Criminal America: Reading, Studying and Teaching American Crime Fiction

A Symposium Sponsored by the American Literature Association

March 2-4, 2017

Palmer House Hilton
17 East Monroe Street
Chicago, Illinois 60603
Criminal America:  
Reading, Studying and Teaching  
American Crime Fiction  

An American Literature Association  
Symposium  

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17 E Monroe St  
Chicago, IL 60603  

Keynote Speaker: Charles Rzepka, Boston University  

Conference Directors:  
David Schmid, SUNY at Buffalo  
Alfred Bendixen, Princeton University  
Olivia Carr Edenfield, Georgia Southern University  

Acknowledgments:  

Tentative Program: Participants should send all corrections and requests  
to Olivia Carr Edenfield, Georgia Southern University:  
carr@georgiasouthern.edu
Thursday, March 2, 2017

Conference Registration:
8:30 pm – 10:00 pm

Friday, March 3, 2017

Registration: 8:00 am – 9:00 am

Opening Plenary Roundtable:
Why American Crime Fiction Matters
9:00 am – 9:45 am
(Room)

Moderator: Alfred Bendixen, Princeton University

John Gruesser, Kean University
Allen Josephs, University of West Florida
Lee Clark Mitchell, Princeton University
Catherine Nickerson, Emory University
Andrew Pepper, Queen’s University, Belfast
Charles Rzepka, Boston University
Candace Waid, University of California, Santa Barbara
Session 1-A: 10:00 – 11:20 am (room)

Criminal Poe
Chair: Molly J. Donehoo, Georgia Southern University

1. “Poe’s Tales: Interpolating the Perverse Subject,” Kaitlin Chase, University of Vermont


3. “Reading Poe’s City: Crime and the Nineteenth Century Urban Landscape,” Julia E. House, Georgia State University

Session 1-B: 10:00 – 11:20 am (room)

New Conceptions of American Crime Fiction
Chair: Charles Rzepka, Boston University

1. “Teaching American Detective Fiction in the Contemporary Classroom,” Nicole Kenley, Simpson University


3. “Reconceiving Contemporary American Crime Fiction through the Lens of the Drug Trade,” Andrew Pepper, Queen’s University, Belfast

Session 1-C: 10:00 – 11:20 am (room)

Feminism and Crime Fiction
Chair: Gloria Cronin, Brigham Young University

1. “Figures of the Law: Comparing Feminism and Race in Sara Paretsky and Dana Stabenow,” Cécile Heim, University of Lausanne

2. “Gonzo Feminism: How the Characters of Gillian Flynn’s Novels are Subverting Archetypes in Crime Fiction,” Jessica Dionne, UNC Charlotte

3. “The Feminist Angle in Domestic Cozies: Knitting, Quilting, and Crafting in Contemporary Murder Mysteries,” Jennifer Hynes, University of Phoenix
Session 2-A: 11:30 am – 12:50pm (room)

Detecting Through Violence: Context Tells Crime in the Late Faulkner
Chair: Alfred Bendixen, Princeton University

1. “Darkness at the Edge of Town: Crime, Politics, and Faulkner’s Late Writing,” Daniel Pecchenino, University of Southern California


3. “Decoding Faulkner: Canned Goods and Crimes against Women; or, Staging Scenes of No Justice in the Late Faulkner,” Candace Waid, University of California, Santa Barbara

Session 2-B: 11:30 am – 12:50pm (room)

Crime, Fiction, and Film
Chair: Hunter Walsh, Georgia Southern University

1. “Edith Meiser and Sherlock Holmes: Bringing the Quintessential British Sleuth to American Airwaves,” Rosemary E. Johnsen, Governors State University

2. “Moving Holmes: An investigation about displacement in Elementary’s Sherlock Holmes,” Larissa Bougleux, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Brazil


Session 2-C: 11:30 am – 12:50pm (room)

Crime Writing and Place
Chair: Joshua Temples, Georgia Southern University


3. “Hawaii as Liminal Space: The Other(s) in American Crime Fiction,” George Evans Light, Independent Scholar

4. “Natty Bumppo with a Toothbrush: Jack Reacher and the Wide-Open Spaces of America,” Leah Watkins DeAloia, University of Dayton
Lunch
1:00 – 2:20 pm
(Room)

Session 3-A: 2:30 – 3:50 pm (room)

**Raymond Chandler**
Chair: Lee Clark Mitchell, Princeton University

1. “Raymond Chandler and Post-Combat Trauma: Reading Philip Marlowe as a Veteran of WWI,” Sarah Trott, Swansea University, Wales

2. “Raymond Chandler and the Pleasures of Genre,” Jeffrey Scraba, University of Memphis

3. “Detectives, Desire, and Drugs in the Novels of Raymond Chandler,” Macy Todd, SUNY Buffalo State

Session 3-B: 2:30 – 3:50 pm (room)

**Wider Perspectives: Crime Fiction and the University**
Chair: Gloria Cronin, Brigham Young University


2. “Breaking into the Vault: Teaching Crime Fiction with Special Collections,” L. Anne Delgado, Indiana University

3. “The ‘Wicked Woman’ and the Forger: Teaching and Theorizing the Detective Work of Miss Fannie Ratchford,” Danielle Dye, University of Texas at Austin

4. “Crime Fiction in the Composition Classroom,” Will Dawkins, Portland Community College
Session 4-A: 4:00 – 5:20 pm (room)

Criminal Elements
Chair: Allen Josephs, University of West Florida

1. “Horror Starts at Home: Echoes of Poe in Gillian Flynn’s Gone Girl,” Todd Rohman, St. Louis Community College


Session 4-B: 4:00 – 5:20 pm (room)

Midwest Crime Literature
Chair: Molly J. Donehoo, Georgia Southern University

1. “‘Somethin’ of that kind, or somethin’ worse’: Crime and the Rural Midwest in Ring Lardner’s ‘Haircut’,” Ross Tangedal, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point


Session 4-C: 4:00 – 5:20 pm (room)

The Beginnings of American Crime Fiction
Chair: Joshua Temples, Georgia Southern University


2. “Local Plague, Global Conspiracy, and the Corpse’s Story: Criminal America in Charles Brockden Brown’s Arthur Meryvn,” Matthew Smalley, University of Kansas


4. “James Hall, William Gilmore Simms, and the Birth of the Western Outlaw in the U.S. Novel,” Sam Lackey, University of South Carolina
5:30 – 7:00 pm

Keynote Address and Reception
Charles Rzepka
Boston University


Professor Rzepka will be glad to pre-distribute copies of the texts that he’ll be citing to anyone who is interested. Please contact him at crzepka@bu.edu before March 1st.
Saturday, March 4, 2017

Registration: 8:00 am – 9:00 am

Session 5-A: 9:00-10:20 am (room)

Hard-Boiled Femininities in Twentieth-Century American Crime Fiction
Organizer and Chair: Leah Pennywark, Purdue University


2. “Floozies, Golddiggers, Blackmailers, and Ordinary Women in the Fiction of Mabel Seeley and Margaret Millar,” Catherine Nickerson, Emory University

3. “Deconstructing the Hard-Boiled Male in Megan Abbott’s The Song Is You,” Kenneth Lota, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill

Session 5-B: 9:00-10:20 am (room)

Reading Race in Crime Fiction
Chair: Alfred Bendixen, Princeton University

1. “Bootlegging in the Black Press,” Martha H. Patterson, McKendree University

2. “Reluctant Witnesses: Narrative Voices in Wideman’s Brothers and Keepers and Gaines’s A Lesson Before Dying,” Keith Byerman, Indiana State University


Session 5-C: 9:00-10:20 am (room)

Masters of Narrative Technique
Chair: Megan M. Flanery, Georgia Southern University

1. “Narrative Technique in Patricia Highsmith’s The Talented Mr. Ripley,” Reshmi Dutta-Flanders, University of Kent

2. “Read it Again: Dashiell Hammett’s Twice Told Tale,” David Stivers, Savannah College of Art and Design

Session 6-A: 10:30 am – 11:50 am (room)

Teaching Crime Fiction
Chair: Nicole Kenley, Simpson University

1. “Teaching the Crime Short Story,” Charlotte Beyer, University of Gloucestershire
2. “Teaching Crime Fiction and Gender,” Maureen Reddy, Rhodes Island College
3. “Teaching Crime Fiction Plots,” Malcah Effron, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Session 6-B: 10:30 am – 11:50 am (room)

Anna Katherine Green
Chair: Catherine Nickerson, Emory University

2. “‘Shot! Murdered!’: Anna Katharine Green’s The Leavenworth Case and the Logics of Action,” Thomas Dikant, University of Chicago

Session 6-C: 10:30 am – 11:50 am (room)

Realism and Naturalism
Chair: Molly J. Donehoo, Georgia Southern University

1. “Gilded Age Noir: William Dean Howells and the Invention of the White-Collar Crime Novel,” Andrew Ball, Lindenwood University
2. “Comic Crime as Cultural Criticism; or Ambrose Bierce, Satire, and the Inevitable Murder of One’s Relatives,” Brian Elliott, Urbana University
4. “Criminal Deviance, Evolution, and Class Representation in Frank Norris’s McTeague,” Jose Fernandez, Western Illinois University
12:00 – 1:15 pm (Room) Lunch

Session 7-A: 1:30 am – 2:50 pm (room)

Haunted Women in Criminal America
Chair: Alfred Bendixen, Princeton University

1. “Ghost-Wave Feminism: Reconciling Two Poles of Femininity in Ellen Glasgow and Mary Heaton Vorse,” Cindy Murillo, Tennessee State University


Session 7-B: 1:30 am – 2:50 pm (room)

Reception Studies
Chair:

1. “Reading Mark Twain’s Detective Fiction: Parody, Realism, and Response,” Philip Goldstein, University of Delaware-Wilmington

2. “Codifying Detection: Collections of, Apologies for, and Criticism on Detective Fiction 1900-1930,” John Gruesser, Kean University.

3. “Femine Noir?: The Reception of American Women’s Cold-War Crime Fiction and Its Contemporary Reprints,” Erin Smith, University of Texas, Dallas

Session 7-C: 1:30 am – 2:50 pm (room)

Faulkner, Race, and Crime
Chair: Candice Waid, University of California, Santa Barbara

1. “Criminalizing Race and Decriminalizing Crime,” Deborah Clarke, Arizona State University


Session 8-A: 3:00 – 4:20 pm (room)

Crime Fiction and its Forms
Chair: Deborah Clarke, Arizona State University


2. “Lessons in Liberalism from an Earlier Age: Reading Helter Skelter,” Jacqueline Foertsch, University of North Texas

3. “The American Metacognitive Mystery Tale,” Antoine Dechêne, Université de Liège, Belgium

Session 8-B: 3:00 – 4:20 pm (room)

American Women Inventing Crime Fiction
Chair: Cindy Murillo, Tennessee State University

1. “Our faces are such traitors’: Reading the Female Body in Alcott’s V.V.,” Stephanie Metz, University of Tennessee

2. “Detecting Economic Panic: Circulation and Sentiment in Metta Fuller Victor’s The Dead Letter,” Nicole Zeftel, CUNY Graduate Center

3. “Doubling & Interpretive Labor in Harriet Prescott Spofford’s Detective Tales,” Bob Hodges, University of Washington

4. “Edith Wharton and Crime,” Josh Temples, Georgia Southern University

Session 8-C: 3:00 – 4:20 pm (room)

Contemporary Crime
Chair: Molly J. Donehoo, Georgia Southern University


2. “Working Class Criminals: The Culture of Crime in the Short Stories of Breece Pancake and Denis Johnson,” Megan M. Flanery, Georgia Southern University

4:30 – 6:00 pm

Closing Reception and Final Reflections:

an Informal Discussion