

FILM 205 Film Genre

Murder Most Foul: Crime Films

Trimester 1 2015

2 March to 1 July 2015

20 Points



Gun Crazy (Joseph Lewis, 1949)

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates:	2 March to 5 June 2015
Easter/Mid-Trimester break:	3 to 19 April 2015
Last assessment item due:	Week 10, 11 or 12 (Presentations)

Withdrawal dates:

Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Screenings:

Tuesdays 09:00 - 11:50 Hugh Mackenzie HMLT104

Lectures:

Wednesdays 09:00 - 10:50 Hugh Mackenzie HMLT104

Tutorials

Tutorials begin in WEEK 2. Please register for tutorials via the FILM 205 site on Blackboard: go to "Tutorial Sign Up" and then follow the instructions under the "S-Cubed Log In" link. Please read the instructions carefully. Tutorial rooms will be listed on S-Cubed, Blackboard and on the noticeboard outside the administration office, 83 Fairlie Terrace.

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Course Coordinator:

Dr Kirsten Thompson

Email: kirsten.thompson@vuw.ac.nz

Phone: 463 6728

Room: 101, 85 Fairlie Terrace

Office Hours: 11-12 Wednesday or by appointment

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, you **must** set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use. All class emails will be sent to your Victoria email ONLY so you are responsible for checking them. All required readings will be uploaded to Blackboard, except for the course textbook *Investigating the Scene*. (However the first week's reading from this textbook will be available via Blackboard)

Please do not send me emails requesting the notes for lectures that you have missed. Some powerpoints or other lecture material will be posted to Blackboard after each lecture, but if attendance drops more than a third, I will stop posting these.

Please address all email **formally and courteously** to me and don't expect a response faster than 24 hours. (This means addressing your email as Dear Dr. Thompson, not "Hey Kirsten" and giving me your full name and Student ID).

PRESCRIPTION

This course will examine one or more film genres from an aesthetic, historical, cultural, and/or economic perspective. In 2015 the course will focus on the crime film. We will largely concentrate on American film and television, with some comparative international examples. We'll examine different types of crime film and television, which may include the gangster film, 'whodunit', film noir and neo-noir, heist film, erotic thriller, serial killer film and Southern Gothic. Additional topics will include the narrative structure of "detection", the historical development of the detective and police force, changing social ideas around insanity, sociopathy and criminality, and the role of crime detection technology from anthropometry to fingerprints and DNA.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course *should* be able to:

1. demonstrate knowledge of the narrative and stylistic conventions of a specific genre
2. demonstrate a general understanding of critical terms and concepts relating to a particular film genre
3. characterise and analyse a range of relevant scholarly texts
4. research course issues effectively
5. communicate scholarly arguments about film genre in a rigorous and persuasive fashion.

TEACHING FORMAT

The course is taught through 12 weekly lectures, film screenings and 11 tutorials, starting in week 2. You are expected to attend all screenings, lectures and tutorials, and your attendance will be taken by roll in all tutorials.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

- attend at least 9 out of the 11 tutorials (unless documented by illness or other excuse, approved by the instructor)
- submit ALL assignments (including sitting the test), **by 5 pm on the specified dates** (unless extensions are approved) both digitally (on Turnitin) and in hard copy form to 83 Fairlie Terrace (front office), or no more than 3 days late (subject to penalties)/

WORKLOAD

The expected workload for a 20-point course is 200 hours over the trimester or 13 hours per teaching week. In addition to spending around 58 hours attending lectures, screenings and tutorials, you should spend approximately 42 hours on reading, preparing for tutorials, re-reading your lecture notes and looking at any lecture material that has been uploaded to Blackboard. The remaining 100 hours should be spent preparing for and working on assignments or studying for the test (for example, an assignment worth 20% should take a minimum of 20 hours). The exact times spend on such activities will vary. Preparation for all assignments should take place a number of weeks in advance of the due dates.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Short Papers (2) (600-650 words each)	20%	1, 2, 3, 4	17 March, 21 April
2	Research Essay (2500 words)	35%	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	5 May
3	Test (one hour)	30 %	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	27 May
4	Group Presentation (10 mins; students will be graded individually)	15%	1, 2, 3, 4	20, 27 May or 3 June

Assignment One: 2 x Short Papers (20%) On Turnitin and in Physical form to Office at 83 Fairlie Terrace by 5 pm

Length: 600-650 words (c. 2 pages double spaced in 12 point font with 1 inch margins)

Due Date: Week 3, 17 March and Week 6, 21 April

Description: This assignment will involve writing two short papers and analysing a case study film in relation to your weekly readings, covering material relating to Weeks 1-6.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilment of the set task in a clear, direct, relevant, and complete manner
- Clear evidence of engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in FILM 205
- The originality and quality of your findings. This will include your ability to comprehend, explain and synthesise research materials from reputable academic sources, engage in textual analysis, and develop and express your ideas
- Coherency, structure and argumentation of your essay
- Quality and fluency of your expression
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in film analysis

- Accurate and complete referencing of all sources, including a bibliography and filmography (See handout to be posted with more details as to format).

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment will improve your knowledge of one of the topics studied in the first six weeks of the course. It will enable you to develop your textual analysis, critical, and argumentation skills. It will also improve your written expression.

First Short Paper 10 % (Due Week 3, 17 March): With close reference to the reading from Week One (Thompson, Introduction, on Blackboard) identify a film you consider to be a crime film, and discuss in what ways it fulfills Thompson's criteria (and whether you consider additional factors also might be relevant here). Further details of assignment with full specifications and grading criteria will be available on Blackboard by Week 1.

Second Short Paper 10 % (Due Week 6, April 21): You will examine the G.K.Chesterton and/or Raymond Chandler readings (Week 3) and answer the question outlined on Blackboard. Further details of assignment with full specifications and grading criteria will be available on Blackboard by Week 3.

Assignment Two: Research Essay (35%)

Length: 2500 words

Due Date: Week 8, 5 May (On Turnitin and in Physical form to Office at 83 Fairlie Terrace by 5 pm)

Description: This assignment will involve building on topics covered in in your first two short papers. It will have a textual analysis component and a component devoted to crime/narrative theory. It will involve selecting a film, and arguing how it exemplifies certain aspects discussed in lectures and readings in Weeks 1-7, such as the definition of a crime film, histories of crime detection, suspense, crime technology, seriality and crime narrative, and the relationship of true crime to cinema. Further details of assignment with full specifications and grading criteria will be available on Blackboard by Week 3.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilment of the set task in a clear, direct, relevant, and complete manner
- Clear evidence of engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in FILM 205
- The originality and quality of your findings. This will include your ability to conduct independent research from reputable academic sources, synthesise research materials, engage in textual analysis, and develop and express your ideas
- Coherency, structure and argumentation of your essay
- Quality and fluency of your expression
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in film analysis
- Accurate and complete referencing of all sources, including a bibliography and filmography.

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment will improve your knowledge of one of the topics studied in the weeks 1-7 of the course. It will enable you to develop your textual analysis, independent research, and critical and argumentation skills. It will also improve your written expression.

Assignment Three: Class Test (30 %) One hour in Lecture timeslot in Week 11 covering material in Weeks 1-10

Description: The test will be a one hour multiple choice and short answer test given in the first hour of the lecture timeslot. It will require you to prepare by revising your film notes, readings and lecture notes for Week 1-10. You will also be expected to study a specific number of terms from a glossary of terms and topics (a study sheet to guide your revision will be posted on Blackboard by Week 8).

Due Dates: 27 May.

Assessment Criteria:

- Answering the questions in a clear, direct, legible, relevant, complete and timely manner
- Knowledge and understanding of the readings and lectures
- Coherency, argumentation and quality of your answer
- Quality and fluency of your expression

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment will develop your understanding of key concepts and/or issues in the crime genre, and your ability to engage with scholarly literature. It will also enhance your critical and expression skills.

Assignment Four: Group Presentation (10 minutes) 15%

Due Date: Tutorials in Weeks 10, 11, & 12

Description:

You will work in a small group and conduct research on an aspect of crime film covered in weeks 1-9. Your group will deliver its findings in a ten minute presentation in tutorials in weeks 10, 11 or 12. You will be marked individually for this assignment.

Assessment Criteria:

- Fulfilment of the set task in a clear, direct, relevant, timely, and complete manner
- Clear evidence of engagement with the ideas and materials discussed in FILM 205
- The originality and quality of your findings. This will include your ability to find, comprehend, explain and synthesise research materials from reputable academic sources, and to develop and express your ideas

- Coherency, structure and argumentation of your presentation
- Effective communication and team work
- Understanding and correct application of terms and concepts used in film analysis
- Accurate and complete referencing of all sources, including a bibliography and filmography, (see handout for more details).

Relationship to Learning Objectives:

This assignment will enhance your knowledge of the crime genre and your understanding of topics covered in the class in Weeks 1-9. It will develop your ability to engage critically with scholarly texts. It will improve your capacity to deliver persuasive oral arguments.

SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK

Work provided for assessment in this course will be checked for academic integrity by Turnitin. Follow the instructions provided in the "Assignments and Turnitin" section of Blackboard.

Hardcopy assignments are submitted in the drop slot outside the administration office: 83 Fairlie Terrace. Attach an assignment cover sheet found on Blackboard or outside the administration office. Remember to fill in your tutor's name.

Your marked assignment will be handed back by your tutor in tutorials or during their office hours. Any uncollected assignments can be picked up from the Programme Administrator after the last day of teaching. Assignments will be held in the administration office until the end of the following trimester. You need to show your student identification to collect marked assignment from the administration office.

EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

Extensions

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted. To apply for an extension, email your Course Coordinator before the assignment is due. If granted, your Course Coordinator will inform you of the new due date. Tutors cannot grant extensions. **No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after Wednesday 17 June 2015.**

Penalties

- Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day, **subject to a maximum of 3 days**. Weekends will count as two late days. **Failure to submit either the digital assignment or hardcopy assignment will result in 2.5 % penalties to your assignment grade per day late AND: No assignments will be accepted more than three days after the due date. Failure to complete any specific coursework results in a failure for the class.** Late work also receives minimal or no comments from your marker. No assignment will be accepted that is more than three days late.

SET TEXTS

Thompson, Kirsten Moana. *Crime Films: Investigating the Scene*. London: Wallflower, 2007.

You can order textbooks online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Additional Required Readings will be on Blackboard.

RECOMMENDED READING

See Bibliography at end of textbook.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

STUDENT FEEDBACK

This is the first time this version of this class has been taught. Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php. In week six or seven of the trimester your class representative will be invited to a meeting with the Programme staff. In week five your class representative will ask the class for any feedback on this course to discuss at this meeting.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute:
www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy

- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz
- School website: www.victoria.ac.nz/seftms

COURSE PROGRAMME

Week I / What is a Crime Film? /The Narrative of Murder I: The Whodunit / 3 & 4 March

Introduction to class, Historical Overview of Crime Genre, Murder, Mystery & thriller genres

Screening: *Dead Again* (Kenneth Branagh, 1991) UK; selection of clips from Agatha Christie and Sherlock Holmes adaptations

Readings: Thompson Introduction pp 1-27

Recommended Home Viewing: *Memento* (Christopher Nolan, 2000)

Week II/ 'Snatched from the Headlines': Crime and History 10 & 11 March

Screening: (selections) *History of a Crime* (Ferdinand Zecca, 1901) France; *Musketeers of Pig Alley* (D.W. Griffith, 1912) US; *Scarface* (Howard Hawks, 1932) US ; *Public Enemy* (William Wellman) US

Screening: *Goodfellas* (Martin Scorsese, 1990) US or *The Grifters* (Stephen Frears, 1990) US

Reading: Thompson chap 1

Tutorial: As part of your preparation for your first short paper, come to first tutorial with a specific crime film example to discuss with classmates in light of reading from Week 1 (and be prepared to discuss how it fulfills criteria from reading in Week 1)

Week III / Seriality and The Narrative of Murder II/ 17 & 18 March

Screening: *Se7en* (David Fincher, 1996) US

Readings: Thompson, chap 4 "The Criminal II: The Serial Killer Film and Postmodern Hybrids"

Reading for Tutorials and Assignment # 2

Recommended Viewing: *Hannibal* (TV Series), *Silence of the Lambs* (Jonathan Demme, 1991) ; *Manhunter* (Michael Mann)

FIRST SHORT PAPER DUE 17 MARCH

Week IV / Suspense & Hitchcock/ 24 & 25 March

Professor Thompson away at Conference. Guest Lecturer Miriam Ross.

Screening: *Dial M for Murder* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1954) US

Reading: Sheldon Hall "Dial M For Murder" BB

Tutorial: Discuss Raymond Chandler "The Art of Murder" as preparation for Second Short Paper, and Sheldon Hall

Week V/ True Life Crime and Murder in the Family/ 31 March & 1 April

Professor Thompson away at Conference. Guest Lecturer Alfio Leotta

Screening: *Heavenly Creatures* (Peter Jackson, 1994) NZ

Reading: Selections, *Parker and Hulme*, Glamuzina, BB

Tutorial: Discuss GK Chesterton "A Defence of Detective Stories" BB as Preparation for Research Paper in relation to film

Recommended Viewing: *In Cold Blood* (Richard Brooks, 1967), *Capote* (Bennett Miller, 2005) US; *Beyond A Reasonable Doubt* (John Laing, 1982) NZ

Easter/Mid Trimester Break: Friday 3 to Sunday 19 April 2015

Week VI / Tartan Noir/Murder amongst friends/ 21 & 22 April

Screening: *Shallow Grave* (Danny Boyle, 1995), Scotland

Reading: Thompson Chap 2

Tutorial: Preparation for Research paper; textual analysis of *Shallow Grave* and reading

Recommended Viewing: Nordic Noir and *The Bridge/Broen/Bron*, Sweden/Denmark; *The Killing* (US)/*Forbrydelsen* (Denmark)

SECOND SHORT PAPER DUE 21 APRIL

Week VII/ Southern Gothic and the Law/ 28 & 29 April

Screenings: *Cape Fear* (Martin Scorsese, 1991)

Readings: Thompson "Cape Fear and Trembling: Familial Dread" BB

Tutorial: Preparation for Research paper; textual analysis of *Cape Fear* and reading

WEEK VIII/Film Noir / 5 & 6 May

Screening: *Out of the Past* (Jacques Tourneur, 1947); selections, Martin Scorsese Documentary on Film Noir;

Reading: TBA

Tutorial: focus on reading and textual analysis of film for week

RESEARCH PAPER DUE (building on papers 1 (case study) and 2 (crime theory))

Week IX / Neo-Noir / 12 & 13 May

Screening: *Blood Simple* (Joel & Ethan Coen) 1984; clips *Body Heat* (Lawrence Kasdan, 1981)

Reading: Thompson chap 3

Tutorial: focus on reading and textual analysis of film for week

WEEK X/ Bad couples on the Run/ 19 & 20 May

Screening: *Badlands* (Terence Malick, 1973); clips *Gun Crazy* (Joseph Lewis, 1949); *Bonnie and Clyde* (Arthur Penn, 1967)

Readings: Stephen Prince "Graphic Violence in the Cinema: Origins, Aesthetic Design, and Social Effects"

BB

Tutorials: Presentations

WEEK XI/ Television & Crime / 26 & 27 May

Screening: selections *CSI*; *Dexter*; *Breaking Bad*

Readings: Selections, "Scene of the Crime" from *The Forensic Science of CSI*

Tutorials: Presentations

WEEK XII /TBA / 2 & 3 June

Class to Vote on favorite Crime Film to be screened

Tutorials: Presentations