

**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:

The conference directors wish to thank everyone who organized a session or contributed to the success of this conference. We are especially grateful to the Department of Literature and Philosophy at Georgia Southern University, for providing crucial logistical and staff support to the American Literature Association. In particular we wish to acknowledge the superb work of Megan Flanery and Molly J. Donehoo, ALA Executive Assistant.

Thursday, March 2, 2017

Conference Registration

8:30 pm – 10:00 pm

Honore Foyer

Friday, March 3, 2017

Registration: 8:00 am – 9:00 am

Honore Foyer

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

**9:00 am – 9:45 am
(Honore 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 (The Indiana 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 (The Kimball Room)
New Conceptions of American Crime Fiction

Chair: Charles Rzepka, Boston University

1. "The American Metacognitive Mystery Tale," Antoine Dechéne, Université de Liège, Belgium
2. "Have I Forgotten Something?: The Crime Series of Stark, Eisler, and Connelly," 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 (The Logan 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 (The Indiana Room)

Detecting Through Violence: Context Tells Crime in the Late Faulkner

Chair: Olivia Carr Edenfield, Georgia Southern 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, Santa Barbara

Session 2-B: 11:30 am – 12:50pm (The Kimball 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 (The Logan 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
(The Empire Room)

Session 3-A: 2:30 – 3:50 pm (The Indiana 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 (The Kimball 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, and Rebecca Baumann, The Lilly Library
3. "The 'Wicked Woman' and the Forger: Teaching 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 (The Indiana 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
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. "Writing the Mob Apocalypse from the Bottom Up: Recollections of a Gambino Family Enforcer," Rick Wallach, Independent Scholar

Session 4-B: 4:00 – 5:20 pm (The Kimball 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 (The Logan 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*," 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
(The Chicago Room)

Keynote Address and Reception

Charles Rzepka

Boston University

"The Face of Genre: Assimilation, Impersonation, and the
Impact of Modernity on Interwar Ethnic Detection"

Saturday, March 4, 2017

Registration: 8:00 am – 9:00 am

Session 5-A: 9:00-10:20 am (The Indiana 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, 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 (The Kimball 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
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 (The Logan 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 am (The Indiana Room)

Teaching Crime Fiction

Chair: Alfred Bendixen, Princeton University

1. "Teaching American Detective Fiction in the Contemporary Classroom," Nicole Kenley, Simpson University
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 (The Kimball Room)

Anna Katharine 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 am (The Logan 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
Lunch
(The Empire Room)

Session 7-A: 1:30 am – 2:50 pm (The Indiana 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 am – 2:50 pm (The Kimball 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 am – 2:50 pm (The Logan Room)

Faulkner, Race, and Crime

Chair: Candice Waid, University of California, Santa Barbara

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 (The Indiana Room)

Crime Fiction and its Forms

Chair: Deborah Clarke, Arizona 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. “Edith Wharton and Crime,” Joshua Temples, Georgia Southern University

Session 8-B: 3:00 – 4:20 pm (The Kimball 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 Zeffel, CUNY Graduate Center
3. “Doubling & Interpretive Labor in Harriet Prescott Spofford’s Detective Tales,” Bob Hodges, University of Washington

Session 8-C: 3:00 – 4:20 pm (The Logan Room)

Contemporary Crime

Chair: Hunter Walsh, Georgia Southern University

1. “Murder Ballads as Story Structure in Sharyn McCrumb’s Appalachian Crime Fiction,” Magdelyn Hammond Helwig, Western Illinois University
2. “Working Class Criminals: The Culture of Crime in the Short Stories of Breece Pancake,” Megan M. Flanery, Georgia Southern University
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**

Call for Papers:

**American Literature Association Symposium
Regionalism and Place in American Literature
September 7-9, 2017**

Hotel Monteleone, New Orleans, Louisiana

American regional writing, as a literary movement, often has a limited association with a few decades during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. At times, many writers have cringed at being described as “regional,” fearing limiting or marginalizing classification. Other writers have embraced the term. However, more recent research has often argued for a renewed importance in regional scholarship or the scholarship of place and has redefined how we look at canonical definitions of regionalism and place. This symposium seeks to deepen our understanding of the importance of regionalism and place in past and present American literature by continuing to question spatial boundaries and definitions. Are regions confined to big patches of landscape or can cities and neighborhoods be regional? How do we address or define more recent regional concepts like the “Postsouthern” or “Postwestern”? What does regionalism look like in the 21st century and how does it define (or fail to define) our sense of place? What is it to publish or write “regionally”? We welcome paper proposals, panels and roundtable discussions on all aspects of regionalism and place within American literature and particularly encourage interdisciplinary papers and projects.

One page proposals or panel suggestions can be sent to program director Dr. Sara Kosiba at skosiba@troy.edu by May 15, 2017

**In cooperation with the Society for the Study of the American Short Story, the American Literature Association, and the Obama Institute
The American Short Story: New Horizons**

Johannes Gutenberg-University, Mainz, Germany, October 5-7, 2017

The conference invites both panels and papers that address fresh and original questions relevant to studying the American short story: how the genre works as performance in itself; how it conveys a theory of culture in which aesthetic structures and the presentation of cultural problematics interrelate; how the short story and the practices of text-making are related to the cultures of print in which textual circulation and economic exchange are homologues; how we can read the short story as an expressive form alongside its material dimensions, its vitality of forms (i.e., short-short fiction, flash fiction), and the multiple meanings of such concepts as authorship and genre; how we can reassess the short story as a field to map out exchanges not just among authors, but also among editors, publishers, reviewers, readers, and the physical text, with its advertisements, illustrations, and editorial changes. The conference thus seeks to explore the American short story as a coming together of the enduring narrative practice of compression and concision in American literature, presently culminating in a digital culture in which brevity rules. See the American Literature Association website for the full CFP

Please submit all proposals and abstracts to Oliver Scheiding (scheidung@uni-mainz.de) by March 15, 2017.

**Please join us for the
American Literature Association
28th Annual Conference**

May 25-28, 2017

**The Westin Copley Place
10 Huntington Avenue
Boston MA 02116-5798**

Conference Director:

**Olivia Carr Edenfield
Georgia Southern University**

Conference Fee:

**For those who pre-register before April 15, 2017: \$90
(\$60 for Graduate Students, Independent Scholars, and Retired Faculty)
After April 15, 2017: \$100**

(\$75 for Graduate Students, Independent Scholars and Retired Faculty)

americanliteratureassociation.org