

**ENG440A: Topics in Literary Genres
End-Semester Exam**

Sunday, April 30, 2023

8-11am

Total Marks: 15

IMPORTANT NOTE: Please ONLY answer questions totaling 15 marks. This means you may either answer three questions from Section I OR one question each from Sections I & II OR one question from Section III. If you answer more than the required number of questions, I will NOT grade them.

Please read the instructions given for each section very carefully and follow all of them in your answer. If you have any questions about these instructions, please ask me.

Section I

5 Marks Each

This course has repeatedly emphasised that the knowledge generated through the study of literature is not absolute. This means that any statement regarding literary texts usually lies somewhere on a spectrum from ‘Mostly True’ to ‘Mostly False’, with the possibility of it being in the middle – ‘Both True and False’ – depending on the way of looking at a text. Keeping this in mind, mark the given statements as one of the following: Mostly True, Mostly False, Both True and False. Please justify your answer by explaining your understanding of the given statement (explaining all concepts contained in it) and providing textual evidence for your claims from at least THREE texts studied in this course. *Please choose the three texts carefully – do not ignore any text that most obviously contradicts the claim you are making.*

- 1) Since detective fiction usually includes murder, we can say that death is an important theme in all detective fiction.
- 2) In texts of science fiction that include both experts and laypersons as characters, it is always the expert’s idea of science that is upheld by the text.
- 3) From our study of science fiction and detective fiction, it is clear that these genres define science in multiple ways in terms of its content.
- 4) Detective fiction is seen as a conservative genre since it is ultimately concerned with the restoration of social order.
- 5) In science fiction, science is completely separated from emotion.

Section II

10 Marks Each

To answer these multiple choice questions, choose the BEST answer, and then justify your choice by explaining how it is a better option than all the other given answers. Please make sure you clearly explain any concepts that are used in any of the answers. Please provide textual evidence from at least FOUR texts studied in this course to support your claims.

- 1) What is the most important role played by science in detective fiction?
 - (a) In the technology used to commit and solve the crime.
 - (b) In the method used to solve the crime.
 - (c) In the method used to commit the crime.
 - (d) In the re-establishment of social order at the end of the text.

- 2) What is the way in which science is fundamental to the genre of science fiction?
- (a) Science is the basis of the futuristic technology that appears in the text.
 - (b) Science as a knowledge system is an important theme in the text.
 - (c) Extrapolations from current science are the basis of the plot in the text.
 - (d) The purpose of science is a central concern of the text.
- 3) What is the most basic difference between science fiction and detective fiction?
- (a) In terms of plot, science fiction is open-ended while detective fiction is close-ended.
 - (b) In terms of theme, science fiction focuses on life/death while detective fiction focuses on crime/justice.
 - (c) In terms of setting, science fiction is set in the future, while detective fiction is set in the present.
 - (d) In terms of affect, science fiction creates a sense of wonder while detective fiction provides a sense of satisfaction.
- 4) What is a basic similarity between science fiction and detective fiction?
- (a) Both genres are concerned with the ethics of science.
 - (b) Both genres are concerned with the generation of knowledge.
 - (c) Both genres are concerned with the relationship between science and social order.
 - (d) Both genres are concerned with ideas/events that are very far from our real lives.

Section III

15 Marks Each

This is the in-class version of the assignment option for the endsem. To answer this question, you need to do the following:

- Identify the genre of your chosen text (science fiction or detective fiction)
- Explain why you place it in that genre
- Rewrite the text to make it fit the other genre
- Explain how your rewrite makes your text fit the other genre

Marks distribution: (a) and (b) = 5 marks; (c) and (d) = 10 marks

1) *The Setup*

Purple marks stained the ivory flesh of the young victim's neck. DNA forensic technicians hustled around her with their swabs and evidence bottles.

My partner Isobel raised an eyebrow in an unspoken question.

"DNA will confirm it, but it's him."

Isobel sucked in a breath. "Adam Knowles. Been killing ten years, but not a hint of where he is."

I knew where he was. Twelve years since I killed him and placed a sample of my DNA labelled with his name in the database.

The victim's final screams played in my memory as I, Detective Richard Morrison, guided the investigation.

2) *The Breakthrough*

Dr Smith looked at the company's quarterly earnings and couldn't help but smile. His breakthroughs in stem cell research had not only sent the company stock soaring, it also meant the country was now the only real option for stem cell treatment in the world. The patent ensured it would be for the next twenty years. Dr Smith clicked through his inbox where he'd received congratulations and links to news sites that speculated on the ways his research would change the world. One headline wiped the smile off his face:

Human Farming Black Market Created By Demand For Stem Cells.

3) *The Murderer*

Yes, I'm a clone. But don't ask me about souls and identity.
I just know that I'm alive and have the memories of Juan Parker, so I must be Juan Parker.
From how I see things, I am the original Juan Parker. It doesn't matter what happened to the other one. I have no memory of what happened to him, so it doesn't really matter to me.
Unless whoever did what happened to him comes after me.
But I highly doubt that.

What? You think I killed him?

That's absurd. Why would someone create me to shoot him?
Never mind.

EASY REFERENCE: TEXTS DISCUSSED IN CLASS

Detective Fiction: The Cop and the Lady; The Haunted Policeman; Anatomical Variant; Trifles; Wasp's Nest; A Scandal in Bohemia; The Hammer of God; Vital Signs; Murders in the Rue Morgue; 'Bones' episode ('Pilot')

Science Fiction: Astronaut; Black Hole Theory; Zoo; Cave Smell; The Grey; Requiem Without Sound; The Star; Harrison Bergeron; The Facts in the Case of M. Valdemar; The Psychohistorians

Mixed Genre: Who Killed the Electric Carriage? (Murdoch Mysteries); Minority Report