

ENGLISH 2150: Film and Literature
Epistemology in Detective Fiction & Film Noir
CRN: 1549
Spring 2016

Time: 9:00a-9:50a MWF

Place: Nesbitt 2211

Instructor: Dr. Owen Cantrell

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Office: Nesbitt 4110

Office Hours: MW 10:00a-11:30a; TR 12:30p-2:00p and by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Detective fiction, while having its literary basis as far back as *Oedipus Rex*, has some unique permutations in American popular and literary fiction. American detective fiction brought us the birth of the hardboiled detective novels, which led to the film noir genre. While the genres are interesting and influential in its own right, this course will focus on theories of epistemology within the detective fiction and noir genres and focus on what detective fiction and noir can teach us about the nature of knowledge and the nature of fiction(al) representation.

This course will offer a historical and theoretical introduction to the study of American detective fiction and noir film with a focus on the epistemological conventions of the genre. We will begin the course by reading pre-twentieth century texts that set the foundation for the genre, before moving onto variations of the hardboiled genre and metaphysical detective fiction. Additionally, we will analyze a number of noir and neo noir films. By the end of the course, students will be familiar with the conventions of American detective fiction, be able to distinguish the different generic focuses throughout nineteenth and twentieth century detective fiction and film, and be able to discuss how generic considerations in detective fiction impact the epistemological foundation of the genre.

GENERAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Define detective fiction, hardboiled, and metaphysical detective fiction, film noir, slacker noir, and neo noir.
- Recognize the central characteristics and generic conventions of detective fiction and film.
- Explain the historical and epistemological evolution of detective fiction as a twentieth and twenty-first century genre.
- Analyze and critique a wide variety of detective fiction and film.
- Construct original arguments about detective fiction and film using class discussion, reading, and viewing in short essays and examinations.

COURSE MATERIALS

Any edition of the below texts is acceptable:

Auster, Paul. *The New York Trilogy*. New York: Penguin, 2006. Print
 Chandler, Raymond. *The Big Sleep*. New York: Vintage, 1988. Print
 Hammett, Dashiell. *Red Harvest*. New York: Vintage, 1989. Print
 Himes, Chester. *Cotton Comes to Harlem*. New York: Vintage, 1988. Print
 Pynchon, Thomas. *Inherent Vice*. New York: Penguin, 2010. Print.

Films Viewed (During Class Time):

The Big Sleep
Brick
Chinatown
The Big Lebowski
Memento
True Detective (S1:E1): “The Long, Bright Dark”
Fargo (S1:E1): “The Crocodile’s Dilemma”

Additional Handouts will be e-mailed, posted online, or passed out in class and must be available for student perusal during class time, either in printed or digital form.

OTHER REQUIRED SUPPLIES: pen/pencil & notebook, 3-ring binder for handouts and note-taking.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATION

The final grade for this course is comprised of the following assignments:

- Response Essay #1 (750-1000 words) (Epistemology & Quest): 10%**
- Response Essay #2 (750-1000 words) (The Detective): 10%**
- Response Essay #3 (750-1000 words) (Noir): 10%**
- Response Essay #4 (750-1000 words) (Postmodern): 10%**
- Midterm Exam: 25%**
- Final Exam: 25%**
- Attendance and Participation: 10%**

PAPER GUIDELINES: PLEASE NOTE — you will receive a detailed assignment sheet for each essay, and we will discuss the assignments in class. The assignments sheets will be passed out **at least two weeks** before their due date. Papers should be typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, and have 1-inch margins. All essays **must be submitted digitally to Lore.com to be graded**. All file names **must have the following format: (LastName_FirstName)**. Any submission **not correctly formatted may be sent back to the student for correction**.

GRADES:

A 100-90

B 89-80

C 79-70

Grades below are considered failing grades

D 60-69

F below 60

COURSEWORK POLICIES**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**

Class attendance is an important part of doing well in class. I will take attendance each class, which will factor into your final participation grade. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences, so please keep that in mind throughout the semester. Any tardy, which means **more than fifteen minutes late** to class, will count as an absence. If you have to miss class for extra-curricular activities, please see me regarding what verification I need from your coach/advisor.

Attendance will be graded on the following scale:

0 Absences 100%

1-3 Absences 90%

4-6 Absences 80%

7-9 Absences 70%

9-12 Absences 60%

12 or more 50%

Each absence beyond eight decreases your attendance by 10%.

If you miss a film viewing, it is your responsibility to watch the film on your own time and to procure your own copy to view. **Film Viewing Guides**, which are the other main aspect of class participation, must be completed **within two class periods of the final viewing; otherwise, I will not be accept them for credit.**

If you do miss class, course information will be provided on the class website, including handouts and assignments. I also encourage you to talk to classmates about what you have missed. Please do not contact me regarding your absences unless it is an emergency absence; it is your responsibility to make sure you are caught up and not my responsibility to catch you up.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE

Our learning environment is a forum for inquiry, experimentation, study, and conversation. Food and beverages are allowed, as long as they are not a distraction for your classmates. The use of laptops is permitted, especially for note-taking purposes and for the viewing of course handouts. If your cell phone becomes a distraction for you or your classmates, I will ask you to put it away. If it continues to be a problem, I will ask you to leave the class until you can control your behavior.

Students who exhibit behaviors that are considered to obstruct or disrupt the class or its learning activities will be considered under the Board of Regents Policy on Disruptive

Behavior. Behaviors that are considered to be inappropriate in the classroom include: coming in late, interrupting others, talking out of turn, inappropriate behavior during group work, and verbal behavior that is disruptive. Students who exhibit such behavior will be given a verbal warning by the class instructor, then will be given a written warning in a meeting with the Chair of the Humanities and Fine Arts Division, and then will be subject to disciplinary procedures as outlined in the University of North Georgia Student handbook.

LATE WORK

I expect all assignments to be turned in on time and in the correct format. All major essays must be submitted online and must be submitted by the required time. For any late assignments, the **grade of the assignment will be automatically reduced 10% per calendar day**. After **five calendar days**, I will no longer accept any assignments for any credit.

Late work should not be an issue to anyone in this class. Please see me if you are having any difficulties completing an assignment so we can talk through an assignment before it becomes late and affects your grade.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Please check your UNG-Gainesville email daily for important announcements, handouts, or other class information. You are responsible for information/material distributed electronically.

When contacting any of your professors via email, remember to use appropriate email etiquette:

- Be sure to include a meaningful subject line; this helps clarify what your message is about and may also help the recipient prioritize reading your email.
- Just like a written letter, be sure to open your email with a greeting like Dear Dr. Jones, or Ms. Smith:
- Use standard spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. THERE'S NOTHING WORSE THAN AN EMAIL SCREAMING A MESSAGE IN ALL CAPS.
- Write clear, short paragraphs and be direct and to the point; professionals and academics alike see their email accounts as business.
- Read through your email before sending it to make sure that your message is clear and that you haven't made any serious grammatical mistakes.

ENGRADE

We will be using Engrade to keep track of grades and attendance throughout the semester. Engrade will also allow you to see your grade in real time, so you will always be aware of exactly how you are doing in the class.

<h3>ACADEMIC HONESTY</h3>

Plagiarism—accidental or intentional—will be dealt with in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct, which can be found in on the Dean of Student's [website](#). *The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* (4th ed.) defines plagiarism as follows: To use another person's ideas or expressions in your writing without acknowledging the sources is to plagiarize....A writer who fails to give appropriate acknowledgement when

repeating another's wording or particularly apt term, paraphrasing another's argument, or presenting another's line of thinking is guilty of plagiarism (Section 1.7)

DISABILITY SERVICES

Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should email Disability Services at disability-gvl@ung.edu, call at 678.717.3855, or visit them at Dunlap-Mathis Building, Room 107

WRITING STUDIO: Nesbit Building 2103

Whether it be an English paper, a research paper for sociology, or a project outside of classes, we can assist you at any point in the writing process. In one-on-one sessions, our tutors engage writers in conversation about their ideas and writing assignments. Our goal is to enhance student writing by encouraging student writers to become independent, insightful, and knowledgeable about the possibilities in writing.

Monday - Thursday: 8:00 a.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m

<http://ung.edu/writing-center/index.php>

SUPPLEMENTAL SYLLABUS

For additional university policies and procedures, please refer to the Supplemental Syllabus, located at <http://ung.edu/academic-affairs/policies-and-guidelines/supplemental-syllabus.php>

ONLINE EVALUATION OF INSTRUCTOR

Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at University of North Georgia-Gainesville. Upon completing the course, please take time to fill out the online course evaluation.

COURSE SCHEDULE

<i>Date</i>	<i>Topics Covered</i>	<i>In-Class Assignments</i>	<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Reading/Listening</i>
Monday, January 11th	Course Introduction; Sign Up for Lore, Engrade			
Wednesday, January 13th	Historical Overview of American Detective Fiction & Noir			
Friday, January 15 th	Epistemology & Quest, pt. 1			Hawthorne: "Wakefield," "Young Goodman Brown" (digital)
Monday, January 18th	NO CLASS (MLK DAY)			
Wednesday, January 20th	Epistemology & Quest, pt. 2			Poe: "William Wilson," "Man in the Crowd" (digital)
Friday, January 22 nd	NO CLASS			
Monday, January 25th	Hardboiled Fiction (Hammett)			Hammett, <i>Red Harvest</i> Ch. 1-13
Wednesday, January 27th	Hardboiled Fiction (Hammett)			Hammett, <i>Red Harvest</i> Ch. 13-end
Friday, January 29 th	Hardboiled Fiction (Chandler)			Chandler, <i>The Big Sleep</i> Ch. 1-5
Monday, February 1st	Hardboiled Fiction (Chandler)			Chandler, <i>The Big Sleep</i> Ch. 5-15
Wednesday, February 3rd	Hardboiled Fiction (Chandler)		Response Essay #1 Due; Introduce Response Essay #2	Chandler, <i>The Big Sleep</i> Ch. 15-25
Friday, February 5 th	Hardboiled			Chandler, <i>The Big</i>

	Fiction (Chandler)			<i>Sleep</i> Ch. 25-end
Monday, February 8 th	Intro to Film Noir			Film Viewing: <i>The Big Sleep</i> (1945)
Wednesday, February 10 th	Intro to Film Noir			Film Viewing: <i>The Big Sleep</i> (1945)
Friday, February 12 th	Intro to Film Noir			Film Viewing: <i>The Big Sleep</i> (1945)
Monday, February 15 th	Noir & Neo- Noir			Film Viewing: <i>Brick</i> (2005)
Wednesday, February 17 th	Noir & Neo- Noir		Response Essay #2 Due; <i>The Big Sleep</i> Viewing Guide Due	Film Viewing: <i>Brick</i> (2005)
Friday, February 19 th	Noir & Neo- Noir			Film Viewing: <i>Brick</i> (2005)
Monday, February 22 nd	Detective Fiction & Representation			Himes, <i>Cotton Comes to Harlem</i> Ch. 1-7
Wednesday, February 24 th	Detective Fiction & Representation		<i>Brick</i> Viewing Guide Due	Himes, <i>Cotton Comes to Harlem</i> Ch. 8-15
Friday, February 26 th	Detective Fiction & Representation		Pass out Midterm Review Guide	Himes, <i>Cotton Comes to Harlem</i> Ch. 15-end
Monday, February 29 th	Midterm Review			
Wednesday, March 2 nd	MIDTERM EXAM, pt. 1			
Friday, March 4 th	MIDTERM EXAM, pt. 2			
Monday, March 7 th	Noir & Power WITHDRAWL DEADLINE			Film Viewing: <i>Chinatown</i> (1975)
Wednesday, March 9 th	Noir & Power			Film Viewing: <i>Chinatown</i> (1975)
Friday, March 11 th	Noir & Power			Film Viewing: <i>Chinatown</i> (1975)
Monday, March 14 th	NO CLASS			

	(SPRING BREAK)			
Wednesday, March 16 th	NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)			
Friday, March 18 th	NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)			
Monday, March 21 st	Slacker Noir		Introduce Response Essay #3	Pynchon, <i>Inherent Vice</i> Ch. 1-5
Wednesday, March 23 rd	Slacker Noir		<i>Chinatown</i> Viewing Guide Due	Pynchon, <i>Inherent Vice</i> Ch. 6-12
Friday, March 25 th	Slacker Noir			Pynchon, <i>Inherent Vice</i> Ch. 12-16
Monday, March 28 th	Slacker Noir			Pynchon, <i>Inherent Vice</i> Ch. 16-21
Wednesday, March 30 th	Slacker Noir			Film Viewing: <i>The Big Lebowski</i>
Friday, April 1 st	Slacker Noir			Film Viewing: <i>The Big Lebowski</i>
Monday, April 4 th	Slacker Noir			Film Viewing: <i>The Big Lebowski</i>
Wednesday, April 6 th	Metaphysical Detective Fiction		Response Essay #3 Due	Auster, <i>The New York Trilogy</i> : “City of Glass”
Friday, April 8 th	Metaphysical Detective Fiction		<i>The Big Lebowski</i> Viewing Guide Due	Auster, <i>The New York Trilogy</i> : “City of Glass”
Monday, April 11 th	Metaphysical Detective Fiction			Auster, <i>The New York Trilogy</i> : “Ghosts”
Wednesday, April 13 th	Metaphysical Detective Fiction			Auster, <i>The New York Trilogy</i> : “The Locked Room”
Friday, April 15 th	Metaphysical Detective Fiction			Auster, <i>The New York Trilogy</i> : “The Locked Room”
Monday, April 18 th	Epistemological Exhaustion			Film Viewing: <i>Memento</i>
Wednesday, April 20 th	Epistemological			Film Viewing:

	Exhaustion			<i>Memento</i>
Friday, April 22 nd	Epistemological Exhaustion			Film Viewing: <i>Memento</i>
Monday, April 25 th	The Future of Noir & Detective Fiction		Response Essay #4 Due	Film Viewing: <i>True Detective</i> S1: E1: “The Long, Bright Dark”
Wednesday, April 27 th	The Future of Noir & Detective Fiction		<i>Memento</i> Viewing Guide Due	Film Viewing: <i>True Detective</i> S1: E1: “The Long, Bright Dark”; <i>Fargo</i> S1: E1: “The Crocodile’s Dilemma”
Friday, April 29 th	The Future of Noir & Detective Fiction			<i>Fargo</i> S1: E1: “The Crocodile’s Dilemma”
Friday, May 6 th @ 8:00a- 10:00a	Final Exam		<i>Fargo</i> Viewing Guide Due; <i>True Detective</i> Viewing Guide Due	