

Deception and Detection: The Detective and the Criminal in British Literature, 1827-Present

ENL2022-6224

MWF Period 3, MAT 0014 (M&F) and AND 0021 (W)

Instructor: Sarah Kniesler

Office: Tigert 302

Email: smkniesl@ufl.edu

Office Hours: M & W period 4, and by
appointment

Course Description:

The legacy of Sherlock Holmes and his detective prowess is undeniable—we have seen *two* successful television adaptations come to life within the last five years alone. As a character, Holmes endures because he is quirky, irreverent, and unconventional. But the crime fiction genre itself remains compelling and relevant because of its unique ability to uncover and explore unpalatable aspects of society. This course surveys British crime fiction, exploring how this genre negotiates traditional British themes such as identity, gender, and modernity. Working outside of, around, and even within dominant social structures, the detectives we will discuss give voice to the anxieties, aspirations, and ideologies of marginal social groups. As a result, we can use crime fiction as a platform from which we can complicate our understanding of perceived historical truths and appreciate the culture work that contemporary crime fiction does. Readings will include scholarly criticism, short stories, and novels. Texts have been chosen both for their literary significance as well as their interesting treatment of the detective and/or the criminal.

This course can satisfy the UF General Education requirement for Composition or Humanities, and it also contributes 6000 words toward fulfillment of the UF requirement for writing.

Required Texts to Purchase:

(in reading order)

- Doyle, Arthur Conan. *The Sign of Four*, Penguin Classics (ISBN: 0140439072)
- Buchan, John. *The Thirty-Nine Steps*, Dover Publications (ISBN: 0486282015)
- Rankin, Ian. *Knots and Crosses*, Minotaur Books (ISBN: 0312536925)
- Galbraith, Robert. *The Cuckoo's Calling*, Mulholland Books (ISBN: 0316206857)
- *Sherlock* (TV Series), *Miss Marple* (TV Series), and *Luther* (TV Series), available on Netflix Instant and/or Amazon Instant Video (specific episodes TBA)

Required Texts Available on E-Learning:

(in reading order)

- De Quincey, Thomas. "On Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts."
- Poe, Edgar Allan. "The Murders in the Rue Morgue," and "The Purloined Letter."
- Selections by Stephen Knight
- Doyle, Arthur Conan. "A Scandal in Bohemia," and "The Speckled Band"
- Critical essay(s) on Sherlock Holmes
- Chandler, Raymond. "The Simple Art of Murder."

- Collins, Wilkie. "Who Killed Zebedee?"
- Chesterton, G. K. "The Oracle of the Dog."
- Selections by Sally Munt
- Excerpts from Braddon, Mary Elizabeth. *Under the Red Flag*.
- Selections by Susan Rowland
- Selections by Gill Plain

Additional scholarly criticism or critical theory may be added throughout the course of the semester.

Goals:

By the end of the semester, you should...

- Gain an appreciation for the literary significance of crime/mystery fiction and the cultural work done by this genre
- Be able to engage in scholarly conversations about British literature, British culture, and crime/mystery fiction
- Be able to make historical, literary historical, critical or theoretical statements about the texts you have read and should be able to support those statements.
- Refine basic writing skills, including drafting, proofreading, editing, and composing a polished final product
- Employ proper MLA documentation requirements

Grading Scale:

UF has recently instituted minus grades. As a result, letter grades now have different grade point equivalencies. For more information, see:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.htmls>

A =	93-100 =4.0	C =	73-76 =2.0
A- =	90-92 =3.67	C- =	70-72 =1.67
B+ =	87-89 =3.33	D+ =	67-69 =1.33
B =	83-86 =3.0	D =	63-66 =1.0
B- =	80-82 =2.67	D- =	60-62 =.67
C+ =	77-79 =2.33	E =	0-59 = 0.0

You must pass this course with a "C" or better to satisfy the CLAS requirement for Composition (C) and to receive the 6,000-word University Writing Requirement credit (E6). You must turn in all papers totaling 6,000 words to receive credit for writing 6,000 words.

PLEASE NOTE: a grade of "C-" will not confer credit for the University Writing Requirement or the CLAS Composition (C) requirement.

Assignments and Grading Scale:

Reading Responses: 5 entries in total, 500 words each, 15%

You will engage with a critical question about each of the novels that we read and construct a brief argument in answer to that question. These assignments will allow you to receive my feedback on critical interpretation and composition skills.

Close Reading Assignment: 750 words, 20%

You will construct a formal literary analysis of one of the texts read in class. This assignment will allow you to elaborate on one of your reading responses and/or engage further with a text *or*

critical theory you are interested in. This paper will not cite outside research; instead, it should be a detailed close reading and analysis of *one* text.

Synthesis Paper: 1,500 words, 20%

You will choose a text or theory from the course readings and synthesize it with a contemporary book or film or another popular culture medium that you are interested in. This paper allows you to bring your own interests into the classroom and encourages you to think about the contemporary significance of the texts we are reading in class. This is not a compare and contrast essay; instead, you should make an argument that can only be shown by bringing the two texts into conversation with each other.

Critical Analysis Paper: 2,000 words, 25%

For this final assignment, you should compose a detailed argument that engages with one of the texts we read in class. You can choose between working with a primary text we read throughout the semester or choosing a piece of theory or criticism we read in the class and applying it to a more contemporary text. Regardless, I expect the final essay to make an original contribution to our understanding of the text, not to simply repeat ideas that we discussed in the class.

Reading Quizzes: 10%

If you have reading assigned, you should expect to have a quiz first thing that class period. These quizzes will test if and how well you read the text. It is important that you take time in your reading to understand issues concerning character, theme, plot, tone, and format.

Participation: 10%

I expect you to come to class prepared to actively participate in class discussions and other in-class activities. This means having completed any reading or homework assigned for that day. Our classroom acts as a safe environment where you can air your opinions and consider those presented by your classmates, so take advantage of this and see how something you're thinking of writing a paper on, for instance, flies in general discussion.

If something prevents you from actively participating in class, please schedule a conference with me early in the semester to make other arrangements.

General Assessment Rubric:

Here is the meaning behind the grades I assign to your papers (all papers are graded on a letter scale, not points); you can use these statements to determine how you might work toward a higher grade:

A: Insightful: You did what the assignment asked for at a high quality level, with care and precision, and your work shows originality and creativity. Work in this range shows all the qualities listed below for a "B," but it also demonstrates that you took extra steps to be original or creative in developing content, solving a problem, or developing a style. Work in the "A" range is not only convincing and intriguing, but also illuminating. Since careful editing and proofreading are essential in writing, papers in the A range must be free of typos and grammatical or mechanical errors.

B: Proficient: You did what the assignment asked of you at a high quality level. Work in this range is competent, thoughtful, and considered, but it needs additional revision. Work in this range must be complete in content, be well organized, and show special attention to style.

C: Satisfactory: You did what the assignment asked of you and demonstrated that you have a

generalized comprehension of the ideas/films/essays you're working with. Work in this range needs significant revision, but it is complete in content and the organization is logical. Diction may be imprecise or unclear. The style is straightforward but unremarkable.

D: Poor: You neglected some basic requirements of the assignment, and completed it at a poor quality level. Work in this range needs significant revision. The content is often incomplete and the organization is hard to discern. Support is irrelevant, overgeneralized, lacks validity, and/or is absent. Ideas/texts are oversimplified. Work in this range may have no thesis statement, or may stray significantly from the thesis throughout the essay. Attention to style is often nonexistent or chaotic.

E: An E is usually reserved for people who don't do the work or don't come to class. However, if your work is shoddy and shows little understanding of the needs of the assignment, you will receive a failing grade.

Course Policies:

Attendance

Attendance is *required*. You are allowed three absences without any direct effect on your grade. Your final grade will drop by 5 points with each subsequent absence after your first three. If you reach six absences, you will automatically fail the course. If you are facing unusual circumstances that affect your ability to abide by these expectations, please schedule a conference with me.

Absences involving university-sponsored events, such as athletics and band, and religious holidays are excused, but you must discuss these with me *prior* to the date that will be missed.

If you are absent, it is your responsibility to be aware of all due dates/classwork. If absent due to a scheduled event, you are still responsible for turning assignments in on time.

Tardiness will not be tolerated. Three tardies will be considered as an absence.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is a serious violation of the [Student Honor Code](#). The Honor Code prohibits and defines plagiarism as follows:

Plagiarism. A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

a.) Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.

b.) Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.

(University of Florida, Student Honor Code, 15 Aug. 2007

<<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/honorcode.php>>)

University of Florida students are responsible for reading, understanding, and abiding by the entire [Student Honor Code](#).

All the work submitted on Sakai will be passed through Turnitin.com, a website that compares your paper to other papers on the Internet, any published work, and the Internet itself. If you plagiarize, you will be caught, which could result in an automatic E for the assignment, the

course, or a disciplinary measure from the university, depending upon the gravity and frequency of the matter.

Phones, Computers, etc.

Out of courtesy for your fellow classmates, and myself, it is expected that you silence your cell phone/other gadgets off before class. If you are using a laptop in class, it should only be used for taking notes.

Classroom Civility

Please keep in mind that you and your classmates come from diverse cultural, economic, and ethnic backgrounds. Some of the texts we will discuss and write about engage controversial topics and opinions. Diversified backgrounds combined with provocative texts require that you demonstrate respect for ideas that may differ from your own. Disrespectful behavior will result in dismissal, and accordingly absence, from the class.

In-Class Work

You will be expected to work in small groups and participate in group discussions, writing workshops, and other in-class activities. You must be present for all in-class activities to receive credit for them. In-class work cannot be made up. In general, you are expected to contribute constructively to each class session.

Paper Maintenance Responsibilities

You are responsible for maintaining duplicate copies of all work submitted in this course and retaining all returned, graded work until the semester is over. Should the need arise for a resubmission of papers or a review of graded papers, it is the your responsibility to have and to make available this material.

Mode of Submission

All papers will be submitted as MS Word (.doc) or Rich Text Format (.rtf) documents to E-learning/Sakai. Final drafts should be polished and presented in a professional manner. All papers must be in 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins and pages numbered.

Papers and drafts are due at the beginning of class or on-line at the assigned deadline. Late papers will not be accepted. Failure of technology is not an excuse.

Students with Disabilities

The University of Florida complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Should you need any accommodation, contact the Students with Disabilities Office, Peabody 202. That office will provide you with documentation that you will then present to me when requesting accommodation.

Harassment

UF provides an educational and working environment for its students, faculty, and staff that is free from sex discrimination and sexual harassment. For more about UF policies regarding harassment, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/studentguide/studentconductcode.php#s4041>

Grade Appeals

You may appeal a final grade by filling out a form available from Carla Blount, Program Assistant, Department of English. Appeals may result in a higher, unchanged, or lower grade.

Instructor Evaluations

You are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at: <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but you will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available at <http://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Course Schedule:

Reading is due the day it appears on the calendar

	Monday	Wednesday	Friday
Unit One: Intro to Crime Fiction & The Fine Line Between the Detective and the Criminal			
Week One (8/25)	Syllabus and Intros	Unit Intro	“On Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts” and “The Murders in the Rue Morgue”
Week Two (9/1)	No Class	“The Purloined Letter”	RR I Due Selections by Stephen Knight (Unit Intro)
Unit Two: Identity: Personal, National, and Imperial			
Week Three (9/8)	<i>The Sign of Four</i>	<i>The Sign of Four</i>	<i>The Sign of Four</i>
Week Four (9/15)	“A Scandal in Bohemia” and “The Speckled Band”	Critical essay(s) on Sherlock Holmes	RR II Due <i>Sherlock</i> episodes
Week Five (9/22)	<i>The Thirty-Nine Steps</i>	<i>The Thirty-Nine Steps</i>	First Essay Due <i>The Thirty-Nine Steps</i>
Unit Three: Gender: Masculinities and Feminisms			
Week Six (9/29)	Selections by Stephen Knight (Unit Intro)	RR III Due “The Simple Art of Murder”	<i>Knots and Crosses</i>
Week Seven (10/6)	<i>Knots and Crosses</i>	<i>Knots and Crosses</i>	<i>Knots and Crosses</i>
Week Eight (10/13)	<i>Knots and Crosses</i>	RR IV Due <i>Knots and Crosses</i>	No Class
Week Nine (10/20)	“Who Killed Zebedee?” and “The Oracle of the Dog”	Selections by Sally Munt	<i>Under the Red Flag</i>
Week Ten (10/27)	<i>Under the Red Flag</i>	<i>Under the Red Flag</i>	Second Essay Due <i>Under the Red Flag</i>
Week Eleven (11/3)	<i>Miss Marple</i> episodes	Selections by Susan Rowland	Selections by Gill Plain
Unit Four: Contemporary Crime Fiction			
Week Twelve (11/10)	<i>Cuckoo’s Calling</i> (Unit Intro)	<i>Cuckoo’s Calling</i>	RR V Due <i>Cuckoo’s Calling</i>
Week Thirteen (11/17)	<i>Cuckoo’s Calling</i>	<i>Cuckoo’s Calling</i>	<i>Cuckoo’s Calling</i>
Week Fourteen (11/24)	<i>Cuckoo’s Calling</i>	No Class	No Class
Week Fifteen (12/1)	<i>Cuckoo’s Calling</i>	<i>Cuckoo’s Calling</i>	<i>Luther</i> episodes

Week Sixteen (12/8)	Writing Workshop	Peer Review and Course Wrap-up	Final Essay Due Reading Day-No Class
---------------------	------------------	-----------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------