

Some administrative things

Exam

Two weeks from today

Same format, whole class through
The High Window

Paper

1500-2000 words

Final paper

- Expand on and rework material from one of your response papers
- Or take a related idea in a different direction
- In either case, focus on aspects of the text that have to do with the representation of minds, the logic of detection, the logic of knowability, and so on, as we've been doing throughout.

Parameters

- Your paper **MUST** have a central claim, AKA a thesis. This will be an assertion about a pattern of interest **IN THE TEXT**.
- In other words, you're making a claim about an interesting preoccupation or technique or something of that sort in the text or texts.
- Then illustrate/defend this claim with close readings of individual passages.

Parameters continued

- Your central claim: some non-obvious observation about something distinctive or interesting going on in the text
- Supported with sub-claims,
- Illustrated with examples,
- And explained via *analysis*, clearly articulating how the examples support your claim.
- Write as if to an intelligent person who has read the text(s) in question, but perhaps several months ago, and has not taken this class.

Parameters continued

- As crisp, specific, and focused as possible
- About 1500-2000 words
- All quotations cited using parenthetical notation, with author and page number (Collins 88)
- Works cited at end so I can see what edition you used.
- NO outside references.

Due...

- June 6th at noon
- In the form of a .doc, .docx, .rtf, or .pdf file, as an email attachment to vtobin@english.ucsb.edu.
- 1500-2000 words, MLA style parenthetical notation.
- Either double-spacing or single-spacing is fine. The font should be Times, Times New Roman, or Cambria (the default serif font in Word 2008).

Having trouble...

- Formulating a suitable thesis?
- Some handy aids:
 - <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/618/01/>
 - <http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/litweb05/writing/33-2.asp>
- Keep in mind that these are general guides, though, and tailor your thesis in keeping with our emphases in class and my feedback on your response papers.

Wrapping up Woman in White

Standards of evidence

"As the Judge might once have
heard it, so the Reader shall hear it
now"

And yet the novel does not train you to
be judicious, but to jump to
conclusions, prompted by nervous
stimulation

Strictly judicial habits of mind

- Only Gilmore, who *misjudges*, in practice
- "My function was of the purely judicial kind. I was to weigh the explanation we had just heard... and to decide honestly whether the probabilities, on Sir Percival's own showing, were plainly with him, or plainly against him. My own conviction was that they were plainly with him."

Characters who rely on intuition,
coincidence, and literary
connotation do much better

Walter

- "Judging by the ordinary rules of evidence, I had not the shadow of a reason, thus far, for connecting Sir Percival Glyde with the suspicious words of inquiry that had been spoken to me by the woman in white. And yet, I did connect them."

Why Laura does not accept Percival's explanation

- (Marian explains) "In the eyes of law and reason, Mr. Gilmore, no excuse, I dare say. If she still hesitates, and if I still hesitate, you must attribute our strange conduct, if you like, to caprice in both cases."
- And the competent reader knows that they are correct.

And the reader, properly trained,
makes similarly tenuous (by
evidentiary standards) conclusions
of her own

(The actual state of affairs in all
detective stories?)

But here detectives and readers are
equally in this position

Accurate but faulty syllogism

- Percival's men are watching somebody
- Walter may be being watched
- Percival's men are watching Walter

Marian's letter

- Fosco was hovering around the post-bag
- When Marian retrieves her letter from that bag, the seal is loose!
- Fosco was tampering with her letter

From coincidences, we infer a
complicated scenario of
persecution: a plot! (Pun intended.)

Suspicion abounds

A merry-go-round of suspicious characters

- Because, of course, what Anne, Walter, and Marian all suspect is that...
- Their own motives and plans are suspected
- And that they are suspected for being overly suspicious
- Good grief.

The urgency and futility of trying
not to excite suspicion

Trying to ward off (while
simultaneously promoting)
violations of privacy

And haunting the novel throughout

The threat of personal and bodily
possession

Virtual rapes abound

“Possession” and violation

- Anne’s fears in her first encounter with Walter
- Mr. Fairlie: “So glad to possess you at Limmeridge, Mr. Hartright”
- Sir Percival: “Now go to bed, and dream of him, if you like — with the marks of my horsewhip on his shoulders.”
- The letters removed from Fanny’s bodice
- And of course, Marian’s diary

This is an important divergence
from the classic detective story

Some features

- Pervasive and justifiable paranoia
- Violations that *feel* like violations (to which victims and protagonists alike are subject)
- Porous boundaries between role of detective and role of victim
- Conspiracy that protagonists themselves are caught up in
- Mysteries that only arise once the narrative is under way

Let's look forward to Chandler

The High Window: 1942

Eighty-three years after *Woman in White*

Critic E. M. Beekman

- “The traditional detective novel is not a novel at all but an intellectual game on the level of acrostics or checkers.”
- (Hold that thought.)

The inception of the “hardboiled” detective novel

From refined or clue-puzzle detection
to stories of crime

Other antecedents

- American pulp (semi) nonfictions like Allan Pinkerton's *The Expressman and The Detective* (1875) and *The Mollie Maguires and the Detectives* (1877)
- Self-serving narratives of union infiltration
- Present underworlds to which detective must adapt to get his work done
- As a sort of surreal fever-dream that the detective ultimately defeats and dissipates (locally)

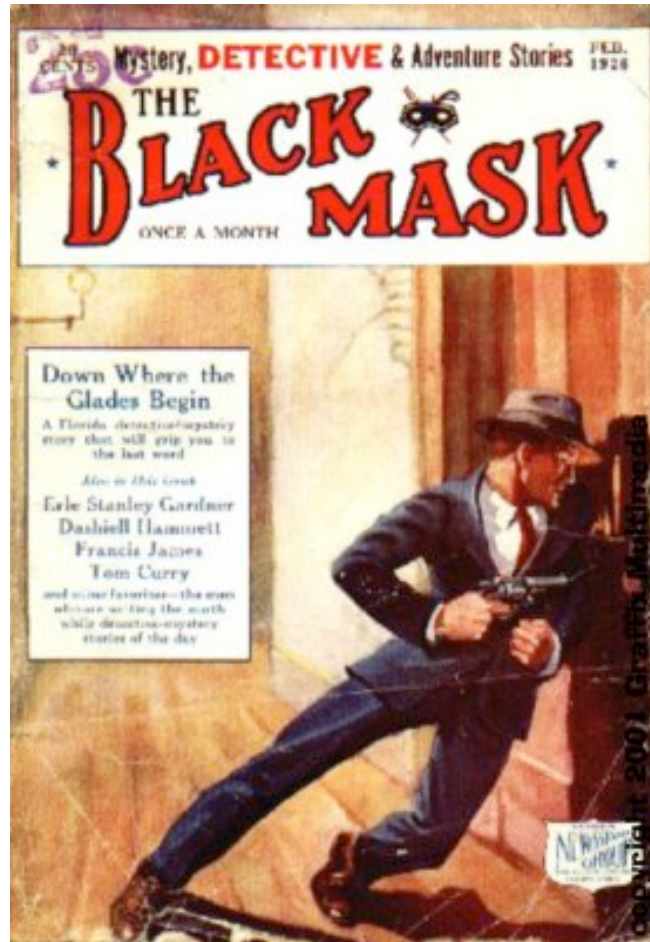
From *The Mollie Maguires*



Dime novels and pulps



Black Mask, c. 1923



1926: editor Joseph “Cap” Shaw

- Emergence of a “Black Mask school” of fiction
- Shaw’s view of his readers: “vigorous-minded; hard, in a square man's hardness; hating unfairness, trickery, injustice, cowardly underhandedness; standing for a square deal and a fair show in little or big things, and willing to fight for them; not squeamish or prudish, but clean, admiring the good in man and woman; not sentimental in a gushing sort of way, but valuing true emotion; not hysterical, but responsive to the thrill of danger, the stirring exhilaration of clean, swift, hard action – and always pulling for the right guy to come out on top.”

Shaw worked with

- Carroll John Daly, whose characters Terry Mack and Race Williams are prototypes of the hardboiled protagonist. Immersion in the underworld, clarity of purpose combined with a *personal* morality: "right and wrong are not written on the statues for me, nor do I find my code of morals in the essays of long-winded professors. My ethics are my own."
- Dashiell Hammett (convincing him to return to publishing with *Black Mask* in early 1920s)
- Raymond Chandler (in early 1930s)

Shaw's memos on style

- “In creating the illusion of reality” authors should have their characters look and act tough rather than be tough.
- “To accomplish action it's not necessary to stage a gun battle from start to finish, with a murder and a killing in every other paragraph... You can keep it alive through dialogue.”

Dashiell Hammett

- Popularized and solidified the hardboiled genre
- As critic Bill Marling puts it, “He was recognized immediately for lifting a previously disreputable style of fiction into literary prominence.”

Hammett's novels

- Red Harvest (1929)
- The Dain Curse (1929)
- The Maltese Falcon (1930)
- The Glass Key (1931)
- The Thin Man (1934)

Hammett's ingredients

- Style: bare and terse, direct
- Mood: cynical
- Action and style are both relentless.
- There are still puzzles, but solutions are less important than settling a job.
- Atmospheric.
- Organized crime: villains can be faceless cogs, violence can be institutional.
- And the setting is resolutely metropolitan.

Chandler, in *The Simple Art of Murder*

- "He was spare, frugal, hard-boiled, but he did over and over again what only the best writers can ever do at all. He wrote scenes that seemed never to have been written before."

Raymond Chandler

- The Big Sleep (1939)
- Farewell, My Lovely (1940)
- The High Window (1942)
- The Lady in the Lake (1943)
- The Little Sister (1949)
- The Long Goodbye (1953/1954)
- Playback (1958)

Writing assignment: Group A

- 500 words: Find one small passage or moment in which the nature of Marlowe's detecting mind – his modes and habits of thought, his capacity for insight – is presented in some surprising or otherwise interesting way. Provide a **close reading** of that moment. Attend closely to the language and the internal logic of your passage, and discuss, with as much specificity as possible, why and how it is surprising, intriguing, interesting.