

2006 Holiday Gift Buying Guide

We asked some friends of Crimespree to give us some gift giving ideas. We didn't specify if these were to give or to get, but we think they are all great ideas for shopping. Here's what we got in response.

Reed's Holiday Wish List Recommendations:

A Maltese Falcon replica. *Otto Penzler sells them at the Mysterious Book Shop in Manhattan and they're really really cool. By the way, I don't have one!*

For the Anglophile at home: a DVD collection of The Prisoner, The Avengers, Dr. Who (with Tom Baker), or Inspector Morse.

A DVD of Olivier's Shakespeare to be played in tandem with DVDs of Deadwood. *Shakespeare is not dead! See if you don't agree.*

Berlin Noir by Phillip Kerr, The Long Firm by Jake Arnott and Train by Pete Dexter. *The three books I recommend to everyone.*

A bottle of Marietta Hills Zinfandel, 2003.

Ayo Onatade:

Granta 2007 Classic Crime Diary – *2007 diary that has original classic, modern crime fiction and pulp covers. Also has snippets of interesting crime fiction trivia. The coolest 2007 diary around!*

Fear of the Dark by Walter Mosley – *The return of Walter Mosley in an excellent tale of family revenge. Smooth writing, excellent story and one does not ignore Walter Mosley's books.*

The Wire – 3rd Series - *The Wire is undoubtedly the best TV around these days since "Homicide: Life on the Street. A must for anyone's collection.*

Cheapskate by Charlie Stella - *I am not sure why it took me so long to start reading his books. They rock!*

Crime Wave by Howard Hughes - *An informative and entertaining guide to the crime movie phenomenon. A book for any crime movie buff to wallow in.*

Greatest Hits: Original Stories of Hit Men, Hired Guns and PI's- Robert Randisi - *Who wouldn't want to read stories about hired guns, hit men and private investigators from some of the best authors around. A good reason to indulge my love of anthologies.*

Kidnapped by Jan Burke – *The opportunity to read about Irene Kelly and her husband Frank Harrison is always a good reason to hibernate.*

Mr Moto Collection Volume 1 - *Classic Peter Lorre playing a wonderful detective based on the books of JP Marquand. A wonderful addition to anyone's collection of classic crime fiction.*

Born in Death by J D Robb - *This is my secret addiction, what more can I say!*

Idlewild by Outkast - *Hip-hop album that is just the thing to listen to or have in the background when reading any noirish crime novel.*

Sarah Weinman:

For the Sherlockian or for those with a passing interest in Holmes & Watson, Leslie Klinger's THE ANNOTATED SHERLOCK HOLMES is a must buy.

The DVD of KISS KISS BANG BANG because it's Shane Black's love song to Raymond Chandler, pulp fiction and kamikaze storytelling.

Michael Cox's THE MEANING OF NIGHT for those who love meaty Victorian novels.

Mark Gatiss's THE VESUVIUS CLUB for people with sick minds and a willingness to read decidedly alternative options to spy fiction.

A box of Crimespree t-shirts.

Mary Reagan:

DVR - *to make it easier to record the crime fiction on tv.*

Netflix account - *okay I already have one, but if someone doesn't, they should get one. What is especially nice is all the British crime fiction tv series they have. I've been making my way through Midsomer Murders, Inspector Morse, A Touch of Frost, Cracker, Taggart, The Singing Detective, Maigret, Inspector Alleyn, Kavanagh QC, Champion, and Rumpole.*

Instant Messaging account - *to keep in touch with your fellow crime fiction fans.*

iPod - *They've got some nice new ones on the market. Great prices. The audio ones are good for listening to crime fiction audio books or book-related podcasts like Behind the Black Mask: Mystery Writers Revealed or the NYTimes Book Review. The video versions are great for watching tv shows and now movies.*

And of course they need to get all their friends subscriptions to Crimespree.

Russel McLean's Criminal Christmas Gift List:

THE MALTESE FALCON STATUE: *I've heard of this item a lot down the years and apparently it does exist: yes, you too could give that Sam Spade wannabe in your life their own black bird to covet. If Sam had been thinking ahead, all he needed to do was look online. Its pricey, of course, when you go to www.hauntedstudios.com and buy the limited edition for \$150. And if that doesn't appeal, and you're of a more creepy bent, you can check out their extensive collection of Hollywood "life masks".*

MURPHY'S LAW (DVD, seasons 1-3 only): *Who'd'a thought cheeky Irish chappie James Nesbitt could turn into one of the most convincingly gritty cops on TV. The first two series of this undercover copper drama (both available on BBC DVD) didn't give out much hope, but everything changed with season three where Nesbitt not only grew a ludicrous porn 'tache but also a pair of balls.*

THE ADVENTURES OF PHILIP MARLOWE (CD) *Okay, okay, I haven't heard them myself: but by God, the old Philip Marlowe radio show sounds right up my street. 9 discs. 9 hours. And that's just volume one. I found this – and loads of other old detective shows in box-set form, at www.radiospirits.com for \$23.99.*

LIFE ON MARS (DVD, season 1 only): *This 2006 British copper series just blew me away when it first aired. Fantastic performances, a real feel for the 1970's setting (although there are historical gaffes when they deal with football hooliganism) and one of the greatest characters ever seen on British TV in DCI Gene Hunt ("I'm Gene Hunt. Your DCI. And it's 1973. Nearly dinner time. I'm 'aving hoops."). Even the faintly ludicrous premise (a copper from 2006 gets hit by a car, wakes up and finds he's stuck in 1973) is carried off with such style and aplomb you don't consider questioning the writer's sanity. Perfect for anyone who needs a hit of quality, televised crime.*

CRIME SCENES: MOVIE POSTER ART OF THE FILM NOIR - THE CLASSIC PERIOD - 1941-1959 BY LAWRENCE BASSOFF, WITH A FOREWORD BY ROBERT WISE. (Book) *I love books of movie art. I love old pulp styles. And this book looks like a bloody brilliant study of the best of film noir posters. Apparently it traces the history and development of the movement as well as including all the pictures we love to see.*

And the Wildcard Selection:

BIO-PROTECTION SUIT (for the oddball in your life) <http://www.crimescene.com> sells a whole bundle of forensic wear for those loony enough to believe such things are cool. Not only can you buy a bio-protection suit (only twenty dollars!) but you can buy all the kit: fingerprint dust, body bags, all the good stuff. If you've got a freaky CSI fanatic in your life and they've already got a signed picture of Marge Helgenberger wearing nothing but those funky infra-red vision glasses (yeah, I'm shuddering, too) then this could be the place to go.

Sean Chercover:

Hardcover: AMERICAN SKIN, Ken Bruen's violent and beautiful love song to America, just came out in hardcover. And it flat-out rocks.

Trade Paperback: THE MAN IN MY BASEMENT, by Walter Mosley, is shelved in the Fiction & Literature section of bookstores, so the mystery fan on your Christmas list may have missed it when it was first released. Fantastic book, also available as an unabridged audiobook (read by Ernie Hudson).

Paperback: TO THE POWER OF THREE, by Laura Lippman. You'd think that everybody already knows how great this book is. Not so. Makes a great stocking-stuffer, and a great introduction to L.L., for those who are still in the dark.

DVD: SEXY BEAST. This movie came out in 2000, but I'm constantly running into people who haven't seen it. So I'm giving it for Christmas. Sure, SEXY BEAST is a neo-noir caper film, but it is also one of the most intense character studies in recent cinema. Ben Kingsley gives a white-hot performance in a role that could be described as the anti-Gandhi.

Ruth's List:

Christmas. Five things everyone should have? Well I have to start with KISS, KISS, BANG, BANG. This film is a salute to noir movies done in the best possible manner. The music selection is easy as well. This summer we got to see Elvis Costello & Allen Toussaint. Nothing can compare to the live show but THE RIVER IN REVERSE is a fabulous C.D. Blues with a capital B. Books are harder for me. Everyone has different taste. However if you have a Rankin fan on your list, don't make them wait for the American release of NAMING OF THE DEAD. It's been too long since we've shared a night with Rebus and the latest is brilliant, as always. A CO2 detector is a great gift. It shows you care about the recipient's mortality. And finally a big ticket item. Registration for Charmed to Death, Bouchercon 2008(okay, you knew I had to, right).

Blake Crouch:

A pass to Trimble Hot Springs

A case of Westvleteren 12 (yellow cap)

Twin Peaks (Season Two) on DVD
For Thomas Harris's new book not to suck
El Nino

Jon's List

I think any crime fiction fan would enjoy a number of the new collections from DC Comics, including THE LOSERS volumes 1-5, Batman:FACE TO FACE, and the collection of HELLBLAZER written by Denise Mina called Empathy is the Enemy.

There are also some wonderful DVD sets out there to help with your shopping, THE WIRE, Veronica Mars, and the Shield. Of all the television I've seen in the last ten years this is the cream of the crop.

A pleasant addition to the books and DVDs is of course coffee. I suggest a Blue Mountain or Kona.

And to round this out, call an independent mystery book seller and ask about gift certificates. It's hard buying books from people who read a lot so why not help out the independents and your shopping needs at the same time?

Jeremy's Holiday DVD list

The Holidays are coming up and I would like to take a few minutes to give you some ideas for the Crime nerd in your life...or these might be ideas you can give to *your* loved ones for the crime nerd in *their* life (**yes, that would be you**).

This year has actually been a really great one for crime buffs, both in terms of new films and re-releases.

Brick

Best film of the year. This should be owned by every living soul. Actually, I don't think you could go wrong giving to your deceased loved ones, as long as they were fans of hard-boiled fiction. With a budget of 500k, Brick gives more bang for the buck than any film in this century.

Rian Johnson tells a classic hard-boiled detective story in a decidedly unusual setting: A high school. This is not a cutesy film, but gritty and noir, through and through.

Lucky Number Slevin

Morgan Freeman, Sir Ben Kingsley, Josh Hartnett, Stanley Tucci and Bruce Willis all deliver the goods in this amazing tale of revenge. Take this great cast, give them a killer script and you have a clever film keeps you guessing, but does not go so far as to become convoluted...plus it features Lucy Liu in what is likely the cutest role she has ever done.

The James Bond Ultimate Editions volumes 1-4

MGM/Fox is issuing all of the *James Bond* films in four volumes. These films are undergoing audio and video upgrading that makes them look and sound incredible. There will also be a truckload (they measured) of bonus features including deleted scenes and some audio commentaries from Sir Roger Moore. Bond fans will think they have died and gone to heaven.

If I have one complaint, it is that the sets are not in chronological order, so if you want all of the Connery films, you will also be getting the Dalton films as well.

Nov 7th

Set 1 contains: *Goldfinger*, *The World Is Not Enough*, *Diamonds Are Forever*, *The Man With The Golden Gun* and *The Living Daylights*.

Set 2: *Thunderball*, *Die Another Day*, *The Spy Who Loved Me*, *A View To A Kill* and *License To Kill*.

Dec 12th

Set 3: *GoldenEye*, *Live & Let Die*, *From Russia With Love*, *For Your Eyes Only* and *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*

Set 4: *Tomorrow Never Dies*, *You Only Live Twice*, *Dr. No*, *Octopussy* and *Moonraker*.

Homicide: Life on the Street

A&E Home video has released the complete series. It comes in a nifty filing cabinet case. From the creative staff of this show came *Oz* and *The Wire*.

Homicide lasted for seven seasons and won four Emmies. This is an excellent chance to own what was perhaps one of the most original, not to mention finest, police dramas in the history of network television.

Agatha Christie's Miss Marple collection

Released by Warner earlier this year, this set contains the four Margaret Rutherford Miss Marple films from the early 60s. While they may not stick exactly to the original stories, they are fun and Dame Rutherford does a great job. The set contains: Murder She Said, Murder at the Gallop, Murder Ahoy! and Murder Most Foul.

Superman!

They are reissuing 1-4 in the Superman series. One and Two are amazing, three and four...well, let us not talk about them. Richard Donner was originally slated to direct both Superman 1 and 2, so while shooting the first film, he also filmed about 70% of the second one. Unfortunately after the first movie came out and was a big success, the producers decided Richard Lester, of The Beatles movies fame, would be better than the director that made the first movie such a success and made them wealthier than God...or Bill Gates (OK, not THAT rich, but at least as wealthy as God).

Warner is now releasing not only special editions of the first (Four discs) and the second (two discs) but a separate version of the Superman 2 that will be the Richard Donner cut, so fans can see the film as Donner intended it to be.

Superhero geeks get ready to binge.

Happy Holidays!