



上海财经大学

Shanghai University of Finance & Economics

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Shanghai University of Finance & Economics

2022 Summer Program

ENG 400 Pulp Fiction

Course Outline

Course Code: ENG 400

Instructor: Professor Joseph Bowling

Home Institution: University of Wisconsin-Madison

Email: jdbowling@wisc.edu

Credit: 4

Class Hours: This course will have 52 class hours, including 32 lecture hours, professor 8 office hours, 8-hour TA discussion sessions, 4-hour review sessions.

Course Overview:

Pulp Fiction: The term “pulp fiction” originally referred to cheap paperback books aimed at the mass market rather than the cultural elite. Some of the original “pulp” were reprinted literary classics, but the term “pulp fiction” became most familiarly associated with lurid, sensational stories. Today “pulp fiction” is sometimes used as a general label for popular genres like mysteries, westerns, or romances, but the early connotations of cheap thrills and low quality lingers, and in some circles genre fiction gets as little critical respect as the “pulp” once did.

Course Description:

In this class, we will read a selection of “pulp” texts and study their narrative forms, their reception, and their ideological content.

Learning Outcomes:



By the completion of this course, students will have a strong understanding of the history, role, and importance of Pulp Fiction.

Required Textbooks and Films:

- Textbook: [The New Mammoth Book Of Pulp Fiction](#) *Kindle Edition*, Sold by Hachette Book: \$3.99

Grading & Evaluation:

Participation 10%

Essay Assignment 1: 30%

Essay Assignment 2: 30%

Essay Assignment 3: 30%

A+:4.3——95-100

A :4.0——87-94

A -:3.7——82-86

B+:3.3——78-81

B :3.0——75-77

B -:2.7——71-74

C+:2.3——68-70

C :2.0——65-67

C -:1.7——61-64

D :1.0——55-60

E :0.0——49-54

X :0.0——0

Course Schedule:

Week 1:

- 1) what is the history of pulp fiction, and how does it develop, from early nineteenth-century dime novels right up to the proliferation of mass-produced paperbacks;
- 2) what are the links between “canonical” works and writers of pulp fiction? Here we will foray into Paris, where a number of famous writers got their start by writing notoriously bawdy fiction for the consumption of Parisian tourists.



Week 2:

- 3) how does pulp fiction relate to such terms as “national romance,” “the culture industry,” and “mass culture”?
- 4) what do we learn from pulp fiction about plot-driven narratives, the so-called cliff-hangers, and what this means about the genre?
- 5) how do the narrative forms common in pulp fiction express ideological content?

Week 3:

- 6) what do “pulp” and “popular” have in common? This will lead us into discussions of populism, mass culture, subculture, the “people,” and the politics of style.
- 7) what do we learn about pulp fiction through our examinations of the detective novel, adventure story, science fiction, the romance, the spy thriller and the western, among others;

Week 4:

- 8) The idea of pulp fiction finds its way into the commercial space, in particular in advertisements. This is unsurprising, given the popularity of the genre, but it’s also linked to work from more historical genres, such as the Historical Avant-Garde, which we will discuss.
- 9) We will focus upon the question of how pulp fiction intersects with other popular mediums such as radio, television, and music.