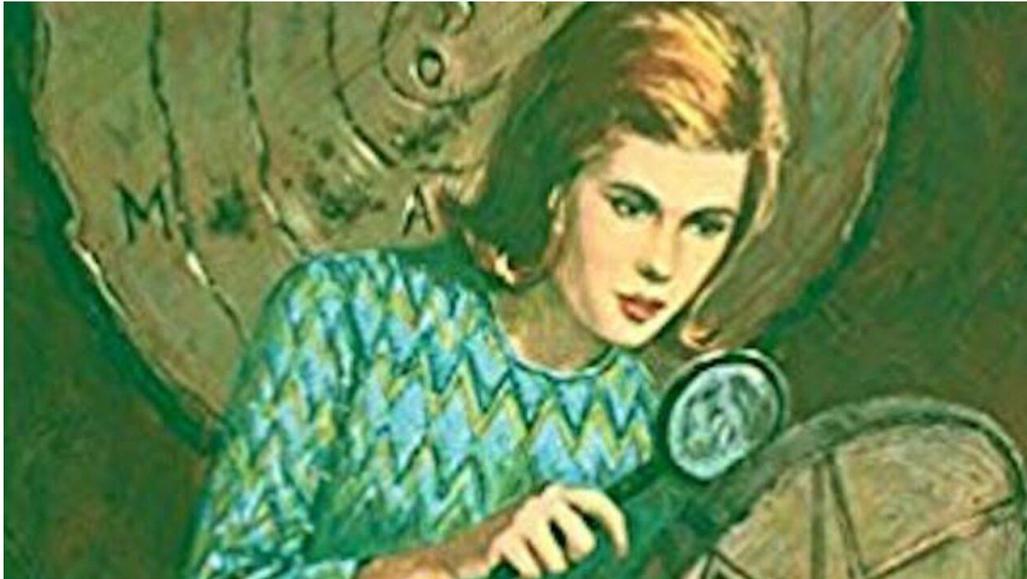


## BLOOD WILL HAVE BLOOD: (UN)SOLVED MYSTERIES IN LITERATURE



A wonderful fact to reflect upon, that every human creature is constituted to be that profound secret and mystery to every other. A solemn consideration, when I enter a great city by night, that every one of those darkly clustered houses encloses its own secret; that every room in every one of them encloses its own secret; that every beating heart in the hundreds of thousands of breasts there, is, in some of its imaginings, a secret to the heart nearest it!

- Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*

The criminal is the creative artist; the detective only the critic.

- G. K. Chesterton, "The Blue Cross"

Instructors: Michael Amey, Rachel Martin, Stuart Bowen, Amy Coren, and Zak Tredwell

Email: [mamey@nvcc.edu](mailto:mamey@nvcc.edu)

Phone: (207) 554-0770 (This is Mike's cell phone)

Location: Zoom <https://vccs.zoom.us/j/84546763653>

Meeting times: Thursdays 11:00 – 12:30

Blog: <https://thespoilers.blog/> This is a work in progress. The instructors will be publishing their own stuff here as well as material relevant to the books under discussion.

### Course Description

This course explores the history of detective / crime / mystery fiction. This genre perhaps stands in contrast with the *horror* fiction we read last semester in that detective and mystery novels promise us that while violence cannot always be averted, it can be understood.

### **General Course Purpose**

Teaches students to use close readings of literary texts as a springboard for discussion about history, psychology, sociology and the human condition.

### **.Course Prerequisites/Co-requisites**

A willingness to read books and talk about them.

### **Course Objectives**

The primary objectives of the course are:

- 1) to engender in students an appreciation of literature and its role in illuminating, mirroring and transforming society;
- 2) to teach students how to use literary theory and reading strategies to explore literature;
- 3) to familiarize students with terminology used to discuss literature and the conventions used to write about literature;
- 4) to help students discover the connections between literature and other academic disciplines;
- 5) to develop and foster in students the ability to think critically and to express their ideas cogently

(Obviously, this is not a class in the traditional sense, so readers are encouraged to find whatever editions of the texts are most affordable. Also, it is likely that readings may get cut if the pacing of the class seems too hectic, so fear not.)

**Please consider supporting your local, independent bookstores by ordering from [bookshop.org](http://bookshop.org), or from [biblio.com](http://biblio.com)**

### **Textbook 1**

Author: Jobb, Dean

Title: *The Case of the Murderous Dr. Cream: The Hunt for a Victorian Era Serial Killer*

ISBN-13: 9781643752501

### **“Elementary, My Dear Watson...”**

Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson decide to go on a camping trip. After dinner and a bottle of wine, they lay down for the night, and go to sleep.

Some hours later, Holmes awoke and nudged his faithful friend.

"Watson, look up at the sky and tell me what you see."

Watson replied, "I see millions of stars."

"What does that tell you?"

Watson pondered for a minute.

"Astronomically, it tells me that there are millions of galaxies and potentially billions of planets."

"Astrologically, I observe that Saturn is in Leo."

"Horologically, I deduce that the time is approximately a quarter past three."

"Theologically, I can see that God is all powerful and that we are small and insignificant."

"Meteorologically, I suspect that we will have a beautiful day tomorrow."

"What does it tell you, Holmes?"

Holmes was silent for a minute, then spoke: "Watson, you idiot. Someone has stolen our tent!"

**Textbook 2**

Author: Biggers, Earl Derr  
Title: *The Chinese Parrot*  
ISBN-13: 9780897335782

**Textbook 3**

Author: Christie, Agatha  
Title: *Crooked House*  
ISBN-13: 9780062073532

**Textbook 4**

Author: Fforde, Jasper  
Title: *The Eyre Affair*  
ISBN-13: 9780142001806

**Textbook 5**

Author: Penny, Louise  
Title: *The Brutal Telling*  
ISBN-13: 9781250140951

**Textbook 6**

Author: Boulley, Angeline  
Title: *Firekeeper's Daughter*  
ISBN-13: 9781250766564

An assortment of other texts will be provided as handouts or online.

**Course Requirements**

- ◆ Participation – everyone should come having done (some) of the readings, and be willing to talk about them.
- ◆ Keep a notebook – this won't be collected (obviously), but I want to encourage everyone to keep a notebook about readings and class discussions.

**Grading:**

This is the best kind of class – a class for the love of learning – so there are no grades or credit to be earned. Just come and enjoy.

**Class Schedule (This is a flexible schedule, which means that, as necessary, discussions may continue on to subsequent weeks. The schedule may also change, but we will inform you of any major changes in advance)**

<b>JANUARY 20</b>
<p>Class introduction</p> <p>READ BEFORE CLASS:            Edgar Allen Poe, <a href="#">“The Murders in the Rue Morgue”</a> (Prof. Amey)            James Thurber, <a href="#">“The Macbeth Murder Mystery”</a> (Prof. Amey)            G. K. Chesterton, <a href="#">“The Blue Cross”</a> (Prof. Amey)            Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, <a href="#">“A Study in Scarlet”</a> (Prof. Amey)</p>
<b>FEBUARY 3</b>
<p>READ BEFORE CLASS:            Dean Job, <i>The Case of the Murderous Dr. Cream: The Hunt for a Victorian Era Serial Killer</i> (Prof. Coren)</p>
<b>FEBUARY 24</b>
<p>READ BEFORE CLASS:            Earl Derr Biggers, <i>The Chinese Parrot</i> (Prof. Tredwell)</p>
<b>MARCH 3</b>
<p>READ BEFORE CLASS:            Agatha Christie, <i>Crooked House</i> (Prof. Martin)</p>
<b>MARCH 24</b>
<p>READ BEFORE CLASS:            Louise Penny, <i>The Brutal Telling</i> (Prof. Amey)</p>
<b>APRIL 7</b>
<p>READ BEFORE CLASS:            Jasper Fforde, <i>The Eyre Affair</i> (Prof. Martin)</p>
<b>APRIL 21</b>
<p>READ BEFORE CLASS:            Angeline Boulley, <i>Firekeeper’s Daughter</i> (Prof. Amey)</p>