

Writing Crime: Darkness and Light

Start date	9 th June 2018	Time	10:00 – 16:45
Venue	Madingley Hall Madingley Cambridge		
Tutor	Emily Winslow	Course code	1718NDX044

**Interim Co-Directors of Public
and Professional Programmes**

Dr Liz Morfoot
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**For further information on this
course, please contact**

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Tutor biography

Emily Winslow is an American living in Cambridge. She's written a series of Cambridge-set crime novels (*The Whole World*, *The Start of Everything*, *The Red House* and *Look for Her*, about which *The Washington Post* has written: "[Winslow is] brilliant at portraying the ragged fragments of these lives. What emerges isn't a single killer with motive and means, but a tangle of stories crossing and colliding, stray intersections of incidents and accidents, misunderstandings and misreadings, all thanks to the myopia of individual perspectives and the self-centeredness of individual desires." She is also the author of the memoir *Jane Doe January*, which has been called "powerfully redemptive" (*Publishers Weekly*) and "potently rendered" (Kirkus). She's written personal essays for *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*, and for six years was a logic puzzle designer for *GAMES* magazine in the US. She teaches the long-form term of the Certificate in Creative Writing.

Course programme

09:30	Terrace bar open for pre-course tea/coffee
10:00 – 11:15	A Guilty Pleasure? The values and virtues in crime-themed entertainment
11:15	
11:45 – 13:00	Coffee
13:00	Structure: defining a story by where it spends its time
14:00 – 15:15	Lunch
	Point of View: the recurring roles that populate crime fiction
15:15	Tea
15:30 – 16:45	Stories and real life: the impacts of crime fiction
16:45	Day-school ends

Course syllabus

Aims:

- To consider the purposes and effects of crime fiction, for both writers and readers.
- To explore the choices writers make in terms of structure and point of view, and what those choices invisibly convey to readers
- To recognise and name some of the impacts of crime fiction on real life
- To identify and practise skills used to create effective crime fiction

Content:

Why are stories based on something as dark as murder so enjoyable?

Spend a day with crime novelist Emily Winslow exploring the ways that the structures of crime stories are so often actually inspiring. Learn how to build a fictional plot of your own, or to better appreciate the stories you read and watch.

Session 1—A Guilty Pleasure? The values and virtues in crime-themed entertainment

Finding a personal standard: What makes a book, movie or television programme valuable?

Session 2—Structure: defining a story by where it spends its time

Is a murder mystery about murder? Is a detective story about solving?

Considering alternative definitions of crime stories based on structure

Session 3—Point of View: the recurring roles that populate crime fiction

Whose story is it? Detective, murderer, victim, grieving loved one, witness, suspect?

The typical characters that populate crime fictions, and their connection to readers.

Session 4—Stories and real life: the impacts of crime fiction

True crime stories versus fiction; the effects of crime fiction on real-life crimes and crime solving; the effects of crime fiction on readers and writers

Presentation of the course:

Lecture, discussion, brainstorming, writing exercises.

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- more consciously consider the crime stories they read and watch, in terms of their effects, values, and meaning
- better understand the design of crime stories from the writer's perspective, for both appreciation and application
- make more effective storytelling choices as writers

Reading and resources list

Listed below are texts that might be of interest should you wish to supplement your learning on the course. Any essential reading is marked with an asterisk *

Books

Rendell, Ruth *Heartstones* (London: Arrow, 1991)
Rule, Ann *The Stranger Beside Me* (London: Sphere, 1994)

Essay

Winslow, Emily 'The Comfort of Crime Novels'
(<http://crimereads.com/comfort-of-crime-novels/>)

TV

Inspector George Gently "Goodbye China"
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1955768/> <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Goodbye-China/dp/B00IYOKFD6>

Additional information

Venue

Details of how to find Madingley Hall can be found on our website:
<http://www.ice.cam.ac.uk/who-we-are/how-to-find-the-institute>

Refreshments

Tea and coffee and lunch will be provided. If you have any specific dietary requirements or allergies and have not already advised us, please inform our Admissions Team on ice.admissions@ice.cam.ac.uk or +44 (0)1223 746262.

Note Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

Information correct as of: 15 May 2018