

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

Source: Cinema Journal, 43, no. 1 (2003): 3-24

Hollywood's Detectives: Crime Series in the 1930s and 1940s from the Whodunnit to Hard-boiled Noir

By Wilson, R.

Source: HISTORICAL JOURNAL OF FILM RADIO AND TELEVISION, 33, no. 3, (2013): 530-532

A Lotta Night Music: The Sound of Film Noir

By Ness, Richard

Source: Cinema Journal, 47 (2007): 52-73

Meehan's The Fusion of Science Fiction and Film Noir and Botting's Limits of Horror

By Freedman, C

Source: Science-fiction studies. 38, Part 3 (2011): 528-529

Melodrama and Film Noir on Today's Big Screen: How Modern Audiences Experience Yesterday's Classics

By Hilscher, M.C. and Cupchik G.C.

Source: Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts, v2 n4 (2008 11 01): 203-212

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 Deitch, 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 Horses, Don't They

By McCoy, Horace

Watchmen - Graphic Novel

By Moore, Alan

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

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 Bepop - 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

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://arthurl Lyonsfilmnoir.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