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 selected film adaptations as well as an ongoing discussion of the crime genre in the marketplace.

The course takes its starting point in the influential author duo Maj Sjöwall & Per Wahlöö, creators of emblematic character Martin Beck. We will 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 society and Swedes as a nation 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 take place in room A975a. Please bring primary and secondary readings to class.

An unexcused absence may negatively affect your final grade. Your grade will not be affected if you miss a class due to illness or in the case of a (documented) emergency situation. If you have a personal or family event that conflicts with a class, and cannot be re-scheduled, you may ask your instructor for an excused absence. Such a request should be made at least one week prior to the class in question. 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 and preparatory reading-journal entries (quality and timely submission)
- a midterm essay due 9/3 (formal assignment specified on 23/2)
- a final paper due 4/4
PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

I
31/8, 10.00-13.00
Room: A975a

Introducing class. Introduction to course and course material; introducing lecture, group work and seminar discussion.


II
7/9, 10.00-13.00
Room: A975a

The Canon I: Sjöwall & Wahlöö. Seminar discussion.

– Maj Sjöwall & Per Wahlöö, Den vedervärda mannen från Säffle/The Abominable Man (1967)
– Kerstin Bergman (2014), chapter 2, pp. 33–50

Presentation of:


III
14/9, 10.00-13.00
Room: A975a

The Canon II: Henning Mankell. Seminar discussion.

– Henning Mankell, Mördare utan ansikte/Faceless Killers (1991)
– Kerstin Bergman (2014), chapter 3, pp. 51–68

Presentation of:


IV
21/9, 10.00-13.00
Room: A975a

The Canon III: Stieg Larsson. Seminar discussion.
Kerstin Bergman (2014), chapter 7, pp. 121–136

Presentation of:


V
28/9, 10.00-13.00
Room: A975a

Famous Adaptations. Group presentations and seminar discussion; midterm essay handed out.

- *Mannen på taket/Man on the Roof* (1976), director: Bo Widerberg
- *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo* (2011), director: David Fincher

VI
2/3, 13.00-16.00
Room: A975a

Female Perspectives II: Camilla Läckberg. Seminar discussion.

- Kerstin Bergman (2014), chapter 6, pp. 103–119

Presentation of:


VII
5/10, 10.00-13.00
Room: A975a

Crime and class. Seminar discussion. Deadline for midterm paper.
- Malin Giolito, *Quicksand/Störst av allt* (2016)

VIII

12/10, 10.00-13.00
Room: A975a


IX

20/10, 10.00-13.00
Room: A975a

Intertextuality and developments of the genre: Stockholm Noir. Seminar discussion.


[Fall break 25/10 – 7/11]

X 9/11 Excursion – Literary city walk
Exact time and starting point will be announced later.

Ahead of this seminar read: Kerstin Bergman (2014), chapter 5, pp. 87–101

XI

16/11, 10.00-13.00
Room: A975a


- *Låt den rätte komma in/Let the Right One In*, dir. Thomas Alfredsson (2008)

XII

23/11, 13.00-16.00
Room: A975a
The Genre in the Marketplace. Seminar discussion; concluding lecture. Instructions for final essay handed out.


XIII
30/11, 13.00-15.00
Room: A975a

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

XIV
Exam period. Deadline final essay 4 may.