

**CTV 3300: Film and Television Genres – Crime TV**  
Fall 2007

**Professor Derek Kompare**

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**Hours:** Monday and Wednesday, 12:30 – 2 pm

**PURPOSE:**

This course explores one of the most popular, controversial, and influential areas of television: crime. We will analyze the televisual representations of crime and its related concepts (e.g., law enforcement, criminal justice, incarceration) in its primary fictional and non-fictional forms.

**OBJECTIVES:**

- To understand and appreciate primary crime-related forms and genres (in literature, film, and television)
- To understand the relationship between representations of crime and the business of television
- To understand the study of the relationship of culture (including television) to society

**TEXTBOOKS:**

John Scaggs, *Crime Fiction* (New York: Routledge, 2005)

David Trend, *The Myth of Media Violence: A Critical Introduction* (Boston: Blackwell, 2007)

This book is available as an e-book through the SMU Library website:

Jeremy H. Lipschultz and Michael L. Hilt, *Crime and Local Television News: Dramatic, Breaking, and Live from the Scene* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2002).

Additional assigned readings are available online in PDF format, either via Academic Search Premier, or on the course BlackBoard site; check the syllabus for location.

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

Midterm Exam 1 (October 18):	30%
Final Exam (December 13 @ 8 am):	30%
Paper (due December 4):	30%
Participation:	10%

**Exams** will consist mostly of essay questions of various lengths, with a few multiple-choice questions. The **Final Exam** is cumulative, and will be held on **Thursday, December 13, at 8 am.**

The **Paper** is a 2400 to 3600 word (roughly 8 to 12 pages) critical essay that focuses on one television series, exploring how it functions in light of the issues raised by the course readings, lectures, and discussion. The paper is due on **Tuesday, December 4**, with an ungraded proposal due on **Thursday, November 8**. The paper **must** be:

- **typed/word-processed in a 12 pt font (like this one)**
- **double-spaced**
- **have 1" margins all around**
- **in an appropriate citation format**

We will cover research and writing strategies as we go through the semester. Bear in mind that all of the readings we will encounter serve as useful models for your scholarship and writing. To determine word count in Microsoft Word, highlight the text, and then click on "Word Count" under the "Tools" menu in the top toolbar.

The overall success of this class also entails your **participation** in discussion. While such opportunities in class time will vary throughout the semester, your thoughts will help shape our overall discussion of key topics, readings, and screenings. That said, I'll grant that our classroom is not ideally conducive to discussion; accordingly, I've created discussion areas in our BlackBoard course to facilitate talk outside class, and will offer up questions and statements for comment there. Your constructive participation in this forum is expected, and will be monitored throughout the semester.

<p><b>PLEASE NOTE: There will be NO extra credit offered beyond the assignments listed here.</b></p>
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#### **GRADING STANDARDS (paper):**

**A range work** fulfills all the requirements of the assignment with exceptional quality. The writing is clear, precise, and engaging throughout, and has no significant issues of grammar, spelling, and style. A-range papers go beyond the essentials of the assignment in their insight and originality.

**B range work** fulfills all the requirements of the assignment with good quality. The writing is mostly clear, precise, and engaging, though it may have a few significant issues of grammar, spelling, and style.

**C range work** fulfills some to most of the requirements of the assignment with fair quality. The writing may have some clarity or interest, but relies heavily on the obvious or cliché, and is also bogged down with some significant issues of grammar, spelling, and style.

**D range work** does not fulfill most of the requirements of the assignment. The writing is generally poor, with little clarity, precision, organization, or interest, and suffers from significant issues of grammar, spelling, and style.

#### **ATTENDANCE:**

I will take attendance each class meeting, via a sign-in sheet passed around. You are allowed **three** unexcused absences (for whatever reason); after that I will deduct **one full letter grade from your overall grade for each additional absence**. I will only grant excused absences as detailed in the 2007-08 SMU Student Handbook for allowed religious observances and school-sanctioned activities (see below). **Please note that "family emergencies" fall under the three unexcused absences you are already granted.** All excused absences must be accompanied by written documentation. Consistent tardies will also be factored into your participation grade, at half the penalty of absences; if you come in late, see me after class for the sign-in sheet.

#### **RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE AND ATTENDANCE:**

Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify me in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with me, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)

#### **UNIVERSITY EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND ATTENDANCE:**

Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity may make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is your responsibility to make arrangements with me prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalogue)

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

Like all of your professors, I assume you'll approach every aspect of your life at SMU conscientiously. Nevertheless, some of you may be tempted to cut corners and cheat. If you are caught cheating on any assignment (e.g., copying test answers or plagiarizing sources), we will follow the guidelines in the SMU Honor Code (found online at [http://www.smu.edu/studentlife/PCL\\_05\\_HC.asp](http://www.smu.edu/studentlife/PCL_05_HC.asp)). Depending on the situation, penalties may range from an F for the assignment to expulsion from the course. If you are unaware of what constitutes plagiarism, please consult the Honor Code, or the Academic Honesty course on BlackBoard.

**DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first contact Ms. Rebecca Marin, Coordinator, Services for Students with Disabilities (214-768-4557) to verify the disability and establish eligibility for accommodations. They should then schedule an appointment with me to make appropriate arrangements. (See University Policy No. 2.4.)

**OTHER:****Contacting me...**

- I'm generally in my office from about 8 am on Monday and Wednesday (before my scheduled office hours), and you can almost always see me then.
- I check my e-mail, BlackBoard, and Facebook every morning and mid-afternoon, but rarely otherwise; don't expect a reply right away. I won't reply over the weekend.

**While in class...**

- Please do not bring in any food or drink.
- Please be respectful of your classmates and myself; switch off your cell phones, and keep personal conversations to a minimum (length and volume).
- Please be respectful of the Dean's staff and offices
- You may use the wi-fi connection, but not to the distraction of others.

**Outside class...**

- Absorb media in as much variety as is possible
- Keep connected to others and the world in general
- Take care of yourself (physically, mentally, spiritually)

**SCHEDULE :**

All readings and assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date indicated. Late work is **ONLY** accepted if it's the result of an official SMU activity, or a family or medical emergency, and must be accompanied by a written excuse. Any other conflict on your time (including work for other classes, social activities, job interviews, etc.) does **NOT** constitute an acceptable excuse. In order to facilitate getting assignments in, you may e-mail assignments to me (by the beginning of class) as an attached Word-compatible document, at [dkompare@smu.edu](mailto:dkompare@smu.edu).

**AUGUST**

- 23**    **Course Introduction**
- 28**    **Forms, Genres, and Ideologies**  
**READ** Scaggs introduction + chapter 1
- 30**    **Just The Facts, Ma'am**  
**READ** Mittell, "Policing Genres"  
**SCREENING** *Dragnet*

**SEPTEMBER**

- 4**    **"One Thing I Don't Understand..."**  
**READ** Scaggs chapter 2  
**SCREENING** *Columbo*
- 6**    **SCREENING** *Columbo* (cont'd)
- 11**    **The Procedural**  
**READ** Lee, "'These are our stories'"  
**SCREENING** *Law and Order*
- 13**    **READ** Cavender and Deutsch, "CSI and Moral Authority"  
**SCREENING** *CSI: Crime Scene Investigation*
- 18**    **The Thin Blue Line**  
**READ** Scaggs chapter 4  
**SCREENING** *The Rookies*
- 20**    **READ** Thompson, "Hill Street Blues: The Quality Revolution"  
**SCREENING** *Hill Street Blues*
- 25**    **READ** Mascaro, "Shades of Black"  
**SCREENING** *Homicide: Life on the Street*
- 27**    **Good Cop/Bad Cop**  
**READ** Robert Arnett, "Eighties Noir"  
**SCREENING** *Miami Vice*

**OCTOBER**

- 2     **SCREENING** *The Shield*
- 4     **Police Women**  
**READ** D'Acci, "Defining Women"  
**SCREENING** *Cagney & Lacey*
- 9     **SCREENING** *The Closer*
- 11    **Private Eyes**  
**READ** Scaggs, chapter 3  
**SCREENING** *Magnum, P.I.*
- 16    **SCREENING** *The Rockford Files*
- 18    **MIDTERM EXAM**
- 23    **Supernatural Justice**  
**READ** TBA  
**SCREENING** *Medium*
- 25    **SCREENING** *Saving Grace*
- 30    **Law and Disorder**  
**READ** Waldron, "Barney Miller"  
**SCREENING** *Barney Miller*

**NOVEMBER**

- 1     **SCREENING** *Police Squad!, Reno 911*
- 6     **If it bleeds, does it lead?**  
**READ** Lipschultz and Hilt chapters 1-4  
**SCREENING** Local TV news
- 8     **READ** Lipschultz and Hilt chapters 5 and 8  
**SCREENING** Local TV news
- 13    **Real Cops?**  
**READ** Rapping, "Aliens, Nomads, Mad Dogs, and Road Warriors"  
**SCREENING** *Cops*
- 15    **SCREENING** *Dallas SWAT*
- 20    **FALL BREAK (no class)**
- 22    **THANKSGIVING (no class)**

27 **Media Violence and Society**  
**READ** Trend, intro and chapter 1+2

29 **READ** Trend, chapter 3+4+5

**DECEMBER**

4 **Course Review**

13 **FINAL EXAM**  
8 – 11 am