

**Criminal America:  
Reading, Studying and Teaching  
American Crime Fiction**

A Symposium Sponsored by the American Literature Association

October 3-4, 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

March 3-4, 2017

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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 Alfred Bendixen at [ab23@princeton.edu](mailto:ab23@princeton.edu)

**Thursday, March 2, 2017**

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

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**Friday, March 3, 2017**

Registration: 8:00 – 9:00 am

**Opening Plenary Roundtable:  
Why American Crime Fiction Matters**

**9:00 – 9:45 am  
(Room)**

**Moderator:**

**Alfred Bendixen, Princeton University  
John Gruesser, Kean University  
Lee Clark Mitchell, Princeton University  
Catherine Nickerson, Emory University  
Andrew Pepper, Queen's University, Belfast  
Charles Rzepka, Boston University**

**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
2. "The Reader as Detective: Cryptographic Homosexuality in Edgar Allan Poe," Paul Emmett, University of Wisconsin-Manitowoc
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. "The American Metacognitive Mystery Tale," Antoine Dechêne, Université de Liège, Belgium
2. "Sequels, Series, and the Uses of Memory in Crime Fiction: Stark, Connelly, Perry," Lee Clark Mitchell, Princeton 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
2. "The Curious Case of Hunger: Crime in *Light in August*," Natasha O'Neill, University of California, Santa Barbara
3. "Decoding Faulkner: Canned Goods and Crimes against Women; or, Staging Scenes of No Justice in the Late Faulkner," Candace Waid, University of California

**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
3. "*Film noir* in Writing: a Study of Remediation in Nic Pizzolatto's *Between Here and the Yellow Sea*," David Rodriguez-Martinez, University of Minnesota-Twin Cities

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

**Crime Writing and Place**

Chair: Joshua Temples, Georgia Southern University

1. "Detecting New York: The City in Contemporary Crime Fiction," Thomas Heise, Penn State University
2. "The City of Cincinnati Welcomes You... : City-Mysteries and Urban Boosterism," Tyler Roeger, Pennsylvania State 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

1. "The Shady Side of the Library: A Case for Crime Fiction in Academic Libraries," William Blick, Queensborough Community College
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: Olivia Carr Edenfield, Georgia Southern University

1. "Horror Starts at Home: Echoes of Poe in Gillian Flynn's *Gone Girl*," Todd Rohman, St. Louis Community College
2. "Crime Fiction's Complicity in State Power in Ross Macdonald's *Zebra-Striped Hearse* and Valerie Wilson Wesley's *When Death Comes Stealing*," Patrick Russell, University of Connecticut
3. "Working Class Criminals: The Culture of Crime in the Short Stories of Breece Pancake and Denis Johnson," Megan M. Flanery, Georgia Southern University

**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
2. "'A Patch of Dried Blood': Hemingway and Midwestern Crime Literature," Michelle Moore, College of DuPage
3. "Eroding the Self: Identity in Dan Chaon's *Await Your Reply*," Douglas Sheldon, DePaul University

**Session 4-C: 4:00 – 5:20 pm (room)**

**The Beginnings of American Crime Fiction**

Chair: Joshua Temples, Georgia Southern University

1. "'The Measure of My Iniquity': The Shifting Borders of Religion and Crime in the Eighteenth Century," Kathleen N. Monahan, St. Peter's University
2. "Local Plague, Global Conspiracy, and the Corpse's Story: Criminal America in Charles Brockden Brown's *Arthur Mervyn*," Matthew Smalley, University of Kansas
3. "George Lippard and Nathaniel Hawthorne, Unlikely 'Partners in Crime': The Class Accents of Antebellum Crime Fiction," Timothy Helwig, Western Illinois University
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**

Address by: **Charles Rzepka, Boston University**

# Saturday, March 4, 2017

Registration: 8:00 – 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

1. "Hard-Boiled Dames: Gun-Molls, Female Dicks, and Tough Sob-Sisters in the Gangster Pulps," David M. Earle, University of West Florida
2. "Floozies, Goldiggers, 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 Beyerman, Indiana State University
3. "Making an Urban Monster: Race and Crime in Victor LaValle's *The Ballad of Black Tom*," Rick Swope, University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras

## 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
3. "Criminal Minds: The Shirley Jackson Renaissance," Doni M. Wilson, Houston Baptist University

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

**Teaching Crime Fiction**

Chair: Lee Clark Mitchell, Princeton 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 pm (room)**

**Anna Katherine Green**

Chair: Catherine Nickerson, Emory University

1. "Mapping Family Secrets: Spatiality and Domestic Architecture in Anna Katharine Green's Detective Fiction," Claire Meldrum, Wilfred Laurier University
2. "'Shot! Murdered!': Anna Katharine Green's The Leavenworth Case and the Logics of Action," Thomas Dikant, University of Chicago
3. "Police-Men: Law Enforcement and Manhood in the Detective Fiction of Anna Katharine Green," Joshua Leavitt, Ohio State University

**Session 6-C: 10:30 am – 11:50 pm (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
3. "*The Sport of the Gods*: Paul Laurence Dunbar, Naturalism, and Crime," Rob Welch, Indiana University of Pennsylvania
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 – 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
2. "The Specter of Sterility: Abortion and Extrajudicial Punishment in Lois Weber's *Where Are My Children?* (1916)," Megan Minarich, Tennessee State University
3. "Entering and Belonging: Redefining Feminine Identity in *The Haunting of Hill House*," Jennifer Nader, Central New Mexico College

### Session 7-B: 1:30 – 2:50 pm (room)

#### Reception Studies

Chair: Molly J. Donehoo, Georgia Southern University

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 – 2:50 pm (room)

#### Faulkner, Race, and Crime

Chair: Olivia Carr Edenfield, Georgia Southern University

1. "Criminalizing Race and Decriminalizing Crime," Deborah Clarke, Arizona State University
2. "The Criminal Community: Lynching in the Novels of William Faulkner and Harper Lee," Kathryn S. Koo, St. Mary's College of California
3. "William Faulkner's *Mansion* as Soft-Boiled Noir," Kris Mecholsky, Louisiana State University

**Session 8-A: 3:00 – 4:20 pm (room)**

**Crime Fiction and its Forms**

Chair: Deborah Clark, Arkansas State University

1. “*The Vanishing of Ethan Carter*: Immersion, Classic Detection and Games,” Stephen D. Rachman, Michigan State University
2. “Lessons in Liberalism from an Earlier Age: Reading *Helter Skelter*,” Jacqueline Foertsch, University of North Texas
3. “Writing the Mob Apocalypse from the Bottom Up: Recollections of a Gambino Family Enforcer,” Rick Wallach, Independent Scholar

**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

1. “Murder Ballads as Story Structure in Sharyn McCrumb’s Appalachian Crime Fiction,” Magdelyn Hammond Helwig, Western Illinois University
2. “Victoria Kneubuhl’s Crime Fiction and Colonial Critique: The Hawaii Mysteries and *Kānaka Maoli* Women,” Penelope Kelsey, University of Colorado
3. “BROcialists, MANagers, and the Double Bind of Misogyny in Jim Thompson,” Joshua Lukin, Temple University

**4:30 – 6:00 pm**

**Closing Reception and Final Reflections:  
an Informal Discussion**