



THE SWEDISH PROGRAM

LIBERAL ARTS @ STOCKHOLM SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

SYLLABUS
SWEDISH CRIME FICTION
Spring 2018
Instructor: T. Lavelle

The purpose of the course is to provide students with basic knowledge of the tradition of Swedish crime fiction and to stimulate interest and critical reflection in this subject. The genre has been commercially successful worldwide in the 2000s, and this course offers an overview of this success story. A selection of acclaimed Swedish crime novels provides the main material of the course, but the students will also get acquainted with critical analyses of important works and some film adaptations in the genre. Students will also try their hands at writing a Swedish crime story.

The course takes its starting point in the influential author duo Maj Sjöwall & Per Wahlöö, creators of emblematic character Martin Beck. We'll take this work as the catalyst for the success of Swedish crime fiction and the inspiration for the use many Swedish authors make of crime fiction as a genre to highlight societal problems and political issues. While we will discuss the genre Swedish crime fiction from several points of view, our primary point of departure will be the relationship of literature to society (e.g. issues concerning class, gender, ethnicity, and power and the (re)presentation of Sweden as a nation/society 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 the Rhode Library, Saltmätargatan 19A. One absence is understandable; each subsequent absence will lower your overall participation grade by one full step (A becomes B, 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 the following criteria:
active participation in class

quality, quantity and timely submission of reading-journal entries
a midterm paper due on Feb 27 (Formal assignment specified on Feb 16)
completion of an original crime story (required, but not graded)
a final paper due May 2

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Jan 23

Course introduction; Anglophone forerunners, “The Adventure of the Speckled Band” *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1892); Raymond Chandler, “I’ll be Waiting”, Originally published in the October 14, 1939, issue of the *Saturday Evening Post* and reprinted in *The Simple Art of Murder* (1950).

Jan 26

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

Jan 30

Maj Sjöwall & Per Wahlöö, *Den vedervärdige mannen från Säffle/The Abominable Man* (1967). Seminar discussion based on your reading journals.

Feb 2

Contextualizing Sjöwall & Wahlöö. 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

Feb 6

Henning Mankell, *Mördare utan ansikte/Faceless Killers* (1991). Seminar discussion based on your reading journals.

Feb 9

Contextualizing Mankell. 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

Feb 13

Stieg Larsson, *Män som hatar kvinnor/The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2005). Seminar discussion based on your reading journals.

Feb 16

Seminar discussion continues.

Introduction of midterm-paper assignment.

Feb 20

Contextualizing Larsson. 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

Feb 23

Film Adaptations 1, Wallander, S02E01: “Faceless Killers” (2011), director: Hettie Macdonald. 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].

Feb 27

The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo (2011), director: David Fincher. Seminar discussion based on your viewing journals.

Mar 6

Liza Marklund, *Sprängaren/The Bomber* (1998). Seminar discussion based on your reading journals. Mid-term paper due. Note that mid-term tutorials will be scheduled during this week.

March 9

Contextualizing Marklund. Kerstin Bergman (2014), chapter 4, pp. 69–86; Jakob Stougaard-Nielsen (2017), “Investigating the Family in the Welfare State”, pp. 171–177; 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. Note that mid-term tutorials will be scheduled during this week.

March 13

Class replaced by mid-term tutorials.

March 16

Class moved to a date in April when we schedule an excursion to explore the some settings from the Larsson novels. Date TBD.

April 10

Viveca Sten, *I den lugnaste vattern/Still Waters* (2008). Seminar discussion based on your reading journals.

April 13

Contextualizing Sten. Tentative visit by the author. Alternatively, critical texts assigned.

April 17

Åsa Larsson, *Sol storm/Sun Storm* (2009). Seminar discussion based on your reading journals.

April 20

Contextualizing Larsson

Critical texts TBD.

April 24

From reader to writer: the experience of drafting and crafting crime fiction.

April 27

Sharing your crime fiction continues; course summary and evaluation.