

ARTS AND LETTERS 100g
ID: 35234
TTH: 12:30-1:50 – VKC 203

Professor Margarita Pillado
THH 266 (0-3765)
Hours: T 2:00-4:00 & by appt.

Detectives with an Accent

Learning Objectives

Within the thematic framework of the quest for truth, justice, and knowledge that lies at the heart of the human enterprise, this course examines Spanish, Latin American, and Chicano contributions to the rich tradition of narratives of detection broadly conceived to include any investigation whose objective is to provide a solution to a mystery. Students will learn to identify the various models established in the British and North American traditions, such as the analytical, hard-boiled, and philosophical detection, and assess how works from the Hispanic tradition have contributed to the enrichment of the genre. Methodologically, this course emphasizes close reading, literary and film analysis, and engagement in class discussions.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be familiar with the literary conventions of detective fiction in general and those of the Hispanic literary tradition in particular and will be able to contextualize the novels, films, and stories studied in class with the specific historical, social, and political period they stem from or depict. This outcome presupposes effective command of the technical vocabulary for textual analysis.

Assessment

- Assignments: To be handed in at the beginning of the class period (20%)
- Discussion: Sustained engagement evidencing careful preparation (20%)
- Reviews: Five short tests (10%)
- Exams: Midterm (10%); Final (15%) (25%)
- Papers: Argumentative (3-5 pp.—10%) and Critical (5-8 pp.—15%) (25%)

A. Readings

Alarcón, Pedro Antonio de. *"The Nail", and Other Stories*. Trans. Robert M. Fedorchek. Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1997.

Borges, Jorge Luis, *Collected Fictions*. Translated by Andre Hurley. New York. Penguin, 1998

Burns, Rex and Mary Rose Sullivan. *Crime Classics. The Detective Story from Poe to the Present*. New York: Viking Penguin, 1990

Corpi, Lucha. *Eulogy for a Brown Angel*. Houston, Tex: Arte Público Press, 2002.

Cortázar, Julio and Paul Blackburn. *End of game and other stories*. London: Collins and Harvill Press, 1968.

Craig, Patricia, Editor. The Oxford Book of English Detective Stories. New York: Oxford UP, 1990.

- Hillerman, Tony, and Rosemary Herbert, editors. The Oxford Book of American Detective Stories. New York: Oxford UP, 1996.
- Lodge, David and Nigel Wood. *Modern Criticism and Theory. A Reader*. 1988. Essex, UK: Pearson Education Limited, 2000. 2nd edition.
- Pardo Bazán, Emilia. *"The White Horse" and Other Stories*. Trans. by Robert M. Fedorchek. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1993.
- Queen, Ellery, Editor. 101 Years' Entertainment. The Great Detective Stories, 1841-1941. 1941. New York: Garden City Publishing Co. (Little, Brown and Company), 1945.
- Taibo, Paco Ignacio, and Beth Henson. *Frontera Dreams*. El Paso, TX: Cinco Puntos Press, 2002.
- . "So When Was It That This Guy Medardo Rivera Killed This Guy Lupe Barcenas?" *The Armchair Detective* 26.3 (1993)
- Tusset, Pablo. *The Best Thing That Can Happen to a Croissant*. Trans. by Kristina Cordero. New York: Canongate, 2003.
- Vázquez Montalbán, Manuel. *The Angst-Ridden Executive*. Trans. by Ed Emery. London: Serpent's Tail, 1990
- B. Films
- The Maltese Falcon* (Houston, 1941)
The Official Story (Puenzo, 1985)
Cautiva (Biraben, 2005)
The Best Thing That Can Happen to a Croissant (Mir, 2003)
- C. Critical Bibliography
- Alazraki, Jaime, Editor. Critical Essays on Julio Cortázar. Critical Essays on World Literature. New York: G. K. Hall & Co, 1999.
- Bayó Belenguer, Susana. Theory, Genre, and Memory in the Carvalho Series of Manuel Vázquez Montalbán. Spanish Studies 11. Lewiston, ME: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2001.
- Boileau-Narcejac. Le Roman Policier [La Novela Policiaca]. 1964. Trans. Basilia Papastamatín. Letras Mayúsculas 7. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 1968.
- Collins, Jacky, and Shelley Godsland. *Mujeres Malas: Women's Detective Fiction from Spain*. Manchester Crime Fictions Research Series. 2005.
- Colmeiro, José. La Novela Policiaca Española: Teoría e Historia Crítica. Prólogo Manuel Vázquez Montalbán. Madrid: Anthropos, 1994.
- Craig-Odders, Renée W. *The Detective Novel in Post-Franco Spain. Democracy, Disillusionment, and Beyond*. U. Press of the South, New Orleans, 1999.

- Craig-Odders, Renée W., Jacky Collins, and Glen S. Close, Eds. Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Detective Fiction. Essays on the "Género Negro" Tradition. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Co, 2006.
- Escribá, Alex Martín, and Javier Sánchez Zapatero, Editors. Informe Confidencial. La Figura Del Detective En El Género Negro. Valladolid, Spain: Didafácil, 2007.
- Grossvogel, David I. "*Blow-Up: the Forms of an Esthetic Itinerary*." Critical Essays on Julio Cortázar. Editor Jaime Alazraki. New York: G. K. Hall & Co, 1999. 144-54.
- . Mystery and Its Fictions: From Oedipus to Agatha Christie. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins UP, 1970.
- Hart, Patricia. The Spanish Sleuth. The Detective in Spanish Fiction. Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1987.
- Ladeira, Ricardo. El Género Policiaco En La Literatura Española Del Siglo XIX. San Vicente del Raspeig, Alicante: Universidad de Alicante, 2001.
- Malin, M. R. "The Nineteenth-Century Spanish Literary Sleuth from Romanticism to Realism." *Confluencia*. 18 (2003): 219-221.
- Paredes Núñez, Juan, Ed. La Novela Policiaca Española. Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1989.
- Pérez, Genaro J. Ortodoxia y Heterodoxia De La Novela Policiaca Hispana: Variaciones Sobre El Género Negro. Hispanic Monographs. Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 2002.
- Resina, Joan Ramon. *El cadáver en la cocina. La novela criminal en la cultura del desencanto*. Barcelona: Anthropos, 1997.
- Stavans, Ilan. *Antiheroes. Mexico and Its Detective Novel*. Trans. Jesse H. Lytle and Jennifer A. Mattson. Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1997.
- Todorov, Tzvetan. "The Typology of Detective Fiction." *Modern Criticism and Theory: a Reader*. Eds. David Lodge and Nigel Wood. 2nd ed. Essex, UK: Pearson Education Limited, 2000. 137-44.
- Simpson, Amelia S. *Detective Fiction from Latin America*. Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1990.
- Valles Calatrava, José R. *La novela criminal española*. Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1991.
- Vázquez de Parga, Salvador. *La novela policiaca en España*. Barcelona: Ronsel, 1993.

Schedule of Readings, Assignments and Examinations:

Tales of Ratiocination: American and English Models

- Aug 26 Introduction: The case for detective fiction
Todorov, "The Typology of Detective Fiction"
The Prototype: Poe's "The Murders of the Rue Morgue"
- Aug 28 Poe, "The Purloined Letter"
Conan Doyle, "A Scandal in Bohemia"; "The Silver Strand"
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Tales of Ratiocination in the Hispanic Context: Antecedents and Masters

- Sept 4 Alarcón, "The Nail"
Pardo Bazán "The Cuff Link"; "The White Hair"
REVIEW 1: Literary Terms
- Sept 6 Intellectual Games
Borges, "Garden of Forking Paths", "Death and the Compass"
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- Sept 9 Playing with Reason
Borges, "The Approach to Al Mu'tasim", "Averroës' Search", "Ibn-Hakam al-Bokhari, Murdered in His Labyrinth", "The Man in the Threshold", "The Problem"
REVIEW 2: Tales of Ratiocination
- Sept 11 The Limits of Reason
Cortázar, "Blow Up"
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- Sept 16 Antonioni, *Blow Up*
Grossvogel, "Blow-Up: the Forms of an Aesthetic Itinerary"
- Sept 18 Workshop on argumentation
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Reality Bites Back: The Hard-Boiled Detective This (and The Other) Side of the Border

- Sept 23 Hammet, "The House on Turk Street"
Chandler, "Red Wind"
- Sept 25 Houston, *The Maltese Falcon*
Paper #1: Argumentation
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- Sept 30 Houston, *Chinatown*
- Oct 2 Detection South of the Border (Discussion Board)
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Anti and Domestic Heroes: Latin American and Chicano Detectives

- Oct 7 When Was It That This Guy Medardo Rivera Killed This Guy Lupe Barcenas?"
- Oct 9 Paper #1: Feedback Interview (schedule an appointment)
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- Oct 14 Review for Midterm
- Oct 16 **Midterm**
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- Oct 21 Taibo II, *Frontera Dreams* (Chapters 1-8)
- Oct 23 Taibo II, *Frontera Dreams* (Chapters 9-15)
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- Oct 28 LA Confidencial: Detection in the Barrio
Corpi, *Eulogy for a Brown Angel* (pp. 1-90)
Review 3: Paco Ignacio Taibo II
- Oct 30 Corpi, *Eulogy for a Brown Angel* (pp. 91-189)
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- Nov 4 Motherly Detection: the case of Argentina's Disappeared
The Official Story
- Nov 6 *Cautiva*
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- Memory and Counter Memory: the Post-Franco Spanish Sleuth
- Nov 11 Barcelona Blues: 'Carvalho—For lobsters, and for the Love of God!'
Vázquez Montalbán, *The Angst-Ridden Executive* (7-114)
REVIEW 4: Women and Detection
- Nov 13 Vázquez Montalbán, *The Angst-Ridden Executive* (114-229)
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- Nov 18 Tuset, *The Best Thing that Can Happen to a Croissant* (1-201, selections)
- Nov 20 Tuset, *The Best Thing that Can Happen to a Croissant* (205-475, selections)
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- Nov 25 Mir, *The Best Thing that Can Happen to a Croissant*
REVIEW 5: Spanish Sleuths
- Nov 27 Thanksgiving Break
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- Dec 2 Workshop on the critical paper (Paper due on or before the final exam)
- Dec 4 Review for the final exam

IMPORTANT

Feedback

- Schedule an appointment with me at least ONCE during the semester to discuss your work

Participation

- Each unjustified absence will lower your grade by 2%
- Tardiness will lower your grade by 0.5%
- In addition to your sustained engagement in class discussions, your participation grade will include a fifteen-minute presentation based on a reading assignment

Reading Assignments

- You are expected to complete a reading assignment and hand it in at beginning of each class period.
- A completed assignment will earn 100%
- A late assignment will receive 60%

Writing Assignments

- Papers, as well as reading assignments, are due at the beginning of the class (or exam) period.
- Late papers will be discounted 10% off the final grade each day after the deadline, for a maximum of 20% off. That means that your paper cannot be more than two days late or you will forfeit your right to submit it.
- Schedule an appointment with me well ahead of a paper's deadline to discuss your ideas and clarify any issues.

STATEMENT ON DISABILITY

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776