School of Humanities, Creative Industries and Social Sciences

ENGL3012: Crime Fiction: Mutations of a Genre
Online
Semester 2 - 2023

The School of Humanities and Social Science is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which all cultures are accorded respect and all students and staff are expected to act with honesty, fairness, trustworthiness and accountability in dealings with others. The School recognises and respects the unique histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their unbroken relationship with the lands and the waters of Australia over millennia, and the validity of Aboriginal ways of knowing. We are dedicated to reconciliation and to offering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access and succeed in higher education.

OVERVIEW

Course Description

In this course, you will gain detailed knowledge of one of the most popular and widely read literary genres: crime fiction. You will become familiar with the evolution of the genre from the early nineteenth century to the present day and will develop advanced skills in analysing and contextualising crime fiction texts from the UK, the US, Australia and beyond.

The course as a whole challenges the traditional view of crime fiction as formulaic "genre fiction", seeing instead the genre as a form of literature defined by its diligent investigation of some of the key issues of modern society: justice, inequality, urban life, gender, sexuality, race and many others.

Assumed Knowledge   20 units of 1000-level English
Contact Hours   **Online**
Lectorial
Online
2 hour(s) per Week for 12 Weeks

The course will take place on the FutureLearn platform, and modules will be released weekly. A link to FutureLearn is available on the course Canvas site.

Unit Weighting   10
Workload   Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10-unit course.

CONTACTS

Course Coordinator	**Online**
	Prof Jesper Gulddal
	Jesper.Gulddal@newcastle.edu.au
	(02) 4921 5166
	Consultation: Via email, in person or on zoom (by appointment)
Teaching Staff	Other teaching staff will be advised on the course Canvas site.
School Office	**School of Humanities Creative Industries and Social Sciences**
	Social Sciences Building
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SYLLABUS

Course Content

The course provides detailed insight into a range of crime fiction texts in English.
Topics and activities may include:
• The history and evolution of crime fiction
• Main subgenres (classic, Golden Age, hardboiled, police procedural, metaphysical)
• Genre theory
• "Popular fiction" vs "Literature"
• Hybridisation and genre mobility
• Reading crime fiction
• Victims, detectives, criminals
• Beginnings and endings
• Plots and narrative structures

Course Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Outline the history of crime fiction and some of the key crime fiction subgenres.

2. Examine the key formal, thematic and contextual characteristic of individual crime fiction texts.

3. Investigate crime fiction texts in relation to their genre and the idea of genre evolution.

4. Analyse crime fiction texts as investigations of specific political, social or philosophical issues.

5. Debate the concept of "popular literature", its significance in modern culture and its limitations.

Course Materials

The following five novels are required reading (preferred editions in brackets):
• Arthur Conan Doyle, *The Sign of Four* (ISBN: 0140439072)
• Agatha Christie, *Appointment with Death* (ISBN: 9780008164959)
• Dashiell Hammett, *The Maltese Falcon* (ISBN: 9780752865331)
• Sarah Paretsky, *Indemnity Only* (ISBN: 04402210690)
• Jane Harper, *The Dry* (ISBN: 9780349142111)

These novels can be purchased from online booksellers such as bookdepository.com and amazon.com.au in print, ebook or audiobook format. Alternatively, you can buy them second-hand (lots of copies out there!) or borrow them from the University library or a public library. I've indicated ISBN numbers for each title, but it's not essential that you use these exact editions – any good edition will be fine.

Required secondary/critical readings are listed in the Course Schedule and are available via the "Course Readings" folder in Canvas. Please note that the number of critical readings is deliberately low and has been adjusted to enable us to read a broad selection of crime fiction texts.

Supplementary Reading (not required, but useful for completing the assessment tasks):

- Jesper Gulddal and Stewart King, "What is World Crime Fiction?", *The Cambridge Companion to World Crime Fiction*, p. 1-24.
- Jesper Gulddal, Stewart King and Alistair Rolls (eds.), *Criminal Moves. Modes of Mobility in Crime Fiction* (809.3872 GULD)
- *Janice Allan, Jesper Gulddal, Stewart King and Andrew Pepper (eds.), *The Routledge Companion to Crime Fiction* (library has online access)
- *Pierre Bayard, *Who Killed Roger Ackroyd?* (823.912 CHRI-2 BAYA)
- Luc Boltanski, *Mysteries and Enigmas* (823.087209 BOLT 2014)
- Patricia Craig (ed.), *The Oxford Book of Detective Stories* (808.83872 CRAI 2008)
- *Lee Horsley, *Twentieth-Century Crime Fiction* (823.087209 HORS)
- P.D. James, *Talking About Detective Fiction* (808.3872 JAME)
- *Jesper Gulddal, Stewart King and Alistiar Rolls (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to World Crime Fiction* (library has online access)
- Stephen Knight, *Crime Fiction Since 1800: Detection, Death, Diversity* (823.087209 KNIG 2010)
- *Stephen Knight, *Form and Ideology in Detective Fiction* (A823.087209 KNIG-1)
- Deane Mansfield-Kelley & Lois A. Marchino (eds.), *Longman Anthology of Detective Fiction* (813.087208 MANS)
- Sean McCann, *Gumshoe America* (813.087209 MCCA)
- Catherine Ross Nickerson (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to American Crime Fiction* (Electronic Resource)
- Gill Plain, *Twentieth-Century Crime Fiction: Gender, Sexuality and the Body* (823.0872 PLAI)
- Dennis Porter, *The Pursuit of Crime* (809.3872 PORT)
- *Martin Priestman (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction* (Ebook available via library catalogue)
- Charles J. Rzepka, *Detective Fiction* (809.3872 RZEP)
- Erin A. Smith, *Hard-Boiled. Working Class Readers and Pulp Magazines* (Ebook available via library catalogue)
- Julian Symons, *Bloody Murder* (809.3872 SYMO)
- *Andrew Pepper, *Unwilling Executioner* (889.3872 PEPP)
- Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen, *Scandinavian Crime Fiction* (Ebook available via library catalogue)
- Ronald R. Thomas, *Detective Fiction and the Rise of Forensic Science* (823.087209 THOM 2000)

(* recommended)

Recent scholarly journal articles can be found using the Library's online databases, e.g. EBSCO Megafile Premier, MLA Bibliography, JStor etc.

It is expected that you find additional critical sources when writing your 1,500-word essay.

ASSESSMENTS

This course has 4 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Reading Log (25%)	Must be submitted to Canvas *weekly* in 6 out of 12 weeks of your choosing. The final reading log entry must be submitted by 18 October @ 5pm.	Individual	25%	1, 2, 3, 4
2	Book review exercise (20%)	25 August @ 5pm	Individual	20%	1, 2, 4
3	Two in-term quizzes (20%)	Week 6 and 12	Individual	20%	1, 2, 4
4	1,500-word essay (35%)	23 October @ 5pm	Individual	35%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Late Submissions   The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this

applies equally to week and weekend days.

Assessment 1 - Reading Log (25%)

Assessment Type Log / Workbook

Description

The Reading Log assessment task requires you to engage critically with the assigned secondary/critical readings. Over the course of the semester, you will write 6 x 125-word reading log entries, **each focusing on a single critical essay from the course syllabus**. Please note that you cannot write about the fictional texts on the syllabus. The individual entries should ideally be written prior to the corresponding class and should form part of your preparation; they will also prepare you for the two in-class quizzes as well as for the written assignment.

Each entry must **succinctly summarise the key arguments of the critical essay you're write about**. You are welcome to highlight aspects of the essay that you find particularly interesting / provocative / untenable etc or offer critical perspectives or counterarguments. However, the main emphasis should be on capturing the main claims of the text.

You can choose the 6 texts/6 weeks independently, but make sure you get started early on this task. **Each entry is due by the Wednesday of the chosen week.** For example, if you choose to write about Todorov's "The Typology of Detective Fiction", which is a required reading in Week 2, you'd need to submit no later than 5pm on Wednesday 27 July.

Please submit your reading log entries using the six links under "Assessment 1" in the Canvas "Assignments" folder. Keep an off-line copy of all your journal entries in case we encounter technical difficulties with Canvas. The final deadline for completing the sixth and final entry is Wednesday **18 October.**

Weighting   25%
Due Date   Sixth and final entry due Wednesday 18 October @ 5pm
Submission Method   Canvas (separate links for each entry)
Assessment Criteria Marking criteria will be posted on Canvas by Week 1
Return Method   Canvas
Feedback Provided   Yes

Assessment 2 - Book review exercise (20%)

Assessment Type Online Learning Activity

Description   This assessment task requires you to write a **1,000-word response** to one of the assigned crime fiction texts. Please write this response in an "authentic" (that is, professional or real-life) format. This could be a newspaper-style critical book review (think *Sydney Morning Herald*) that identifies and discusses distinctive aspects of the text and avoids, as far as possible, purely subjective views about the quality of the work. You can write in a number of other formats as well: a fictional interview with the author; a blog post for a crime fiction website (see e.g. https://crimereads.com/); a vlog; a radio feature; a high school lesson plan or learning activity etc. Be creative, but make sure you engage seriously and critically with the text and provide evidence and arguments in support of your claims.

You should identify all sources in a bibliography included in your submission. If you quote or otherwise base your account on critical sources, you should provide in-text page references in brackets.

The responses must be **submitted in Canvas**; they can be text-only (default option) or they can be in video or audio format (MP3 or MP4), but will be assessed on the content only. Please state clearly at the top of the page which authentic format you've chosen.

The Book Review Exercise is due on Canvas on **Friday 25 August @ 5pm**.

Weighting   20%
Due Date   25 August @ 5pm
Submission Method   Canvas
Assessment Criteria Marking criteria will be posted on Canvas by Week 1
Return Method   Canvas

| **Feedback Provided** | Yes |

Assessment 3 - Two in-term quizzes (20%)

Assessment Type	Quiz
Description	Each quiz will consist of up to 10 questions relating to the course readings. Quiz 1 may include questions about all primary and all (required) secondary sources read in the first half of the course (weeks 1-6). Quiz 2 may include questions about all primary and all (required) secondary sources read in the second half of the course (weeks 7-12). Some questions will be multiple choice, other will require you to provide very brief answers. The purpose of the quizzes is to ascertain whether you've read and understood the required readings and have developed a solid understanding of crime fiction relative to the stage of the course.
	The quizzes replace an essay / written assignment and are designed to ensure that the set texts are read.
	You are allowed to consult all course readings when completed the quizzes, but there will be a time limit, so make sure that you're ready and that you won't be disturbed before starting.
	The quizzes are open **Monday-Thursday of Week 6 (Quiz 1) and Monday-Thursday of Week 12 (Quiz 2). The dates are: 21-24 August and 16-19 October.**

Weighting	20%
Due Date	Quizzes will be completed in Weeks 6 and 12.
Submission Method	Canvas
Assessment Criteria	N/a
Return Method	N/a
Feedback Provided	N/a

Assessment 4 - 1,500-word essay (35%)

Assessment Type	Essay
Description	Essay questions will be posted on Canvas by Week 1. Questions will focus on specific aspects of the assigned crime fiction novels and will require you to present a coherent argument based on textual evidence and critical engagement with secondary sources.
	Essays must be submitted online using the Turnitin link on the course Canvas site. The due date is **Monday 23 October @ 5pm**.
Weighting	35%
Due Date	Monday 23 October @ 5pm
Submission Method	Canvas
Assessment Criteria	Marking criteria will be posted on Canvas by Week 1
Return Method	Canvas
Feedback Provided	Yes

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development

		of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Communication Methods

Communication methods used in this course include:

Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

Oral Interviews (Vivas)

As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination (viva) may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the Oral Examination (viva) Procedure. In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the Student Conduct Rule.

Academic Misconduct

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35.

Adverse Circumstances

The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:
1.   the assessment item is a major assessment item; or
2.   the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances system;
3.   you are requesting a change of placement; or
4.   the course has a compulsory attendance requirement.
Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at:
https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236

Important Policy Information

The Help button in the Canvas Navigation menu contains helpful information for using the Learning Management System. Students should familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures at https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/no-room-for/policies-and-procedures that support a safe and respectful environment at the University.

This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.
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