



The Circular Study

Anna Katharine Green

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The Circular Study Details

Date : Published May 29th 2008 by BiblioLife (first published 1900)

ISBN : 9781426494352

Author : Anna Katharine Green

Format : Paperback

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Classics, Audiobook

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From Reader Review The Circular Study for online ebook

Bre Teschendorf says

I enjoyed the book, it was very fun to read.

I only didn't understand one little tiny detail, even after the mystery was cleared up at the end. I have left a question about this in the questions section... If anyone wants to enlighten me, I would be very pleased!

James says

Interesting crime scene but found story quite plodding.

Ed says

#9 in the Ebenezer Gryce series. Gryce is an octogenarian NYPD detective in this series entry. The series began with *The Leavenworth Case* (1878). *The Circular Study* (1900) is named as one of the *Ninety Classics of Crime Fiction 1900-1975*, edited by Jacques Barzun and Wendell Hertig Taylor. The novel is dated and not easy to get into, but it is worth the effort. Verbatim quoting of lengthy messages, letters and diary entries, as well as comments made to the reader are not commonly encountered in this century. Amelia Butterworth provides information and suggestions to, and a sounding board for Gryce. This is at least her third appearance and I would suggest starting the series with an earlier entry.

Ebenezer Gryce series - Detective Gryce receives a cryptic message calling him to the scene of a "strange" crime. He soon finds that the adjective is correct, for in a quiet brownstone house in a respectable New York City neighborhood, he finds the body of a man brutally stabbed to death, yet lovingly laid out on the floor of his study. The only apparent witnesses are a deaf and dumb butler driven mad by the event, and a caged bird that sings out a vital but puzzling clue. Before he solves the crime, with the help of the redoubtable Miss Amelia Butterworth, Gryce must uncover a motive that spans generations and the passions that have kept it alive

Sandy says

Absolutely brilliant! Where have you been all my life, Anna Katharine Green? Who needs Sherlock Holmes?

Initially, the complex sentence structure is a bit cumbersome but, when the groundwork had been laid, I was whisked away in this captivating story. I listened to a record 6-hour audiobook in three days! Give me more!

A note to readers — at the end of Book 1, Chapter 8, there is a diagram which I happened to discover much earlier in the story and found quite helpful.

Jan says

A simple, straightforward plot made complicated, confusing, and convoluted by purple prose. It was still a good story, and worth plowing through the antiquated style of prose.

Kathy says

This started out as a detective mystery, but the last half was pure Victorian melodrama, complete with an evil man who has no heart and a fainting heroine.

Wyntroire says

Mostly told not shown. Gryce or Butterworth scarcely appear.

LindaH says

Inexplicable clues and behavior. A genial old detective and a sensible society sleuth. A backstory steeped in melodrama, with a whiff of Rapunzel. This is a well-crafted early mystery (1900) which explores, as modern crime fiction still does, the deep dark motives of the human psyche.

UnoStudio says

Una piccola stanza, di forma circolare, illuminata da una terrificante luce rossa. Accanto alla porta, un ombrellino dal manico di perla e al di là dell'ampia scrivania il ritratto, maestoso, di una ragazza dal fascino insondabile. Sul pavimento alcuni petali di rosa, una scia di splendenti lustrini neri e un tappeto in pelle d'orso su cui giace il padrone di casa, morto oltre ogni ragionevole dubbio, con un pugnale conficcato nel cuore e una croce dalle finiture dorate adagiata sul petto. Un delitto insolito per l'attempato detective Ebenezer Gryce, che dovrà vedersela con un inquietante domestico sordomuto, un pappagallo assai ciarliero... e una collaboratrice davvero speciale: Miss Amelia Butterworth di Gramercy Park ovvero, nientemeno che...!, "la donna più rispettabile del mondo". Ficcanaso impenitente, detective per caso (e cristallina vocazione), Miss Butterworth affiancherà Gryce in un'avventura dal sapore epico tra rancori, segreti di famiglia e inconfessabili propositi di vendetta.

Per gli appassionati di detective fiction la prima edizione italiana di "The Circular Study", romanzo del 1900 della scrittrice statunitense Anna Katharine Green (Brooklyn, 11 novembre 1846 – Buffalo, 11 aprile 1935), non può non essere una festa. Il fatto che un giallo di pregevole fattura come "Lo studio circolare" sia stato tradotto e stampato per la prima volta in Italia a più di un secolo dalla pubblicazione, tuttavia, la dice lunga sulle fortune letterarie della sua autrice. Che, a dispetto della scarsa popolarità (alzi la mano chi ha letto uno dei suoi romanzi o ne ricorda anche solo il titolo!) e con buona pace dei suoi detrattori, non è – e non può considerarsi – una semplice meteora nel sin troppo popoloso firmamento della detective fiction.

Se è vero che questo genere letterario deve i natali al genio visionario di Edgar Allan Poe e al trittico di racconti incentrati sull'infallibile Monsieur Dupin, è vero altresì che Anna Katharine Green (la quale addirittura coniò l'espressione "detective story": si veda C. Bombieri, Poliziesco, Enciclopedia Europea Garzanti, 1979) ne è stata la madre e la coraggiosa pioniera in un'epoca in cui si riteneva inconcepibile, per una donna, dedicarsi – con ottimi risultati, per giunta – alle storie del mistero. Ma le vie della fama letteraria,

come si sa, sono infinite; può accadere persino che una giallista il cui talento ha influenzato in maniera decisiva Sir Arthur Conan Doyle e Dame Agatha Christie (tanto per citare gli esponenti più autorevoli del filone in commento) conosca un precoce quanto durevole oblio.

Tanto più meritevole di lode e di attenzione appare dunque il lavoro svolto da RuM Corp.(se) Localisation Pro, che ha curato la traduzione e la prima edizione italiana de “Lo studio circolare” nell’ambito del progetto Caxton’s Forge.

Come sottolineano Claudia Mucavero e Marialuisa Ruggiero, le due giovani traduttrici che animano il progetto, un’intera biblioteca ci è stata tenuta nascosta: autori “dal cuore ancora pulsante” sono stati dimenticati “da critica, tempo ed editoria”.

Senza contare che, quantomeno nel caso di Green, la dimenticanza ha tutto il sapore di una rimozione. Lungi dall’essere “solo” un buon giallo (impreziosito da un contrappunto d’ironia che non è facile ritrovare nei polizieschi moderni), “Lo studio circolare” si rivela uno strumento chiave per leggere in maniera diversa e più consapevole la nascita e la evoluzione della letteratura poliziesca; la lente ideale, insomma, per provare a comprendere i meccanismi e finanche l’essenza della crime fiction. Non è per puro caso, forse, che “Uno studio in rosso” di Sir Conan Doyle (la prima, indimenticabile avventura del duo Holmes – Watson) presenti la stessa struttura del romanzo in commento, che si apre con la descrizione di una scena del crimine alquanto insolita e, dopo aver dato conto delle prime ipotesi investigative e svelato (eh sì, poco oltre la metà del romanzo!) l’identità del colpevole, ci regala una lunga ricostruzione degli eventi che hanno condotto all’assassinio. E non è forse per puro caso che la più famosa detective dilettante di tutti i tempi, Miss Jane Marple, sia un’amabile zitella avanti negli anni con un fiuto investigativo fuori dal comune. Quel che è certo è che Agatha Christie conosceva l’opera di Anna Katharine Green:

Madge (la sorella maggiore, n.d.r.) mi aveva iniziato da bambina al grande Sherlock Holmes e io mi ero buttata a capofitto lungo la via indicatami, leggendo *Le due cugine* (“*The Leavenworth Case*”, del 1878, primo romanzo di A. K. Green, n.d.r.), che mi aveva già straordinariamente colpita nel racconto fattomene da Madge quando avevo otto anni. (Agatha Christie, *La mia vita* (Mondadori, 1978), pag. 217).

Vi consiglio dunque di aggiungere al più presto “Lo studio circolare” alla vostra biblioteca digitale. Per quel che mi riguarda, considerato che il lavoro in commento è il terzo (e ultimo, ahimè!) dei romanzi in cui compare Miss Butterworth, aspetterò con ansia e trepidazione i primi due capitoli della serie: *Lost Man’s Lane* (1898) e *That Affair Next Door* (1897).

John says

This is I think the first of Anna Katherine Green's novels that I've read; it won't be the last, I'm sure. It's the tenth novel she wrote featuring NYC detective Ebenezer Gryce and the fourth (and last) to feature a spinster sleuth who helps him, Miss Amelia Butterworth; some regard Amelia Butterworth as a precursor of Miss Marple, but I don't see much resemblance myself. In this novel she has a fairly minor role.

The reclusive owner of a distinguished house is discovered stabbed to death in the circular study at the heart of that house. The only other occupants are a deaf-and-dumb butler and a caged starling that can parrot occasional words it hears. Aided by some of Amelia's insights but more especially by an ambitious young cop, who displays exemplary enterprise and deductive skills, Gryce doesn't take too long to discover who the murderer is. About the last 35% of the book follows the murder's solution, which might sound like a recipe for literary disaster but in fact is the opposite: the first part was entertaining, but this second part is quite absorbing, and will undoubtedly be what remains with me when I think back on the book.

Of course, I've started reading Green in the wrong place -- I had no idea that her books weren't all

standalones. Well, that can easily enough be rectified . . .

Michelle says

The mystery was lame, in my humble opinion. It was not interesting, accompanied by an eye-rolling resolution. Mrs. Green lost her touch in this one. Told in third person, it was clearly from the start the narrative was not as lively as when it was told from Miss Butterworth's point of view. Furthermore, the side characters were boring, flat one-dimensional nobody, with the exception of the murder victim.

1.5 stars.

Amanda Schafer says

Weaker than the previous two books. Miss Butterworth figures very little in the outcome of the investigation. But neither does Mr. Gryce.

Jeffrey says

Anna Katharine Green (1846-1935) was one of the first mystery writers in the United States and was hugely popular in her time.

Called "the mother of the detective novel", she was known for her well-plotted, character-driven stories, and this novel is no exception.

A tale of two families, betrayal, revenge, and murder, *THE CIRCULAR STUDY*, written in 1902, is still an engrossing and compelling work.

I highly recommend it to fans of classic detective fiction.

El says

Once again, I loved a book by Anna K. Green. The fact that it is set in the late 19th Century only adds to the enjoyment for me as I love to learn all about life in that era. I also like the way we are set up to believe that A or B or even C is the obvious perpetrator but then it turns out to be G, H or J! The way in which people talk to one another is fascinating and the fact that "gentlemen and ladies" can't be expected to give evidence because it might be upsetting to them or not the done thing always makes me smile. When you are used to reading the horrific and detailed nitty gritty of modern-day crime novels these books are a welcome contrast - hardly any blood is spilt, no violence is witnessed and everybody is unfailingly polite to each other. I can't recommend them highly enough! I should comment on the plot. Ingenious, is all I will say!

Julie says

Another well written mystery by this author. This one involves Detective Gryce and Amelia Butterworth. A man is found dead in a circular room. The obvious suspect is his deaf and mute servant, but the detective and Miss Butterworth think there is more to the story. They slowly unravel the mystery by identifying the main characters and tracing their movements.
