

SYLLABUS SWEDISH CRIME FICTION

The purpose of the course is to provide students with a basic knowledge of the tradition of Swedish crime fiction and to stimulate interest and critical reflection in this subject. The genre has been very successful worldwide in the 2000s, and this course provides an overview of this success story. A selection of acclaimed Swedish crime novels is the main material of the course, but the students will also get acquainted with famous film adaptations in the genre as well as critical analyses of important works and discussions of the genre in the book market.

The course takes its starting point in the influential author duo Maj Sjöwall & Per Wahlöö, creators of emblematic character Martin Beck. The works of Sjöwall & Wahlöö can be seen as the incitement to the way many Swedish authors use crime fiction as a genre where societal problems and political issues can be highlighted. The genre Swedish crime fiction will be discussed from several points of view, but special attention will be directed towards the relations of literature to society (e.g. issues concerning class, gender, and how Sweden as a nation is (re)presented in these texts).

Class requirements

This is a discussion-based course. Therefore, your regular attendance is required, and your active participation is expected. All classes (except the excursion) take place in room A975a. One absence is permitted; each subsequent absence will lower your overall participation grade by one step (A becomes A-, etc.). Please complete all readings by the date noted in the syllabus, and come to class prepared to engage fully with the materials. You are more than welcome to bring in additional materials of interest to the class.

Grades are based upon your active attendance and participation in class, on a midterm paper handed out after the first five classes, and on a final essay at the end of the course. (More detailed guidelines for the essays will be distributed during the course.) If essays are handed in too late, this will have a negative effect on the grading.

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

I

29/8, 10.30–12.00

Room 328

Introducing class. Introduction of course material; introducing lecture by Karl Berglund on Swedish crime fiction and its contexts; seminar discussion.

- Tzvetan Todorov, “The Typology of Crime Fiction”, *The Poetics of Prose*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977, pp. 42–52 [fr. orig. 1971]
- Kerstin Bergman, *Swedish Crime Fiction: The Making of Nordic Noir* (2014), introduction and chapter 1, pp. 11–32

II

5/9, 9.15–12.15

Room 328

The Canon I: Sjöwall & Wahlöö. Seminar discussion.

- Maj Sjöwall & Per Wahlöö, *Den vedervärdige mannen från Säffle/The Abominable Man* (1967)
- John Scaggs, “The Police Procedural”, *Crime Fiction*, London & New York: Routledge, 2005, pp. 85–104
- Kerstin Bergman (2014), chapter 2, pp. 33–50
- Michael Tapper, “The 1960s and 1970s: Sjöwall and Wahlöö”, *Swedish Cops: From Sjöwall and Wahlöö to Stieg Larsson*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014, pp. 61–106

III

12/9, 9.15–12.15

Room 328

The Canon II: Henning Mankell. Seminar discussion.

- Henning Mankell, *Mördare utan ansikte/Faceless Killers* (1991)
- Kerstin Bergman (2014), chapter 3, pp. 51–68
- Andrew Nestingen, “The Burned-Out Policeman: Henning Mankell’s Transnational Police Procedural”, *Crime and Fantasy in Scandinavia: Fiction, Film, and Social Change*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008, pp. 223–254
- Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen, “Foreigners in the Welfare State: Henning Mankell’s *Faceless Killers*”, *Scandinavian Crime Fiction*, London: Bloomsbury, 2017, pp. 89–100

IV

19/9, 9.15–12.15

Room 328

The Canon III: Stieg Larsson. Seminar discussion.

- Stieg Larsson, *Män som batar kvinnor/The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2005)
- Kerstin Bergman (2014), chapter 7, pp. 121–136
- Anna Westerståhl Stenport & Cecilia Ovesdotter Alm, “Corporations, Crime, and Gender Construction in Stieg Larsson’s *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*: Exploring Twenty-first Century Neoliberalism in Swedish Culture”, *Scandinavian Studies*, 2009:2, pp. 157–178
- Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen (2017), “Financial Crisis and Trust Capital in Stieg Larsson’s *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*”, pp. 100–111

V

26/9, 9.15–12.15

Room 328

Famous Adaptations. Seminar discussion; midterm paper handed out.

- *Mannen på taket/Man on the Roof* (1976), director: Bo Widerberg
- *Wallander*, S02E01: “Faceless Killers” (2011), director: Hettie Macdonald
- *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2011), director: David Fincher
- Linda Hutcheon, “Beginning to Theorize Adaptation: What? Who? Why? Where? When?”, *A Theory of Adaptation*, 2nd ed., London & New York: Routledge, 2013, pp. 1–32 [orig. 2006]

VI

3/10, 9.15–12.15

Excursion, starts at Bellmansgatan 1

Excursion – Crime Scene Stockholm

- “Millennium Walk” in Södermalm, in collaboration with Stockholms stadsmuseum
- Kerstin Bergman (2014), chapter 5, pp. 87–101

VII

10/10, 9.15–12.15

Room 350

Female Perspectives I: Liza Marklund. Seminar discussion. Deadline for midterm paper.

- Liza Marklund, *Sprängaren/The Bomber* (1998)
- Kerstin Bergman (2014), chapter 4, pp. 69–86
- Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen (2017), “Investigating the Family in the Welfare State”, pp. 171–177

VIII

17/10, 9.15–12.15

Room 328

Female Perspectives II: Camilla Läckberg. Seminar discussion.

- Camilla Läckberg, *Isprinsessan/The Ice Princess* (2003)
- Kerstin Bergman (2014), chapter 6, pp. 103–119
- Sara Kärrholm, “Swedish Queens of Crime: The Art of Self-Promotion and the Notion of Feminine Agency – Liza Marklund and Camilla Läckberg”, *Scandinavian Crime Fiction*, Andrew Nestingen & Paula Arvas (ed.), Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011, pp. 131–141

IX

24/10, 9.15–12.15

Room 350

On the Borders of the Genre I: Kerstin Ekman. Seminar discussion.

- Kerstin Ekman, *Händelser vid vatten/Blackwater* (1993)
- Helena Forsås-Scott, “Telling Tales Testing Boundaries: The Radicalism of Kerstin Ekman’s Norrland”, *Journal of Northern Studies*, vol. 8, 2014:1, pp. 67–89

X

14/11, 9.15–12.15

Room 328

On the Borders of the Genre II: John Ajvide Lindqvist. Seminar discussion.

- John Ajvide Lindqvist, *Låt den rätte komma in/Let the Right One In* (2004)
- Benny LeMaster, “Queer Imag(in)ing: Liminality as Resistance in Lindqvist’s *Let the Right One In*, *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, vol. 8, 2011:2, pp. 103–123 [focus on the introduction (pp. 103–105) and “*Let the Right One In*: A Vampiric Text” (pp. 111–118)]

XI

21/11, 9.15–12.15

Room 328

The Genre in the Marketplace. Seminar discussion; concluding lecture by Karl Berglund; instructions for final essay handed out.

- Claire Squires, “The Genre in the Marketplace”, *Marketing Literature: The Making of Contemporary Writing in Britain*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, pp. 70–101
- Karl Berglund, “Detectives in the Literary Market: Statistical Perspectives on the Boom in Swedish Crime Fiction”, *Scandinavica: An International Journal of Scandinavian Studies*, vol. 51, 2012:2, pp. 38–57
- Agnes Broomé, “The Exotic North, or How Marketing Created the Genre of Scandinavian Crime”, *True North: Literary Translation in the Nordic Countries*, B.J. Epstein (ed.), Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014, pp. 269–282
- Karl Berglund, “With a Global Market in Mind: Agents, Authors, and the Dissemination of Swedish Crime Fiction”, *Crime Fiction as World Literature*, David Damrosch, Theo D’haen & Louise Nilsson (ed.), London: Bloomsbury, 2017, pp. 77–89

XII

28/11, 9.15–12.15

Room 328

Final class. Summary of course; discussions of course material; course evaluation; discussions of themes for final essays.

XIII

5/12: Deadline final essay