

THE GREAT DETECTIVES



ON SCREEN

Week Eight

Drew. Nancy Drew.

Welcome to *The Great Detectives*

Week Eight

In 1927, American writer and publisher Edward Stratemeyer launched *The Hardy Boys Mysteries*, written by multiple ghostwriters under the collective pseudonym of Franklin W Dixon. Three years later, in 1930, the public was introduced to their female counterpart Nancy Drew in her own series, this time under the pen name of Carolyn Keene.

The original series ran until 2003 over 175 novels, before spawning multiple spin-offs that continue to this day. Mildred Wirst Benson wrote many of the earliest adventures, from outlines provided by Stratemeyer (and later his daughters), but an extraordinary number of different writers contributed manuscripts to the series and its offshoots over the years. Usually for very little money and under conditions of great secrecy.

Nancy Drew – without a singular author’s voice – survived and flourished. Like Holmes and Poirot before her, her name *means* detective. A young woman with gumption and smarts, often outwitting the men around her – although some of the most progressive and aggressive elements of her early persona were ironed out in a series of revisions in 1959.

She continues to have a presence on bookshop and library shelves and, as we’ll see, from not long after her creation, she has graced big and small screens alike.

Often these adaptations involve bringing Nancy into the present day (there are certainly some problematic elements to her earliest stories) and postulating what her place might be in the modern world.

None of them have been blessed with the longevity or success of the original books, but there is something about Nancy – and her descendants (Hi, Veronica!) – that keeps bringing storytellers back into her world.

FILMS WEEK EIGHT

Nancy Drew, Detective (1938)

Dir. William Clemens

Hardy Boys/Nancy Drew Mysteries (1977)

Dir. E.W. Swackhamer

Nancy Drew (1995)

Dir. Alex Chappie

Nancy Drew (2002)

Dir. James Frawley

Veronica Mars (2004)

Dir. Mark Piznarski

Nancy Drew (2007)

Dir. Andrew Fleming

Nancy Drew - Unaired Pilot (2016)

Dir. James Strong

Nancy Drew (2019)

Dir. Larry Teng

Nancy Drew and the Hidden Staircase (2019)

Dir. Katt Shea