ANG 6605 Problems in Narrative Fiction: Detective Fiction

Professor Lianne Moyes
Autumn 2019
Monday 4-7pm

Description
This seminar traces shifts in the genre of detective fiction from its roots in the nineteenth-century to its myriad contemporary forms. The corpus lends itself to a wide range of interests from the Gothic and hauntology to social justice narratives and gendering the detective. Although the focus is English-language texts, the corpus includes writers such as Simenon, Eco, Camilleri and Mankell (in translation). Given the number of writers and theorists who have written about detective fiction, there is a rich body of conceptual readings to draw upon. In the fields of narratology and semiotics, for example, detective fiction has been used as a testing ground for theorizing narrative phenomena such as causality, closure, consequence, curiosity, seriality and suspense. Among the topics we will discuss are links between reading and detection, relations between the story of the crime and the story of the investigation, differences in the codes of ‘Golden-Age’ and ‘Hard-boiled,’ and sub-genres such as urban noir, police procedural, country-house drama, and forensic thriller. Students are encouraged in their final papers to address questions related to their own interests in the field.

Students not registered in a programme in Études anglaises may do the (written) work of the course in French.