, corporations can assemble a dossier or "closet" on every person over the age of five living in the United States, containing information about consumer, travel, medical, educational, professional, credit, legal, and criminal histories. This list appears frighteningly comprehensive, but Rhyme discovers that this sample of dossier contents does not tell the whole story: companies can prepare dossiers that include minute-by-minute whereabouts of any given person, both physical and online. Thus the table of contents alone for one dossier covers thirteen pages in the novel. This volume of information points to two truisms for Deaver's work: a given data set can paint many pictures, and the detective is increasingly necessary as analyst rather than clue-gatherer.

The comprehensive, growing list of bullet-pointed facts that Rhyme assembles for every case, a stylistic hallmark of Deaver's novels, insists on the importance of hard evidence to the detective. Increasingly, though, the texts value both physical and electronic evidence, exploring the play between the two. In many respects, both types of evidence compete for primacy in the forensics lab and within Lincoln Rhyme's universe. DNA, the treasure trove contained within an errant hair or drop of blood—which ultimately leads to Rhyme apprehending his Moriarty, Richard Logan, in *The Burning Wire*—boils down to, "after all, nothing more than a database of our bodies and genetic history, stretching back millennia. If you could plug that into hard drives, how much data could you extract?" (*Broken Window* 409). The relationship between the physical and the abstract that DNA represents takes a sharply postmodern turn with the introduction of metadata, data about data, which structures the interpretation of a given fact. A given piece of physical evidence, such a fingerprint, is less important than the data it represents, and likewise a piece of electronic information becomes less crucial than its metadata, such as information about by whom it was created and when (207). The wheels-within-wheels nature of data in Deaver's novels points toward the kind of ontological questions forensic investigation can pose and the necessity of the detective in parsing them.

Like Cornwell, Deaver tends to focus on a single and often maniacal criminal perpetrator, but he broadens his characters by endowing villains with a strong understanding of their crimes' vast scope. Wagner points out that Deaver harbours a fondness for writing supervillains (23), and the criminals in *The Bone Collector*, *The Cold Moon*, *The Coffin Dancer*, and *The Burning Wire* certainly bear out this claim, yet Deaver's criminals are aware of the potential for broader havoc in their crimes rather than simply committing them for reasons of personal malice. The criminal in *The Broken Window* views data similarly to Rhyme in that while the physical objects

may disappear, the data they generate are permanent. He ponders:

> there is eternal existence completely independent of those bags of skin and organs we cart around temporarily. I have proof: Just look at the trove of data about your life, built up from the moment you're born. It's all permanent, stored in a thousand places, copied, backed up, invisible and indestructible. After the body goes, as all bodies must, the data survive forever. And if that's not the definition of an immortal soul, I don't know what is. (187)

In the new technological universe, a remnant of a physical body or an action vanishes almost instantaneously, but its data imprint lasts forever. With the right combination of information, a person in the know can make anything happen. Unlike the bounded and the physical, digital data can travel anywhere and reveal anything. When data are involved, "Politics, nationality, religion, and race mean nothing […] Data have no borders. The seat of power in the twenty-first century is information, not oil or geography" (274). The power of data to expose the imaginary nature of borders renders it an unstoppable force. Much of the novel seems designed to answer the question of what the worst possible outcome of manipulating data for one's own purposes could be. In addition to murdering over a dozen people, the killer also ruins a man's life by accruing hundreds of thousands of dollars in credit card debt in his name for the sheer fun of it. The victim moans, "If somebody wants to destroy your life, there's nothing you can do about it. People believe what computers tell us. If they say you owe money, you owe money […]. We believe the *data*; we don't care about the truth" (136). The stark contrast between the truth and the data that ostensibly represent it underscores the potentially disastrous, yet inescapable, overreliance on data in the current technoverse. Deaver demonstrates that because of data's ability to indicate virtually anything depending on how it is manipulated,[10] facts inhabit multiple meanings simultaneously even in seemingly concrete forensics.

At the same time, data's chimerical nature marks it as a tool for protection just as much as for destruction, which is the containment mechanism which Deaver uses to conclude the novel. Despite its hazards, Deaver believes that ultimately data can be used to largely contain global crime. While he acknowledges the dystopian elements of the information age, writing, "'Welcome to the brave new world'" (582), in due course Deaver offers a safer alternative to its abuse via the detective's involvement in interpreting the data. Ellen Burton Harrington argues that shows such as CSI condense "the scientific process into […] a fantasy of perfect accuracy […] offering a fantasy of the gritty urban metropolis under control and effectively propagating the vision of America as a place that can be resecured" (374). Certainly, one could level this charge at Deaver's novels, which inevitably end with Manhattan delivered from yet another threat—with the day always saved, Deaver certainly uses the formal structure of the novel as a containment device. Two key differences emerge from Harrington's formulation, however: Deaver does not indulge in "the fantasy of perfect accuracy" stemming from forensic data and, more crucially, he demonstrates that the securing of a nation requires the intervention of the detective, rather than

the power of the data.

With so much data so available to so many, ironically only a detective who recognizes the fallibility of facts can use the tools of forensic investigation as effective sources of containment, a lesson which manifests itself in *The Broken Window*. A police officer believes that sophisticated tracking software may be "the future of police work" (533), but the computer has incorrectly traced a person of interest based on RFID movement, and physical tailing methods succeed where technology fails. When Rhyme searches for his partner, he tries using the data mining software to predict her movement only to hear the useless message "*Sorry, no prediction can be made at this time*" (239), leaving him to deduce her location the old-fashioned way. As he later insists, though "'the computer helped [...] But it was mostly the evidence'" (557). In the information age, when anyone and everyone can cull information, a trained detective has the tools to make sense of it all, while those blinded by technology and deceptive data do not.

While Harrington argues that forensic shows cast the detective as "an unassailable representative of truth" (370), Deaver paints a detective who worships facts but knows their potential to mislead and therefore does not fear reading them from multiple angles, embracing data's postmodern nature of shifting and fragmented meanings. Although Deaver ties the story up in a tidy package, he does not do so to dismiss global threats with clues-turned-facts, but rather to make a case for the necessity of the detective in the information age. Manhattan is safe, but it will be threatened again, and detectives such as Rhyme will be needed as hitherto-unimagined threats emerge, including, crucially, the threat of an overreliance on data. Deaver offers readers reassurance by painting an optimistic picture of the degree to which crime can be contained. While he gives a complex long view of various types of global crime, he demonstrates the way in which science can be brought to bear without insisting on one ironclad interpretation or rendering the detective obsolete. In this way, he exists in the middle of a continuum of containment between Cornwell's valourization of facticity and fully-solved crimes and Reichs's embracing of uncertainty and rejection of definitive endings in her novels.

Kathy Reichs: "Always Questions, Never Answers"

Of these three forensic novelists, Kathy Reichs takes the least concrete perspective on containing the threats posed by global crime. Despite having a similar template to that of Cornwell—and, indeed, frequently being dismissed as a Cornwell knockoff[11]—Reichs differentiates herself through her focus not only on the uncertainty presented by forensic data, but also on the possibility of curtailing global crime. Where Cornwell uses the tools of forensic investigation to delimit the scope of the body, Reichs uses her detective, Temperance Brennan, to demonstrate how scientific investigation ultimately leads to more questions than answers and a multiplicity of solutions. Further,

through her focus on globalization and global crime, Reichs eschews the formulaic style of serial detective novels as a control device, choosing to embrace open endings rather than using the novel's form for containment.

Reichs, unlike Deaver and Cornwell, tends to focus more on the crime than the criminal, especially in her more current work. Oline Cogdill notes that Reichs refrains from returning to the well of the serial killer that she presented in her first novel, *Déjà Dead* (38), and her subsequent novels focus on a range of crimes worldwide. In particular, *Bare Bones*, which looks at the smuggling of exotic animals from the East to the West and vice versa, and *Break No Bones*, which examines international human organ trafficking, provide examples of the kinds of crime enabled by globalization. Although Brennan finds the criminals associated with the individual instances of these crimes, neither novel suggests that these two types of trafficking are contained by her efforts; she acknowledges that these crimes continue on a much larger, uncontainable scale. These crimes are committed not by maniacs but rather by savvy individuals who recognize the vast potential for profit that globalization enables. Reichs does not hesitate to dispatch her forensic anthropologist Brennan on cases which, at least on the surface, frequently have little to do with forensic science, further questioning the discipline's broad applicability.

Indeed, forensic techniques frequently bear the brunt of Reichs's scrutiny. In Brennan's particular area of expertise, forensic osteology, Reichs does not allege a 1:1 ratio between her evidence and facts. Though a recent title, *Bones Never Lie*, belies this tendency, Jun-nan Chou suggests that bones for Reichs have multiple, often contradictory, registers of significance, underscoring their "paradoxical nature as the object of forensic investigation" (150). Where Cornwell's Scarpetta draws credibility from her analytical techniques and objects, Reichs's Brennan works to subvert even DNA analysis, that most trusted of contemporary forensic techniques. Carme Farré-Vidal alleges that the investigative procedures in Reichs's work "are imbued with the undeniable truth of forensic science" (47), but in fact Reichs does not hesitate to expose the myths that undergird the popular conceptions of her field. Though she does not go so far as to allege that the public's trust in DNA evidence is utterly misplaced, in her novels such evidence often raises more questions than it answers. In her novel *Break No Bones*, Reichs has Brennan rail against the public perception of DNA and its usefulness:

> Thanks to some less than meticulously researched TV crime shows, the public now views DNA as the shining Excalibur of modern justice. Hollywood has spawned the myth that the double helix solves all riddles, unlocks all doors, rights all wrongs. Got bones? No problem. Extract and let the little molecule do its magic. Unfortunately, it doesn't work that way. (36)

Reichs's indictment of forensic shows is tongue-in-cheek, given that her Temperance Brennan novels inspired the popular television series *Bones*, but her novels take care to highlight the myriad ways in which DNA is not "magic" and frequently deepens riddles, bars doors, and compounds wrongs, temporarily or in perpetuity.

Reichs examines the potential unreliability of using "the shining Excalibur" of DNA for identification in her novel *Spider Bones*, which investigates what happens when physical bodies cross borders and troubles the notion of forensic evidence providing concrete solutions. In the novel, Reichs interrogates the reliability of the body as evidence, reversing Cornwell's formulation. In forensic science, tension exists between different disciplines such as science and law and even between different loci—thanks to Sherlock Holmes and, perhaps, to an even greater degree, his offshoot John Thorndyke, a medical doctor-turned-forensic investigator, the crime scene itself rather than the body became the primary site of interest for crime solvers. Novelists such as Cornwell and Reichs who scour the body to gather information about the crime scene, instead of vice versa, work in a sense to reestablish the body's primacy as a forensic site. Yet Reichs writes scenarios—by her own accounts, based on her actual cases—that frequently show the tenuousness of the body's evidence, from fingerprints all the way to the often-thought-infallible DNA. As *Spider Bones* demonstrates, forensic answers do not exist definitively enough to extricate detective fiction from the problem posed it by globalization and recognized most clearly by postmodernism, that of the lack of solution to the global crime. Reichs reveals that forensic analysis, while extremely valuable, often raises more questions than it answers.

Spider Bones trades on the fact that identity can still be obscured even in the age of forensic techniques. The novel's first body, that found floating in the Canadian lake, has the fingerprints of John Lowery, reportedly dead in Vietnam and interred in North Carolina. The investigative team's first thought is that the fingerprint identification must be inaccurate, despite its being a "'Thirteen-point match?' My tone conveyed the skepticism I felt. 'Remember that lawyer in Oregon?' Brandon Mayfield. The FBI linked him to the Madrid train bombing based on fingerprint evidence. Turned out the match was erroneous'" (9). Though the prints do belong to Lowery, Reichs, like Deaver, introduces the fallibility of forensic data from the outset and illustrates the dangerous consequences of investigative overreliance on what seem like hard facts, such as accusing an innocent man of terrorism. Fingerprinting, long thought the most reliably individuating forensic technique, here starts out in question and remains a source of uncertainty throughout the novel; the entire case unfolds because in large part someone refuses to accept the data the fingerprints supply, first Brennan and then Lowery's father. Ronald Thomas points out that fingerprinting in its early iterations "was not just the signature of a specific subject's body […] it was a map on which could be traced his origins" (208). To introduce the possibility of inaccuracy in the prints, not potentially forged prints found at a crime scene but fingerprints taken from the dead man's own hands, introduces an element of doubt about the identity and provenance of the subject but more crucially about forensic investigation in general. The fallibility of fingerprint evidence calls forensic detection into question and raises the possibility that, science or no, its techniques may not yield a definitive truth. In a bold gesture, Reichs applies this same manoeuvre to DNA, the contemporary gold standard of forensic investigation.

DNA evidence, which in courtrooms can be presented such that it looks infallible, so much so that other forensic disciplines such as ballistics and even fingerprints have attempted to reinvent themselves in its image, leads Brennan in the wrong direction in this case. Reichs's convoluted plot produces a result[12] that highlights the fallibility of DNA and the inherent danger of treating forensic data as irrefutable fact. DNA, an identifier that theoretically individuates each person from every human being, living or dead, and can definitively settle any question of mistaken identity, does not always follow strict rules and, in fact, can transgress even the borders of the body. The DNA of two different individuals can reside inside one person, as is the case here, and biological linkages such as paternity and maternity do not always appear in DNA. Ingrida Povidiša argues that in Reichs's novels, "ultimately, the body becomes an integral part of the scene of the crime, in which the course of the crime can be read" (13), but Reichs questions the legibility of the body's evidence here. In this instance, DNA fractures connections and distinctions rather than cementing them. Brennan's partner Ryan refers to DNA as a "genetic fingerprint" (88), a telling comment that suggests the standard to which DNA is held and its misleading fallibility simultaneously. The multiplicity of solutions available in postmodernism and the potential for global crimes to remain open becomes reinforced rather than refuted thanks to forensic data.

Reichs also ends the novel on a note of uncertainty, demonstrating how even a positive identification raises more questions than it settles. One of Reichs's stylistic hallmarks is a catalogue of questions, of which some are serious and some demonstrate a certain insouciance. In *Grave Secrets*, Brennan remarks that the state of things is "always questions, never answers" (270) and moans that "my head swam with questions" (288), and little wonder, as she has just rattled off a series of twenty interrogatories in sequence. In *Break No Bones*, Brennan pokes fun at herself and the immensity of things she cannot answer, pondering "Why two spellings for ketchup? Catsup? And where did that name come from, anyway?" (56) after she has posed a series of baffling forensic questions, and this trend continues into *Spider Bones*. Concluding that, thanks to the intervening years and Cumbo's original deceptions, she will "never know his full culpability" (298), Brennan poses no fewer than eighteen questions in the novel's final chapter, the one tasked with wrapping up the narrative's loose ends. Instead, Reichs asks rhetorical questions such as "So much deception. So many lies. Is this how we live our lives?" (299) and intimates that, despite Brennan's investigation, forensic science cannot definitively settle much after all, "so questions remained" (300).[13] In having her detective protagonist end the novel by continuing to ask questions, Reichs emphasizes the notion that, despite the mostly successful resolution of this particular crime, cases never truly close in her evaluation of contemporary crime. Povidiša claims that "the right to have truth revealed" acts as the driving force behind Brennan's investigations, but Reichs embraces the reality that forensics can guarantee neither truth nor justice, a perspective largely ignored by Deaver and Cornwell. As she has Brennan so simply state in *Grave Secrets*, "the

possibilities are endless. That's why the world needs detectives" (77). Thanks to her flexibility in interpreting data, her acknowledgement of how forensics raises more questions than it answers, and her portrayal of crimes based in globalization, Reichs charts a path for the genre's future iterations.

While the tropes of forensic detective fiction seem to place it at odds with both the version of crime presented by globalization and the current trend of postmodernist detection, American forensic detective novels' use of evidence position them on a continuum of containment, from presenting crime as solvable in Cornwell to suggesting the opposite in Reichs. Cornwell's novels demonstrate how a reliance on technology as a tool for reading absolute truth into the body can perpetuate the view that forensic novels work solely to reassure readers of stability in the face of a rapidly changing global landscape. The understanding of the ontological insecurity presented by interpretations of scientific technologies in Deaver's and Reichs's novels demonstrate a far less stable state of affairs that requires the analytical skills of the detective to mediate it. These novels demonstrate how the shifting status of the forensic clue allows for a reimagining of facticity and containment of crime in a global context.

Notes

1. Globalization has been defined as many, and frequently antithetical, things: a solely economic principle, a cultural touchstone, a hybrid cultural-economic force, a world-changing phenomenon, merely another name for ancient trade routes, the saviour of the global economy, the destroyer of the global economy, a vehicle for introducing national cultures to one another, a totalizing force that amalgamates and thereby destroys individual cultures, Americanization, a technological revolution, and a myth, to name a few. While it certainly originated in economic trade unions, treaties, and tariffs, globalization's influence has now indisputably spread to include issues of culture, technology, borders, and national politics. Though some critics argue that globalization has existed since the Silk Route and others believe it is a post-1970s phenomenon, it has traditionally been conceived of in three primary stages: as a facet of empire, as a method for bringing peace and prosperity to the globe, and as a means for procuring labour and capital. What is of primary importance here is not the essence of the term's differing conceptions, but rather the fact that these conceptions exist, that globalization's history has always been a slippery one, and that in essence, the term's meaning can be shifted to suit whatever meaning best serves those employing it at any given moment. Given its slick finish, then, when discussing globalization it is crucial not to attempt to make it more about any one factor than another—say, to argue that it functions first as a geopolitical force and only secondarily as an economic one—but rather to recognize that, whatever face is put on it, it is always a synthesis of interconnected processes that work in tandem and affect each other in a sort of feedback loop. Many critics agree that globalization's most current iteration began when, in the latter years of the twentieth century, corporate capitalism extended its practice beyond traditional national borders through treaties, trade pacts, laws, and international agreements. The impact of such broad commerce has led to a swath of far-reaching definitions of globalization, involving what Hay and Marsh identify as not only "capita (financial and industrial)" but also "labor, information, technology, [and] culture" (2) such that, as Paul Jay so succinctly puts it, "it is nearly impossible to figure out where economic globalization stops and cultural globalization begins" (80). Manfred Steger characterizes globalization as "a multidimensional set of social processes that create, multiply, stretch, and intensify worldwide social inderdependencies and exchanges while at the same time fostering in people a

growing sense of connection between the local and the distant," yet he also cautions that far from being unitary globalization is a "a complex set of often conflicting and contradictory social processes" (2). These definitions tend to lose sight of the fact that separating the factors of globalization from one another is not important, because they exert influence fully in combination. The point at which economic globalization ends and cultural globalization, technological globalization, and geopolitical globalization begin is rendered irrelevant by how completely the forces work in tandem. As the global detective novel demonstrates, whenever an economic decision is made on the global scale, its effects ripple through the spheres of culture, technology, and politics. Indeed, the very existence of novels grappling with globalization bespeaks the extent to which globalization has pervaded culture to become, as Fredric Jameson states, "universal and irreversible, with consequences for culture fully as much as for economics" (374). These pervasive ripples are what make global crime so difficult to contain and what make the detective the ideal mediatory figure. For these reasons, it is crucial to define globalization as a set of interlocking economic, cultural, geopolitical, and technological forces that function to create global communities.

2. Though literary postmodernism and globalization both have multiple and sometimes contradictory definitions, they share certain concerns, which much contemporary American detective fiction reflects: representational instability and ontological questioning. Michael Chabon's *The Yiddish Policemen's Union*, Jonathan Lethem's *Motherless Brooklyn*, and Thomas Pynchon's *Inherent Vice*, for example, each apply a postmodern sensibility as they question the concepts of definitive solution while responding to pressures of globalization. Hans Bertens alleges that the one consistent factor across the multiple iterations of literary postmodernism "is that of a crisis of representation: a deeply felt loss of faith in our ability to represent the real" (11). This lack of stability, which manifests itself frequently in detective fiction as a distrust of facts and solutions, is also mirrored in globalization's drive to simultaneously connect and fragment. Jameson cautions that "attempts to define globalization often seem little better than so many ideological appropriations," but also believes that its facets ultimately demonstrate "cohesion" ("Globalization" 49). Manfred Steger sees globalization as "a complex set of often conflicting and contradictory social processes […] that create, multiply, stretch, and intensify worldwide social interdependencies and exchanges" (2), and yet Hans Schattle points out that these processes that foster interconnectedness also manifest as "dual forces of integration and fragmentation" (12) occurring as globalization reshapes borders, nations, and governance. Globalization also mirrors what Brian McHale, borrowing from Roman Jakobson, calls the "ontological dominant" (10) of postmodernism through its persistent interrogation of the state of the world; as James Mittelman argues, globalization perpetuates a "fear of the inability to secure an order" which results in "ontological insecurity" (12). Put another way, globalization forces consideration of the kinds of questions postmodernism poses about the nature of the world and its comprehensibility. While the two terms have other concordances, as well as distinct differences, forensic detective fiction most frequently seems to challenge these two shared facets of instability and ontological inquiry.

3. Globalization's relationship to detective fiction is, albeit having relatively recently risen to prominence, becoming more widely recognized by crime fiction scholars, to the point that Louise Nilsson et al. refer to "the globalized and hybridized genre of crime fiction" (4) in their 2017 anthology *Crime Fiction as World Literature*.

4. As Melissa Littlefield puts it, "science—and the forensic sciences in particular—are typically associated with objectivity, truth, hard evidence, facts, and 'the real'" (135), distinguishing itself as postmodernism's antithesis but also, in a way, ostensibly opposed to the projects of literature more generally.

5. Though technology is usually portrayed in these texts as reliable and useful, occasionally Cornwell portrays technology as fallible in order to grant the body primacy. Certainly, technology on its own can fail, as Bergman notes (91), but when technology alone is used to interpret the body, the results can be particularly detrimental. In *The Body Farm*, as Linda Mizejewski points out, a faked fingerprint flummoxed "a biometric lock system, a system that supposedly cannot be fooled about bodily identity" (16), raising questions about the body as a site of truth. Scarpetta realizes that the print was stolen and fraudulently placed on the scanner, demonstrating that the body's truth was misinterpreted by a machine. Technology functions to render the body more discrete by transforming its

nuances into data, but it can botch the job, requiring the analytical skills of the detective to intervene and interpret the data correctly.

6. The explicit autopsy descriptions in Cornwell's novels, here evoking nothing so much as the science fiction film *Fantastic Voyage*, lead some critics to argue that she fetishizes the corpse, what Head calls a "deviant masculine desire" (42), and this argument holds, though not in the erotic sense of the word. Head claims that "as a female pathologist, Scarpetta […] combats the implied voyeuristic autopsy" (42), but as the above passage shows, Scarpetta insists on gazing on the body from a variety of angles. She views the body both inside and out, on an incredibly intimate—and, yes, voyeuristic—level, but she does so in the belief that she can know the sum of the body's secrets through the application of her scientific gaze. The body is indeed fetishized for Scarpetta, but scientifically, rather than sexually.

7. Cornwell's murderers' row, from Temple Gault to Denesa Steiner to the brothers Jean-Baptise Chandonne and Jay Talley to Dr. Phyllis Crowder to Basil Jenrette to Mike Morales and others, features killers who either have deeply personal motives for killing or are criminally insane, or both. Chandonne stands as perhaps the clearest example of Cornwell's view on criminality. The heir to a powerful French family with mob connections, Chandonne and his brother Talley have the means and the international know-how to perpetrate crimes on a global scale, yet they commit only crimes of insanity. Chandonne's demented nature is writ large on his body: he is covered with fine hair and is known as *le loup-garou*, or werewolf. In this way Cornwell's criminals resemble nothing so much as the orangutan from Poe's "Murder in the Rue Morgue." As Carme Farré-Vidal notes, even Scarpetta herself occasionally seems endowed with "supernatural traits" (53). Collins contends that Scarpetta "may find the 'who,' but never the cure" (160), but in the case of each of the killers listed above, the only potential cure would be for them not to have been wronged, or perceived themselves as wronged, and/or for them not to be afflicted with various debilitating psychoses.

8. Rhyme, like Wolfe, rarely leaves the confines of his Manhattan brownstone, instead relying on technology and staff to describe the outside world, and as Hank Wagner notes, Rhyme's romantic partner Amelia Sachs is an analogue for Wolfe's helpmeet Archie Goodwin (Nolan 21).

9. Martina Sciolino argues for DeLillo's *Cosmopolis* as world literature rather than American literature because it navigates "a moment when transnational corporatocracy threatens the differences that make such differences meaningful" (211). Certain of Deaver's and Reichs's novels might be understood in the same sense.

10. Perhaps the most dangerous aspect of data for Deaver is how easy it is to accidentally misuse, that is, how even the best attempts to use it for containment of crime can fail. When looking up potential suspects, a technician initially favours one corporate employee because he has a criminal record. On closer inspection, though, the tech had mistakenly inserted a hyphen into the man's name and returned a completely different virtual identity, one that looked far guiltier than the actual man. The ease with which such errors occur staggers Rhyme: "This was a sobering lesson about the nature of data, he reflected. They seemingly had found a suspect and even [an expert's] characterization of him suggested he might be the one—*He seems to be a loner*—yet the lead was completely wrong, due to the minuscule error of missing a single keystroke" (261). Because "we trust data, we don't trust the human eye […and because] data can be erased, can be massaged, can be skewed" (343), information becomes a weapon just as deadly as any hijacked plane or biothreat. Skilled interpreters of data, not just data itself, are required in the highly technologized age of globalization.

11. Farré-Vidal notes that Reichs's character Brennan resembles no one so much as Reichs herself, but readers of both Reichs and Cornwell cannot help but note the myriad resonances between the series' tough-as-nails female protagonists. Though their educations differ slightly (Scarpetta is a forensic pathologist with an MD and a JD, and Brennan is a forensic anthropologist with an MD), the two perform strikingly similar jobs, with each gathering evidence from crime scenes and corpses to relay to various government agencies. On the personal front, each is in her mid-forties, divorced, Southern, romantically involved with a colleague, and in charge of a younger female ward. These multiple similarities between characters make it all the more unusual that the two authors should take such

divergent positions on the role of forensic evidence in containing crime.

12. John Lowery's father refuses to believe that the body disinterred from Lowery's grave does not belong to his son, and so Brennan turns to a DNA sample. She obtains a sample of Lowery's mother's DNA and compares it to the body she believes to be Lowery's, only to find that the DNA does not match. From this she concludes that the body in the lake cannot have been Lowery. Through an extraordinary series of events and mistaken identities which underscores the difficulty of countering what DNA evidence seems to establish as fact, Brennan identifies Lowery's mother as a chimera, a person with two distinct cell lines in her body. Thanks to this discovery, Brennan ultimately concludes that the corpse is indeed Lowery's, even though his mother's DNA does not match the body's.

13. Alistair Rolls and Jesper Gulddal note that in traditional detective fiction, "the authorial power wielded, quasi-vicariously, by the detective is absolute" (155); here, Reichs foregrounds her detective undermining and second-guessing her own conclusions.

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