African-American and Black Mysteries

**Abercrombie, Lynn.** Abercrombie is the pseudonym for Walter Sorrells. He is the author of 18 novels. Mechelle Deakes is an African-American detective working the cold case files.

Series: Cold Case Thrillers


**Bakley, Frankie Y.** Bailey is a criminal justice professor that explores social issues in her mysteries. Her character is Lizzie Stuart, an African-American crime historian.

Novels

- *A Dead Man's Honor* (2001)
- *Death's Favorite Child* (2001)

**Baker, Nikki.** Baker’s protagonist is an African-American lesbian stockbroker in Chicago.

Series: Virginia Kelly

- *In the Game* (1991)
- *The Lavender House Murder* (1992)

**Ball, John.** John Ball won an Edgar award for *In the heat of the night*. He also wrote books for children, was a radio broadcaster, and was Director of Public Relations for the Institute of Aerospace Science.

Series: Virgil Tibbs

1. *In The Heat Of The Night* (1965)
   
   *aka Death For A Playmate*
4. *Five Pieces Of Jade* (1972)

Novels (not specific to African-American themes)

- *Operation Springboard* (1958)
  
  *aka Operation Space*
- *The First Team* (1971)
- *Police Chief* (1977)
- *The Killing In The Market* (1978)
John Ball (continued)
The Murder Children (1979)
Trouble For Tallon (1981)
Chief Tallon and the S. O. R (1984)
The Kiwi Target (1988)
The Van (1989)

Banfelder, Robert. Justin Barnes is an African-American covert operative.
Series
Justin Barnes
1. The Teacher (2006)
2. The Author (2007)
Novels
No Stranger Than I (1990)

Charlie Peace
1. Death and the Chaste Apprentice (1989)
5. No Place of Safety (1997)
7. The Bones in the Attic (2001)
8. A Fall from Grace (2007)

Bates, Karen Grigsby. Bates is a correspondent for NPR. Her sleuth is African-American reporter, Alex Powell.
Series
Alex Powell
Plain Brown Wrapper (2001)
Chosen People (2006)

Baxt, George. Baxt was an agent, screenwriter, and author of several mysteries including gay and African-American Pharoah Love series. He also wrote mysteries about Hollywood celebrities.
Series
Pharoah Love
1. A Queer Kind of Death (1966)
2. Swing Low, Sweet Harriet (1967)
3. Topsy and Evil (1968)
5. A Queer Kind of Umbrella (1994)
**Bland, Eleanor Taylor.** Bland’s African-American cop relocates to a suburb of Chicago. Her mysteries depict social issues such as homelessness, mental illness, and the rights of children.

Series
Marti MacAlister
1. *Dead Time* (1992)
13. *A Dark and Deadly Deception* (2005)

**Brown, Elaine Meryl.** Brown is creative director at Showtime Networks and has created a 1970’s mystery series featuring a middle class black family in the Blue Ridge Mountains.

Novels
*Playing By the Rules* (2006)
*Lemon City* (2009)

**Camacho, Austin.** Camacho’s O'Brian is an Irish jewel thief and Morgan Stark is a black mercenary soldier whose paths cross when they are double crossed by the same man. Hannibal Jones is a professional troubleshooter in the Baltimore/D.C. area.

Series
Felicity O'Brian and Morgan Stark
Hannibal Jones

**Carter, Charlotte.** Carter’s heroine is a young African-American jazz musician. The Cook County series features African-American families in 1960’s Chicago.

Series
Nanette Hayes
Charlotte Carter (continued)
4. Rooster's Riff (2001)
Cook County
2. Trip Wire (2005)

Carter, Stephen L. Yale law professor, Stephen Carter pens mysteries depicting upper class African-American society in academia, and mysteries of political intrigue.
Series
Elm Harbor
3. Palace Council (2008)
Novels
Jericho's Fall (2009)

Corrington, John William & Joyce Hooper Corrington. Husband and wife that wrote for television including soap operas and movies for television. This series features a black homicide detective in New Orleans.
Series
Ralph “Rat” Trapp: black homicide detective in New Orleans.
The white zone (1990)
A civil death (1987)
A project named desire (1987)
So small a carnival (1986)

Davis, Kenn. Davis created a Vietnam veteran with an MP background. Bascombe is an art loving African-American P.I. and student working his way through law school. His cases involve the arts in San Francisco.
Series
Carver Bascombe Mystery
1. The Dark Side (1976) (with John Stanley)
2. The Forza Trap (1979)
5. As October Dies (1987)

Davis, Kyra. Davis’s mother is Jewish and father is African-American. Davis’s character is also Biracial.
Sophie Katz
1. Sex, Murder and a Double Latte (2005)
Kyra Davis (continued)
4. Lust, Loathing and a Little Lip Gloss (2009)
Novels
So Much for My Happy Ending (2006)

Deloach, Nora. Deloach spent most of her career as a social worker. Her protagonist are a mother and daughter team.
Series
Mama Detective
1. Mama Solves a Murder (1994)
5. Mama Stalks the Past (1997)
8. Mama Cracks a Mask of Innocence (2001)
Novels
Silas (1992)

Dickey, Eric Jerome. Dickey is an author in several genres including romance, action, suspense, and the noir series featuring hit man Gideon.
Series
Gideon Trilogy
4. Resurrecting Midnight (2009)

Edwards, Grace F. Mali Anderson is an ex-cop living in contemporary Harlem.
Series
Mali Anderson
1. If I Should Die (1997)
3. No Time to Die (1999)
4. Do or Die (2000)
Novels
In the Shadow of the Peacock (2000)
The Viaduct (2003)
Evans, Mary Anna. Evans character is an African-American anthropologist.
Series
Faye Longchamp Mysteries
2. Relics (2005) Series
5. Floodgates (2009)

Ford, Clyde W. Ford’s character Noble is an ex coast guard commander and marine private investigator.
Charlie Noble Mystery
1. Red Herring (2005)
Shango Mysteries
The Long Mile (2005)
Deuce’s Wild (2006)

Greer, Robert. Floyd is an African-American bail bondsman.
C J Floyd
1. The Devil's Hatband (1996)
3. The Devil's Backbone (1998)

Grimes, Terris McMahan. Theresa Galloway is a personal director and amateur sleuth.
Series
Theresa Galloway mystery
3. Other Duties As Required (2000)

Hambly, Barbara. The January series features a creole physician and music teacher in 1830’ New Orleans.
Benjamin January Series
1. A Free Man of Color (1997)
Barbara Hambly (continued)
5. Die upon a Kiss (2001)
9. Dead and Buried (2010)
10. The Shirt on His Back (2011)
11. Ran Away (2011)

Handler, David. Handler writes several mystery series including Berger and Mitry featuring film critic Mitch Berger and his black homicide detective girlfriend Desiree Mitry.
Berger and Mitry
1. The Cold Blue Blood (2001)
2. The Hot Pink Farmhouse (2002)
6. The Sour Cherry Surprise (2008)
8. The Blood Red Indian Summer (2011)

Hayes, Teddy. Barnett is a former CIA hit man turned Harlem barkeep.
Series

Devil Barnett
Blood Red Blues (2005)
Dead by popular demand. (2004)

Haywood, Gar Anthony. Gunner is an African-American private investigator in South Central L.A.
Series
Aaron Gunner Mystery
1. Fear of the Dark (1988)
2. Not Long for This World (1990)
4. It's Not a Pretty Sight (1996)
5. When Last Seen Alive (1997)
6. All The Lucky Ones Are Dead (2000)

Himes, Chester. Himes was a famous African-American writer. His works include If He Hollers Let Him Go and a series of Harlem Detective novels. In 1958 he won France's Grand Prix de Littérature Policière; two of his novels were made into feature films: Cotton Comes to Harlem directed by Ossie Davis in 1970 and A Rage in Harlem starring Gregory Hines and Danny Glover in 1991.
Chester Himes (continued)
Coffin Ed Johnson and Grave Digger Jones
1. For Love of Imabelle (1957)
   aka A Rage in Harlem
2. The Real Cool Killers (1959)
4. The Big Gold Dream (1960)
5. All Shot Up (1960)
6. Cotton Comes to Harlem (1965)
   aka Come Back, Charleston Blue
   aka Hot Day Hot Night
The Crazy Kill (1959)
The Harlem Cycle Volume 1 (omnibus) (1996)
The Harlem Cycle Volume 2 (omnibus) (1996)
Novels
If He Hollers Let Him Go (1945)
Lonely Crusade (1947)
Cast the First Stone (1952)
   aka Yesterday Will Make You Cry
The Third Generation (1954)
The End of a Primitive (1955)
Pinktoes (1961)
Run Man Run (1966)
Black On Black (1973)
A Case of Rape (1980)
Plan B (1993)

Series
Georgia Barnett Mystery
1. Details At Ten (2001)
2. Video Cowboys (2005)
3. Hit Time (2001)
Novels
Falling Leaves of Ivy (1992)
He Say, She Say (1996)
Bebe's By Golly Wow! (1998)
This Just In.. (2000)
The Hatwearer's Lesson (2003)
Jones, Solomon. Solomon is the author of fast-paced urban crime fiction.

Series
C.R.E.A.M.

Coletti
1. The Last Confession (2010)
2. The Gravedigger's Ball (2011)

Novels
Pipe Dream (2001)
The Bridge (2003)
Keeping Up With the Jones (2004)
Ride or Die (2004)

Lacy, Ed. Leonard Zinberg, aka Lacy was married to an African-American and wrote several novels with African American protagonists including P.I. Toussaint Moore.

David Wintino
1. Lead with Your Left (1957)
2. Double Trouble (1967)

Toussaint M. Moore
1. Room to Swing (1957)
2. Moment of Untruth (1964)

Lee Hayes
1. Harlem Underground (1965)
2. In Black & Whitey (1967)

Novels
End to Violence (1950)
Sin In Their Blood (1952)
aka Death in Passing
Strip for Violence (1953)
Enter Without Desire (1954)
Go for the Body (1954)
The Best That Ever Did It (1955)
aka Visa To Death
The Men from the Boys (1956)
Be Careful How You Live (1958)
aka Dead End
Shakedown for Murder (1958)
Breathe No More My Lady (1958)
Devil for the Witch (1958)
Blonde Bait (1959)
The Big Fix (1960)
A Deadly Affair (1960)
Bugged for Murder (1961)
The Freeloaders (1961)
South Pacific Affair (1961)
Ed Lacy (continued)

Two Hot to Handle (1963)
The Sex Castle (1963)
aka Shoot it Again

Pity the Honest (1965)
The Hotel Dwellers (1966)
The Napalm Bugle (1968)
The Big Bust (1969)
Hoot It Again (1969)
The Woman Aroused (1969)
Sleep in Thunder (1972)

LaMar, Jake. LaMar’s Ricky Jenks thrillers depict an African-American expatriate living in Paris. His stand alone novels also feature African-American protagonists.

Series
American Mysteries in Paris, Featuring Ricky Jenks

Novels
The Last Integrationist (1996)
Close to the Bone (1998)
If 6 Were 9: A Militant Mystery (2001)

Lansdale, Joe R. Hap is straight and white, Leonard black and gay; are amateur sleuths in East Texas.

Hap Collins and Leonard Pine
1. Savage Season (1990)
5. Rumble Tumble (1998)
7. Captains Outrageous (2001)
8. Vanilla Ride (2009)

Lescroart, John. Lescroart is the author of several mystery series including the Glitsky, a black, Jewish cop in San Francisco.

Abe Glitsky
2. Guilt (1996)
3. The Hearing (1999)
4. Damage (2011)
Lindquist, N.J.  Black cop Jacqueline (Jackie Ryan) in Toronto, Ontario. 
Manziuk and Ryan Mystery
1. Shaded Light (1999)
2. Glitter of Diamonds (2007)

Lochte, Dick.  Lochte has written several series including this one with Darden
featuring Nicolette (Nikki) Hill, a 30-something black prosecutor in Los Angeles, California:
    The Trials of Nikki Hill (1998) (with Christopher Darden)
    L.A. Justice (2001) (with Christopher Darden)
    The Last Defense (2002) (with Christopher Darden)
    Lawless (2004) (with Christopher Darden)

Lovell, Glenville.  Protagonist is Blade Overstreet, a black ex-cop, in New York City.
    Fire in the Canes (1995)
    Song of Night (1998)
    Too Beautiful to Die (2003)
    Love and Death in Brooklyn (2004)

Lupoff, Richard A.  Lindsey and Plum Hobart Lindsey, an insurance claims adjuster for
valuable collectibles, and Marvia Plum, a black homicide detective, in Berkeley, California:
    The Comic Book Killer (1988)
    The Classic Car Killer (1992)
    The Bessie Blue Killer (1994)
    The Sepia Siren Killer (1994)
    The Cover Girl Killer (1995)
    The Silver Chariot Killer (1996)
    The Tinpan Tiger Killer (1998)
    One Murder At A Time (2001)
    The Emerald Cat Killer (2010)

McCall-Smith, Alexander.  McCall Smith has written over 50 books on a variety of subjects
including a book on the law of Botswana, a children’s book, and the extremely
Successful No. 1 ladies detective series featuring Precious Ramotswe, Botswana's
only - and finest - female private detective.
1. The No 1 Ladies' Detective Agency (1998)
2. Tears Of The Giraffe (2000)
5. The Full Cupboard of Life (2003)
8. The Good Husband of Zebra Drive (2007)
10. Tea Time for the Traditionally Built (2009)
Alexander McCall-Smith (continued)
12. The Saturday Big Tent Wedding Party (2011)
The No. 1 Ladies’ Detective Series Box Set (omnibus) (2003)
Blue Shoes and Happiness / Good Husband of Zebra Drive (omnibus) (2008)
Precious and the Monkeys (2011)
The Great Cake Mystery: Precious Ramotswe’s Very First Case (2012)

McMillan, Ann. This series is a medical thriller, historical fiction, and mystery. A black herbalist and conjure woman, and a white widow work together and nurses at the Medical College of Virginia.
Series
Civil War
1. Dead March (1998)
3. Civil Blood (2001)

Mickelbury, Penny. Gianna Maglione, a lesbian police lieutenant, and Mimi Patterson, black reporter, in Washington, DC; and Carol Ann Gibson, an African-American defense attorney.
Series
Gianna Maglione
Keeping Secrets (1994)
Night Songs (1995)
Love Notes (2002)
Darkness Descending (2005)

Penny Mickelbury (continued)
Carole Ann Gibson
1. One Must Wait (1998)
2. Where to Choose (1999)
4. Paradise Interrupted (2001)

Mosley, Walter. Mosley is the author of more than 35 books in several genres including mystery, science fiction, and literary fiction. He is well known for his Easy Rawlins series set in 1940’s/1950’s Los Angeles. He also has a present time NYC P.I. Leonard McGill series.
Series
Easy Rawlins
1. Devil in a Blue Dress (1990)
5. A Little Yellow Dog (1995)
Walter Mosley (continued)
Socrates Fortlow
1. Always Outnumbered, Always Outgunned (1997)
2. Walkin' the Dog (1999)
The Right Mistake (2008)
Fearless Jones
1. Fearless Jones (2001)
Leonid McGill
1. The Long Fall (2009)
2. Known to Evil (2010)
3. When the Thrill is Gone (2011)
4. All I Did Was Shoot My Man (2012)
Novels
RL's Dream (1995)
Blue Light (1998)
The Greatest (2000)
Whispers in the Dark (2000)
The Man in My Basement (2004)
47 (2005)
Fortunate Son (2006)
Killing Johnny Fry (2006)
The Tempest Tales (2008)
Diablerie (2008)
The Last Days of Ptolemy Grey (2010)

Neely, Barbara. Neely’s first novel in the Blanche White series won the Agatha, Macauly, and Anthony awards. Blanche is a domestic worker and amateur sleuth from North Carolina, relocated to Boston.

Series
Blanche White
1. Blanche on the Lam (1992)
2. Blanche Among the Talented Tenth (1994)
Nelscott, Kris. Nelscott’s character is an African-American private investigator in Memphis. 
Smokey Dalton
1. A Dangerous Road (2000)
2. Smoke-Filled Rooms (2001)
5. War at Home (2005)

Series
Sam Becket
1. Mind Games (1999)
2. Last Run (2007)
5. Hell (2011)

Olden, Marc. Olden is the author of over 40 books including the black samurai series featuring Robert Sand, a martial arts expert and the only non-Japanese trained by a Japanese samurai.
Black Samurai
4. The Deadly Pearl (1974)
5. The Inquisition (1974)
6. The Warlock (1975)
7. Sword of Allah (1975)
8. The Katana (1975)

Pelecanos, George P. Pelecanos is a highly successful and prolific writer. His Strange and Quinn series features African-American former cop and private eye Derek Strange.
Derek Strange and Terry Quinn
1. Right As Rain (2001)
Right as Rain, Hell to Pay, Soul Circus (omnibus) (2005)

Parrish, P.J. Parrish are two sisters Kristy Mantee and Kelly Nichols. Their character Louis Kincaid is a biracial private detective in Mississippi.
Series
Louis Kincaid
P.J. Parrish (continued)
1. Dark of the Moon (1999)
2. Dead of Winter (2001)
10. The Little Death (2009)

Phillips, Gary. Phillips’ Monk series features a black private eye and owner of a donut shop. The Chainey series features an ex-showgirl now working as a courier for the mob.

Series
Ivan Monk

Martha Chainey
2. Shooter's Point (2001)

Novels
The Jook (1999)
Bangers (2003)
Midnight Mover (2004)
Freedom's Flight (2009)
The Underbelly (2010)

Phillips, Mike. Phillips’ Sam Dean is a Jamaican born black journalist in London.

Sam Dean
2. The Late Candidate (1990)

Novels
The Dancing Face (1997)
A Shadow of Myself (2000)


Series
Marie Laveau Mystery
1. Voodoo Dreams (1993)
2. Voodoo Season (2005)
Jewell Parker Rhodes (continued)
4. Hurricane (2011)

Series
Lew Griffin
1. The Long-Legged Fly (1992)

James Sallis (continued)

Skinner, Robert. The protagonist Farrell is a Creole nightclub owner and private investigator in New Orleans.
Series
Wesley Farrell
2. Cat-eyed Trouble (1998)
5. Pale Shadow (2001)

Smith, Julie. Talba Wallis is a private investigator by day and poet and performance artist by night in New Orleans.
Talba Wallis
1. Louisiana HotShot (2001)
2. Louisiana Bigshot (2002)

Smith-Levin, Judith. Judith Smith-Levin was the first uniformed female police officer in Worcester, MA. Her protagonist is homicide detective Lt. Starletta Duvall.
Series
Starletta Duvall Mystery
1. Do Not Go Gently (1996)
2. The Hoodoo Man (1998) Series
4. Reckless Eyeballin’ (2001)
**Thomas-Graham, Pamela.** Protagonist Nikki Chase is an economics professor and part-time sleuth.

Ivy League

*A Darker Shade of Crimson* (1998)
*Blue Blood* (1999)
*Orange Crushed* (2004)

**Tidyman, Ernest.** Tidyman is the author of the very successful Shaft series made into a movie. He also wrote the screenplay for *The French Connection*.

Series

Shaft
1. *Shaft* (1971)
2. *Shaft Among the Jews* (1973)
3. *Shaft’s Big Score* (1972)
4. *Shaft Has a Ball* (1973)
5. *Goodbye, Mr. Shaft* (1974)
7. *Last Shaft* (1975)

**Tramble, Nichelle.** Protagonist Redfield is a young African-American student making his way in life in urban drug-ridden Oakland.

Series

Maceo Redfield Mystery
1. *The Dying Ground* (2001)

**Wesley, Valerie Wilson.** Wilson’s Hayle is an African-American single mom, ex-cop, and currently a private investigator in Newark, NJ.

Series

Tamara Hayle
4. *No Hiding Place* (1997)

**Wimberley, Darryl.** Raines is an African-American detective in northwestern Florida. Wimberley also writes stand-alone novels including *This King of Colored Town* about Two African-American teens experiencing the integration of their school.

Series

Detective Barrett Raines Mystery
Darryl Wimberly (continued)
2. Dead Man's Bay (2000)
3. Strawman's Hammock (2001)
5. Devil's Slew (2011)
Novels
A Tinker's Damn (2000)
The King of Colored Town (2007)
Kaleidoscope (2008)

Woods, Paula L.  Justice is a black detective for the L.A.P.D.
Series
Charlotte Justice
1. Inner City Blues (1999)
2. Stormy Weather (2001)
Anthologies edited