

Mysterious America: Crime Fiction in American Culture

**A Symposium Sponsored by the
American Literature Association**

September 22 – 24, 2011

**DeSoto Hilton Savannah
15 East Liberty Street
Savannah, Georgia**

**Conference Directors: Alfred Bendixen, Texas A&M University
Olivia Carr Edenfield, Georgia Southern University**

Acknowledgments

The conference directors wish to express their appreciation to the many individuals who organized sessions or submitted papers. We also wish to thank the Department of English at Texas A&M University and the Department of Literature and Philosophy at Georgia Southern University for their support of this symposium.

Thursday, September 22, 2011

Savannah Ghost Tour: 5:30 – 7:00 p.m. (DeSoto Lobby)

Robert Edgerly, author of *Savannah Hauntings*, will lead a walking tour of the historic district. Come hear stories of mystery from this noted local historian. This is a fun and interesting way to discover Savannah. Our discounted price is \$15. Please be prepared to pay with cash. We will begin and end in the DeSoto lobby.

The Flannery O'Connor House is open daily 1-4 p.m, including Sundays, 207 E. Charlton Street, within easy walking distance of the hotel. Phone: (912) 233-6014. \$6 for adults - \$5 for students – free for those 15 and under.

Friday, September 23, 2011

The Chippewa Room is open for breaks during the day.

Coffee and Registration: 8:15 – 8:45 a.m., inside the Pulaski Room.

Plenary Roundtable: 8:45 – 9:50 (Pulaski Room)

“Futures for Crime Fiction Studies”

Moderator: David Schmid, University at Buffalo

1. Susan Elizabeth Sweeney, College of the Holy Cross
2. Charles Rzepka, Boston University
3. Catherine Ross Nickerson, Emory University

Session One A: 10:00 – 11:20 (Lafayette Room)

Flannery O'Connor Society: Crime and Violence in Flannery O'Connor

Chair: Michael Schroeder, Savannah State University

1. "Delinquency in 'The Lame Shall Enter First.'" Robert Donahoo, Sam Houston State University.
2. "When Evil Comes to Town: Drifters and Criminality in Flannery O'Connor's Stories." Bill Dawers, Armstrong Atlantic State University.
3. "Murder by a Thousand Cuts: American Dream-Torture as seen in Flannery O'Connor's 'A View of the Woods.'" Bridget Tomich, Grand Valley State University.
4. "Violence in O'Connor: The Bridge Between Truth and Faith." Mary A. Hancock, Grand Valley State University.

Session One B: 10:00 – 11:20 (Monterey Room)

Race and Crime

Chair: Leslie Petty, Rhodes College

1. "The colored man can't fix nothing with the law": Race, Crime, and Prison in August Wilson's 'The Piano Lesson.'" Anissa Wardi, Chatham University.
2. "'The Unapologetic Acceptance in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*.'" Emma Gratton-Fisher, Carnegie Mellon University.
3. Fingerprinting Race and Criminality in Mark Twain's *Tragedy of Pudd'nhead Wilson*.'" Alexandra Reznik, Duquesne University.
4. "Stealing from the Maya: John Lloyd Stephens as Explorer or Tomb-raider?" William Lenz, Chatham University.

Session One C: 10:00 – 11:20 (Telfair Room)

Detectives and Criminals

Chair: Gloria Cronin, Brigham Young University

1. "Soft-Boiled Detectives: Alternative Traditions in American Crime Fiction (1900-1930)." Alfred Bendixen, Texas A&M University.
2. "Portrait in a Rogue Gallery: Frederick Irving Anderson's *Adventures of the Infallible Godhal* (1914)." Gary Hoppenstand, Michigan State University.
3. "Rejecting the Rational Detective: Consciousness, Cognition, and Cannabis in Pynchon's *Inherent Vice* and *The Crying of Lot 49*." Michael Wayne Harris, Georgia Southern University.

Session Two A: 11:30 – 12:50 (Lafayette Room)
Nineteenth-Century Detective Fiction

Chair: Susan Elizabeth Sweeney, College of the Holy Cross

1. “Who’s In Charge Here? Learning from Poe’s and Melville’s Failed Detectives.”
Kelly Ross, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill.
2. “Moralizing Detection: Hawthorne’s Variations on Poe in *The Scarlet Letter*.”
John Gruesser, Kean University.
3. “Poe’s Spaces.” David Schmid, University at Buffalo.

Respondent: Norlisha F. Crawford, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

Session Two B: 11:30 – 12:50 (Monterey Room)
Cultural Issues and Crime

Chair: Michael Wayne Harris, Georgia Southern University

1. “Paul Auster’s *Invisible*: Murder, Mystery, and Response to Racism.”
Kathy Rugoff, University of North Carolina Wilmington.
2. “The Talisman in Steinbeck’s *The Winter of Our Discontent*.” Barbara Hunt, Columbus State University.
3. “Revelation or Incrimination: Peering Behind Alcott’s Mask.” Carmen Trammell Skaggs, Columbus State University.

Session Two C: 11:30 – 12:50 (Telfair Room)
Hardboiled Modernity

Chair: Gail Sinclair, Rollins College

1. “‘Poet of the underworld’: The Code of Jean-Pierre Melville.” Brad McDuffie,
Nyack College.
2. “Catch a Wave: Surf Noir and the Undertow of American History.” Kirk Curnutt,
Troy University.
3. “Crime and Punishment in E.E. Cummings’s *The Enormous Room*.” Steven J. Florczyk,
University of Georgia.

Lunch: 1:00 – 2:10 (Harborview Room)

“Haunt of Criminals and Ne’er-Do-Wells’: Savannah under the Trustees.”
Jonathan Bryant, Georgia Southern University.

Session Three A: 2:20 – 3:40 (Lafayette Room)
Cormac McCarthy Society: River, Desert, Road

Chair: Stacey Peebles, Centre College

1. “*Suttree*’s Deleted River Queen Episode: Deconstruction of a Crime.”
Dianne Luce, Independent Scholar.
2. “Discourse Demons: Judge Holden and other Allegories of Inscription.”
Rick Wallach, University of Miami.
3. “Navigating the Late World in Cormac McCarthy’s *The Road*.”
Susan Hawkins, Oakland University.

Session Three B: 2:20 – 3:40 (Monterey Room)
Crime and American Literary Naturalism

Chair: Kenneth K. Brandt, Savannah College of Art and Design

1. “Marcus Schuler, Detective?: Reading Frank Norris’s *McTeague* as a Crime Novel.”
Mischa Renfroe, Middle Tennessee State University.
2. “Taking, Holding, and Losing: The economies of Dashiell Hammett’s ‘The Gutting of Couffignal.’” David Stivers, Savannah College of Art and Design.
3. “Thought Leadership: Problematizing the Thinking-Man’s Revolutionary in Jack London’s *The Assassination Bureau*.” Gina Rossetti, Saint Xavier University.

Session Three C: 2:20 – 3:40 (Telfair Room)
Crime in the Canon

Chair: Carmen Tramell Scaggs, Columbus State University

1. “The Value of Appearances in Henry James’s *The Other House*.” Jennifer Eimers,
Missouri Valley College.
2. “The Crime of Knowledge in Melville’s ‘Billy Budd.’” Carl Findley, University of
Chicago.
3. “F. Scott Fitzgerald: Social Acceptability of Crime.” Jaswant Singh Malik,
CCS University Meerut, India.

Session Four A: 3:50 – 5:10 (Lafayette Room)
Visual Media and Crime Fiction

Chair: Melissa Hay, Georgia Southern University

1. “Meet the New Boss: The *On the Waterfront* Screenplay.” Tom Cerasulo, Elms College.
2. “William Gillette: The Actor Who Invented Sherlock Holmes.”
Gretchen Elizabeth Smith, Southern Methodist University.
3. “‘Piss Trickle’: *The Wire* as Condemnation of Trickle-Down Economics.”
Harry Newburn, University of Tennessee Knoxville.

Session Four B: 3:50 – 5:10 (Monterey Room)
European Influences

Chair: Anthony Eberhardt, Georgia Southern University

1. “Detecting the Absurd: Finding Beckett in Auster and Lethem.”
Dustin Anderson, Georgia Southern University.
2. “New England Noir: Georges Simenon’s Connecticut Novels.”
Jane Eblen Keller, University of Baltimore.
3. “Reclaiming Our Charlie Chans: An Annotated Bibliography of Asian American Crime Fiction.” Mary C. Kim, Savannah College of Art and Design.

Session Four C: 3:50 – 5:10 (Telfair Room)
Women’s Perspectives

Chair: Megan Morris, Georgia Southern University

1. “Reading Carson McCullers’ Reflections in a Golden Eye as Crime Fiction.”
Courtney George, Carson McCullers Center for Writers and Musicians,
Columbus State University.
2. “Crime Makes It ‘Real’: The Tangible Traumatic Kernel in Gloria Naylor’s *The Women of Brewster Place*.” Jill Goad, Georgia State University.
3. “Ned Buntline, ‘Madame Sitstill,’ and the Criminalization of Abortion.”
Scott Peeples, College of Charleston.

Opening Reception and Keynote Address: 5:15 – 6:45 (Pulaski Room)

“Cormac McCarthy's Mosaic of Crime”
Allen Josephs, University of West Florida

Saturday September 24, 2011

The Chippewa Room is open for breaks during the day.

Session Five A: 9:00 – 10:20 (Lafayette Room)

Cormac McCarthy Society: Breaking Rules, Bending Genres

Chair: Dianne C. Luce, Independent Scholar

1. “Genre Formulations in *No Country for Old Men*.”
Scott Yarbrough, Charleston Southern University.
2. “No Country for Lawyers: Cormac McCarthy’s Jurisprudence.”
Susan J. Tyburski, The Women’s College of the University of Denver.
3. “Beyond Black and White: How Crime Pays in *The Sunset Limited*.”
Stacey Peebles, Centre College.

Session Five B: 9:00 – 10:20 (Monterey Room)

The Deviant and Subversive

Chair: Nicole Camastra, University of Georgia

1. “‘Deviant’ Discourses: *The National Police Gazette* and American Literature of the 1840s and 50s.” Ashna Bhagwanani, University of Waterloo.
2. “Ruptures in Reason and Faith in Charles Brockden Brown’s *Wieland*.”
Angela Green, Columbus State University.
3. “‘Is there a penalty for killing a dead man?’: subverting the androcentric detective genre as a journey to empowerment in Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s murder mystery, *Unpunished*.” Jacquelyn Markham, South University.

Session Five C: 9:00 – 10:20 (Telfair Room)

Identity in Crime

Chair: Francine Koenig, Georgia Southern University

1. “Fiction and the Unabomber: Susan Choi, *A Person of Interest*.”
Judie Newman, University of Nottingham.
2. “He Knows at Last Who He Is: Native American Detectives and Constitutional Knowledge in Louis Owens’ *The Sharpest Sight*.” Grant Bain,
University of Arkansas.
3. “Elmore Leonard’s Postmodern Code Hero – Chili Palmer.” John J. Daily,
Lynn University.

Session Six A: 10:30 – 11:50 (Lafayette Room)**Twenty-First Century Detective Fiction**

Chair: John Gruesser, Kean University

1. “Neuro-Noir: The Detective’s Mind from Poe to Cyberpunk, and Back.”
Susan Elizabeth Sweeney, College of the Holy Cross.
2. “On Manliness: Chester Himes’ Harlem, Hip-Hop Culture, and Telling Details in Clothing.” Norlisha F. Crawford, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.
3. “Strange Birds: Rewriting *The Maltese Falcon*.”
Cindy Hamilton, Liverpool Hope University.

Respondent: David Schmid, University of Buffalo.

Session Six B: 10:30 – 11:50 (Monterey Room)**Flannery O’Connor Society: Crimes Intended and Committed in O’Connor’s “The Displaced Person”**

Chair: Tim Vande Brake, Roberts Wesleyan College.

1. “The Holocaust and the American Cultural Imaginary in ‘The Displaced Person.’”
Joshua J. Masters, University of West Georgia.
2. “‘The Displaced Person’: Evidence of Bodies in the Corpus of Flannery O’Connor.”
Scott Daniel, Warner Robins High School.
3. “Judging the Priest’s Behavior in ‘The Displaced Person.’”
Marshall Bruce Gentry, Georgia College & State University.

Session Six C: 10:30 – 11:50 (Telfair Room)**Wright and Norris**

Chair: Gautam Kundu, Georgia Southern University

1. “Richard Wright and his Bluebeard Fantasy.” Mary Aswell Doll, Savannah College of Art and Design.
2. “The Equality of Corpses: Richard Wright’s Radical Crime Fiction.” Rachel Watson, University of Chicago.
3. “Broken Ritual and Criminal Impulse in *McTeague*.” Karen Rosenthal, Rice University.

Lunch: 12:00 – 1:10 (Madison Ballroom)

Session Seven A: 1:20 -2:40 (Lafayette Room)**William Faulkner's Crime Fiction**

Chair: Dustin Anderson, Georgia Southern University

1. "‘The Clean Flame’: *Akairic* Desire and Moral Crime in *The Sound and the Fury*." Joseph R. Lease, University of Georgia.
2. "Southern Culture on Trial: Faulkner and the Failure of Testimony." Lisa Hinrichsen, University of Arkansas.
3. "Social Crime and Isolated Transgression in the Small-Town South: Psychological Representations and Physical Manifestations of Violence in William Faulkner's 'A Rose for Emily' and Carson McCuller's *The Ballad of the Sad Café*." Sarah Elizabeth Vanover, Indiana University at Pennsylvania.

Session Seven B: 1:20 – 2:40 (Monterey Room)**Crimes Domestic and International:****Re-evaluating Harriet Prescott Spofford's Crime Fiction**

Chair: Melissa Adams-Campbell, Northern Illinois University

1. "The Scene of the Crime: Domestic Criminality within Harriet Prescott Spofford's *Oeuvre*." Kristen Renzi, Michigan State University.
2. "Adamantine Desires: The Erotics of Harriet Prescott Spofford's Detective Fiction." Jim Berkey, Duke University.
3. "Buyers and Cellars: The Economy of an Underground Plot." Jon Blandford, Bellarmine University.

Session Seven C: 1:20 – 2:40 (Telfair Room)**Crime, Violence, and the Code Hero**

Chair: Alan Swirsky, Georgia Southern University

1. "*The Brick Foxhole*: American bigotry, violence, and noir." Homer B. Pettey, University of Arizona.
2. "Cormac McCarthy's New-World Criminals: Defining Crime in a Lawless World." William Moss, Wake Forest University.
3. "Murder in the Mountains: Violence, Gender, and Dispossession in Three American Novels." Jo Angela Edwins, Francis Marion University.

Session Eight A: 2:50 – 4:10 (Lafayette Room)**Perspectives on Poe**

Chair: Jennifer Bugna Lambeth, Georgia Southern University

1. “‘Upon the Very Verge of Remembrance’: Music and Mystery in Edgar Allan Poe’s ‘Ligeia.’” Nicole Camastra, University of Georgia.
2. “Wild Ferocity and Imitative Propensities: Poe’s Man as Orang-Outang.” Goretta Vianney-Genca, Marist College.
3. “The Mystery of Chess and the Art of Detection in Edgar Allan Poe’s ‘The Murder in the Rue Morgue.’” Amanda Boyle, Williams Town Communications.

Session Eight B: 2:50 – 4:10 (Monterey Room)**Crime and Contemporary Fiction**

Chair: Kirk Curnutt, Troy University

1. “Seeing through the ‘Private Eye’ in Andre Dubus III’s *House of Sand and Fog*.” Jessica Newberry, East Georgia College.
2. “Funicular Folly: Crime as Misdirection in *The Intuitionist*.” Nadine M. Knight, College of the Holy Cross.
3. “Crime in the Short Fiction of Andre Dubus.” Olivia Carr Edenfield, Georgia Southern University.

Session Eight C: 2:50 – 4:10 (Telfair Room)**Crime and Detection**

Chair: Alfred Bendixen, Texas A&M University

1. “Under the Lens: Investigating Race in Rudolph Fisher’s *The Conjure-Man Dies*.” Emad Mirmotahari, Duquesne University.
2. “‘I Sinned for Justice’: Crime in Southern Fiction of the 1930s.” Sean Hoare, Marymount University.
3. “Midrash, Philip Roth, the ‘Open Text’ and Post-Modernism.” Jane Statlander, Miami International University of Art and Design.

Session Nine A: 4:20 – 5:40 (Lafayette Room)**Hard-Boiled Crime Fiction**

Chair: Lyndsey Brown, Georgia Southern University

1. “Guilty by Association: Character Networks in Dashiell Hammett’s *Red Harvest*.” Adam Stier, Ohio State University.
2. “Gil Brewer and the Essence of Noir.” David Rachels, Virginia Military Institute.
3. “When Tough Isn’t Enough: The Hard-Boiled Heroes of James Ellroy’s *The Big Nowhere* and *L.A. Confidential*.” Patrick E. Jackson, Columbus State University.

Session Nine B: 4:20 – 5:40 (Monterey Room)**Written in Blood: Factual Crime and American Fiction**

Chair: Harold Schechter, Queens College, The City University of New York

1. “Exonerating the Victim: The Roseann Quinn Murder in Fiction and Fact.” Jean Murley, Queensborough Community College, City University of New York.
2. “‘He spoke much of his domestic felicity’: The Yates Family Murders & Charles Brockden Brown’s *Wieland*.” Duncan Faherty, Queens College, the City University of New York.
3. “The Shadow of a Crime.” Geoffrey O’Brien, Editor in Chief, The Library of America.

Session Nine C: 4:20 – 5:00 (Telfair Room)**Paranoiac Knowledge and Literary Sub-Genres in Thomas Pynchon**

Chair: Scott McClintock, National University

1. “After the Flood: Paranoid Reading and Politics in *Inherent Vice*.” Casey Shoop, Loyola Marymount University.
2. “Postmodern Sacrality and Paranoiac Epistemology in Thomas Pynchon’s Detective Fiction.” Christopher K. Coffman, Boston University.
3. “Paranoia as Strategy in Thomas Pynchon’s *Inherent Vice*.” Riley McDonald, Dalhousie University.

Closing Reception: 5:45 – 7:15 p.m. (Poolside)

**Flannery O’Connor Event: 7:30 – 8:30 p.m.
(The Book Lady Bookstore, 6 East Liberty)**

Bruce Gentry, Robert Donahoo, and other scholars will be discussing the *Flannery O’Connor Review* and *The Cartoons of Flannery O’Connor at Georgia College*, a collection recently published by Georgia College.

**Humphrey Bogart’s *In a Lonely Place*: 7:00 p.m.
(Trustees Theater, 216 East Broughton Street)**

Savannah College of Art and Design Cinema Circle invites you to attend.

Thank you for your support of the American Literature Association