

ENGL 3283, Topics in Popular Culture and Popular Genres: Film Noir

Teacher: M. K. Booker

Textbooks Required: None. Electronic textbook will be supplied free of charge.

Description: Dark, violent, dangerous, cynical, and sexy, film noir has produced some of the most memorable films in American cinematic history. Film noir has been described as the most American of all film genres, yet it has also exercised a broad international influence (such as its crucial influence on the French New Wave), as well as an extensive influence on the works of contemporary American filmmakers (such as Quentin Tarantino). This course is intended to provide a survey of some of the leading works of film noir as well as a look at a few films clearly influenced by film noir. We will examine film noir in its original historical context, exploring its relationship to that context, but also exploring the ongoing appeal of the genre in other contexts, viewing and discussing some neo-noir films, as well.

Essays, exams, and other major requirements: Students will be expected to view the required films on their own, generally via rental from Prime Video or another streaming service. Grade to be determined from brief daily written assignments and a final exam.