Cyclopaedia 7 — Noir  
By T.R. Knight (InnRoads Ministries * Article Series)

Overview

Noir begins with the French word for black but more often is associated with cinema or fiction characterized by bleak settings, cynicism, danger, fatalism, femme fatales, mystery, and tough heroes.

Film noir, which means black film, sets the standard for most people when it comes to Noir. Crime dramas produced in the 40s and 50s, most often filmed in black and white. Often the anti-hero or hard-boiled detective narrated the dark and bleak tale of his encounter with the femme fatale and the crime she was associated with.

At its core, Noir instills in readers and viewers specific emotions and visuals. Dark shadows and off center lighting set a bleak tone to the scene. Ambiguous morality and cynicism grays the line between hero and villain. Even in modern films and literature, the core of Noir can be found in various films and books, even merging with other genres such as fantasy and science fiction.

Noir Sub-genres

Even then, this iconic visual of Film Noir only covers a portion of the noir genre. There are five primary sub-genres of noir recognized by most, each with its own feel and flair.

- Film Noir
- Crime Noir
- Neo-Noir
- Science Fiction Noir
- Tech Noir

Following are sources of information pertaining to Noir to assist prospective game masters, game designers, writers, and storytellers in knowing where to start their research.

Articles

Film Noir Fascination: Outside History, But Historically So  
By Harris, Oliver  

Hollywood's Detectives: Crime Series in the 1930s and 1940s from the Whodunnit to Hard-boiled Noir  
By Wilson, R.  

A Lotta Night Music: The Sound of Film Noir  
By Ness, Richard  

Meehan's The Fusion of Science Fiction and Film Noir and Botting’s Limits of Horror  
By Freedman, C  

Melodrama and Film Noir on Today’s Big Screen: How Modern Audiences Experience Yesterday’s Classics  
By Hilscher, M.C. and Cupchik G.C.  
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Books

**Batman Noir**
By Azzarello, Brian and Risso, Eduardo

**The Big Sleep (Philip Marlowe #1)**
By Chandler, Raymond

**Burning Chrome**
By Gibson, William

**The Cleanup**
By Doolittle, Sean

**Cocktail Noir: From Gangsters and Gin Joints to Gumshoes and Gimlets**
By Deitche, Scott

**Dark Passage**
By Goodis, David

**Devil in a Blue Dress (Easy Rawlins, #1)**
By Mosley, Walter

**Dirty Snow**
By Simenon, George

**Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep**
By Dick, Philip K.

**Double Indemnity**
By Cain, James M.

**Femme Noir: Bad Girls of Film**
By Hannsberry, Karen Burroughs

**The Film Noir Encyclopedia**
By Silver, Alain and Ward, Elizabeth M.

**Film Noir FAQ: All That’s Left to Know About Hollywood’s Golden Age of Dames, Detectives, and Danger**
By Hogan, David J.

**The Grifters**
By Thompson, Jim

**Gun, with Occasional Music**
By Letham, Jonathan

**In Cold Blood**
By Capote, Truman

**The Hidden World of Film Noir**
By Vieira, Mark A.

**I, the Jury (Mike Hammer, #1)**
By Spillane, Mickey

**The Killer Inside Me**
By Thompson, Jim

**L.A. Confidential**
By Ellroy, James

**The Maltese Falcon**
By Hammett, Dashiell

**The Man with the Getaway Face**
By Stark, Richard

**More than Night: Film Noir in Its Contexts**
By Naremore, James

**Neverwhere**
By Gaiman, Neil

**No Country For Old Men**
By McCarthy, Cormac

**Noir Style**
By Silver, Alain

**The Postman Always Rings Twice**
By Cain, James M.

**Red Planet Blues**
By Sawyer, Robert J.
Somewhere in the Night: Film Noir and the Underside of American Urban Life
By Christopher, Nicholas

Storm Front (The Dresden Files, Book 1)
By Butcher, Jim

Street with No Name: A History of the Classic American Film Noir
By Dickos, Andrew

Sweet Silver Blues (Garret P.I., #1)
By Cook, Glen

The Talented Mr Ripley (Ripley, #1)
By Highsmith, Patricia

They Shoot Horse, Don’t They
By McCoy, Horace

Watchmen - Graphic Novel
By Moore, Alan

CINEMA

12 Monkeys
Alphaville
Basic Instinct
The Big Heat
The Big O - Anime
The Big Sleep
Blade Runner
Body Heat
Breathless
Cape Fear
Cast A Deadly Spell
Chinatown
The City of Lost Children
Collateral
Cowboy Bebop - Anime
Criss Cross
Dark City
The Dark Knight
Detour
Devil in a Blue Dress
Double Indemnity
Fargo
The Grifters
The Groundstar Conspiracy
High and Low

GAMES

A Dirty World - RPG
BioShock Infinite - Computer Game
Black Vienna - Tabletop Game
Blade Runner - Computer Game
Cargo Noir - Tabletop Game
Cthulhu Confidential - RPG
Deadlines: Noir - RPG
Deja Vu - Computer Game
Grim Fandango - Computer Game
Gumshoe - Tabletop Game
GUMSHOE System - RPG
Heavy Rain - Computer Game
Hollywood - RPG
Hotel Dusk: Room 215 - Computer Game
Killer 7 - Computer Game
Mage Noir - RPG
Max Payne - Computer Game
Noir: The Film Noir Roleplaying-Game - RPG
NOIR: Deductive Mystery Game - Tabletop Game
L.A. Noire - Computer Game
P.I. - Tabletop Game
Shadowrun - Computer Game
Snatch - Computer Game
Spider-Man: Shattered Dimensions - Computer Game
Technoir - RPG
Trail of Cthulhu - RPG
White Night - Computer Game
Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956)
Key Largo
The Killers
Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang
Kiss Me Deadly
Kolchak: The Night Stalker - TV
L.A. Confidential
The Last Seduction
Laura
Le Samourai
The Long Goodbye
M
The Maltese Falcon
The Manchurian Candidate
Marvel’s Jessica Jones - TV
Memento
Moonlighting - TV
Mulholland Drive
Murder, My Sweet
Night Moves
Noir - Anime
Notorious
Out of the Past
Outland
Pickup on South Street
Point Blank
Pulp Fiction
Remington Steele - TV
Reservoir Dogs
Se7en
Sin City
Soylent Green
Sledge Hammer! - TV
Someone to Watch Over Me
Strangers on a Train
Sunset Boulevard
Sweet Smell of Success
Touch of Evil
True Detective - TV
Twin Peaks - TV
The Two Jakes
The Usual Suspects
Veronica Mars - TV

The X-Files - TV

Locations

Alex Theatre, Glendale
http://www.alextheatre.org/

Arthur Lyons Film Noir Festival
http://arthurlyonsfilmnoir.ning.com/

Deal Noir Crime Fiction Convention
https://dealnoir.wordpress.com/

Pacific Dining Car
http://pacificdiningcar.com/

People

Lauren Bacall
Humphrey Bogart
James Cagney
James M. Cain
Raymond Chandler
Joan Crawford
Bette Davis
David Goodis
Gloria Grahame
John Huston
Ritz Lang
Ida Lupino
Philip Marlow
Robert Mitchum
Rita Hayworth
Joe Sawyer
Jim Thompson
Charles Williams
Cornell Woolrich