



Eric Ambler: A Literary Biography

Peter Lewis

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Eric Ambler is widely regarded as one of the most important thriller writers of the twentieth century.

In the 1930s he set out to give respectability to a genre that he rightly recognized needed to be rescued from its status as pulp fiction.

With six landmark novels published between 1936 and 1940, Ambler laid the foundations for the postwar generation of writers who raised the spy novel to a form of literature.

Like Graham Greene, Ambler used the ingredients of a thriller to create a series of novels that investigated many aspects of modern life, from totalitarian political regimes to white-collar crime.

And with those books, he transformed the scale and scope of the genre.

But who was the man behind the work?

Edgar Allan Poe Award-winning author Peter Lewis gives us the first full-length study of Ambler's life and work.

It brings us to the heart of the grand master of intrigue through insightful discussions of such popular novels as 'Epitaph for a Spy', 'A Coffin for Dimitrios', 'The Light of Day' (on which the well-known film 'Topkapi' is based), and 'The Siege of the Villa Lipp' – among many others.

By examining the individual books, Peter Lewis shows us how Ambler's work changed throughout his life – while remaining always topical.

As this book argues, no novelist did more to dissolve the boundaries that separated "popular" from "serious" fiction.

'Peter Lewis's book about Eric Ambler is a literate, considerate inspection of the 18 novels of the British writer who transformed the spy thriller from macho, jingoistic, potboiler into a vehicle worthy of genuine literary talent.' - The Booklist

Peter Lewis is a prize-winning author whose book about John le Carré received the prestigious Edgar Allan Poe award from the Mystery Writers of America as the best critical/non-fiction title of its year. His subsequent book about Eric Ambler was shortlisted for another non-fiction Edgar Allan Poe award as well as for an Anthony Award.

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