

Los Angeles Crime Fiction

COLT 472, Class #22066R, Spring 2008, Mon & Wed, 12:00-1:50, THH 215



This course will examine the tradition of “hard-boiled” or “noir” crime and detective fiction as it develops in novels and films set in Los Angeles from the 1930’s through the 1990’s. One theme of discussions will be the conventions of the genre and their manipulation in successive texts and films. Another will be the detective as representative hero (or anti-hero) in American culture in the second half of the twentieth century. Above all, the course will consider representations of Los Angeles, and through this city of American society itself, during this time. Particular attention will be paid to attitudes to gender, race, and class, and their accompanying discourses, as the novels and films reproduce them uncritically or hold them up to scrutiny.

Readings will include James M. Cain, *Double Indemnity*, Raymond Chandler, *The Big Sleep* and *Farewell My Lovely*, Ross MacDonald, *The Zebra Striped Hearse*, Sue Grafton, ‘G’ is for *Gumshoe*, Michael Connelly, *The Black Echo*, and *Trunk Music*, Walter Mosley, *Black Betty*, Nina Revoyr, *Southland*, Robert Crais, *The Monkey’s Raincoat*, and others.

Films will include *LA Confidential*, *The Blue Dahlia*, *Devil in a Blue Dress*, and *Kiss Me Deadly*, as well as films based on the novels read in the course.

Note to COLT majors and minors on the L/M/CT Track: This is a Literature Concentration course.

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