

Golden Age Noir Authors + Titles

Anderson, Edward / *Thieves Like Us*, 1937
Ard, William / *Hell is a City*, 1955
Axelrod, George / *Blackmaile,r* 1952
Brewer, Gil A *Taste for Sin* 1961 + *The Vengeful Virgin* 1958
Burnett, W.R. / *Underdog* 1957
Chandler, Raymond
Cain, James M
Cain, Paul
Davis, Jada M. / *One for Hell*, 1952
Fischer, Bruno
Goodis, David / *Nightfall*, 1947 + *The Burglar*, 1953 + *The Wounded and the Slain* + 1955
Hammett, Dashiell / *The Maltese Falcon* 1929
Himes, Chester / *The Real Cool-Killers* 1959
Hughes, Dorothy B. / *Ride the Pink Horse* 1946
Macdonald, Ross
Marlowe, Dan J. / *The Name of the Game is Death* 1962 + *The Vengeance Man* 1966
McGivern, William P. *The Big Heat*, 1953 + *Odds Against Tomorrow* 1957
Powell, Richard
Stark, Richard
Thompson, Jim / *The Killer Inside Me* 1952 + *Pop. 1280*, 1962
Whittington, Harry / *A Night for Screaming*, 1960
Williams, Charles, / *The Hot Spot* 1953
Woolrich, Cornell

Later Noir Authors + Titles

Banks, Ray / *Cal Innes* series
Block, Lawrence / *Matt Scudder* series and early stand-alones
Ken Bruen / *Jack Taylor* series and some stand-alones
Carlotto, Massimo
Cray, David (see: Stephen Solomita) / *Keeplock*, 1995
Crumley, James
Depp, Daniel / *Loser's Town*, 2009
Disher, Gary / *Wyatt*, 2009
Epperson, Tom / *The Kind One* 2008
Gay, William / *The Long Home*, 1999
Gischler, Victor / *Deputy*, 2010
Guthrie, Allan
Hendricks, Vicki *Cruel Poetry* 2007
Hjortsberg, William / *Falling Angel* 1978
Philip Kerr / *Bernie Gunther* series
Knowles, Mike / *Wilson* series
Lange, Richard / *This Wicked World* 2009 + *Angel Baby* 2013
Manchette, Jean-Patrick
Nisbet, Jim
Phillips, Scott / *The Ice Harvest* 2001
Piccirilli, Tom
Rector, John / *The Cold Kiss* 2010
Ridley, John / *Love is a Racket* 1998 + *Everybody Smokes in Hell* 1999
Russell, Craig / *Lennox* series
Swierszynski, Duane
Zeltserman, Dave

Boiled to Black

Who done it? It wasn't Colonel Mustard in the conservatory with the candlestick; it was Deputy Sheriff Lou Ford in the bedroom, with his fists. Like Deputy Ford, early Noir was American. Europe soon followed, at first in poor imitation, but now has some of the best noir authors.

Noir tales aren't polite, nor do they take place in polite society. The proceedings are dire, strewn with violence and conclude with severe loss.

There are a variety of definitions of the genre. Here are some of my own: Noir is closely aligned in spirit with the Greek Tragedies. The extant tragedies deal exclusively with the causes of, war itself, and aftermath. The golden age of Noir (late 1930's – 1960) -and film noir- continues the exploration of people caught in circumstances beyond their control.

The best high-octane noir should have episodic drive, a tone of fatalistic ruination, and unaffected narrative. It is not unusual to have an unreliable narrator.

The best of the genre are hardboiled and drenched with existential unease. If existential stress is not present, it is simply hardboiled, also quaintly called Thuglit. For example, all of Mickey Spillane's *Mike Hammer* series are hardboiled, but not all are noir.

Noir fiction includes a number of sub-genres such as Comedy: Bowker, David / *How To Be Bad*; Westerns: deWitt, Patrick / *The Sisters Brothers*, and historical: Philip Kerr's *Bernie Gunther* series

Some characteristics:

Cigarettes

Out of the Past: "Cigarette"? reply, "Smoking". In Noir's golden age everybody smokes. Cigarette's convey language and mood. When alone, a person stares at the ceiling and smokes.

In Neo-Noir (post 1970's) cigarettes are rare.

Booze

Everybody drinks. In neo noir this *may* be combined usually with tablets of pain-killers.

Femme Fatale

Not *always* present or fatal.

The Patsy or Fall-Guy

Either the protagonist or secondary character/s is always destined for downfall.

The Investigator

There is usually someone investigating something- typically death by trauma.

The Police

Because of 'The Investigator' factor, the police usually make an appearance, often in a starring role.

The Knockout

Whether Classic or Neo, knockouts supplement murder.

Snappy Dialogue

More usual in Classic Noir, but often still found in Neo-noir.