



FREN 900 Fall 2022
 Le récit décentré: le roman policier and
 the Birth of the French Detective
 Caroline Jewers
 Course # 26730
 TR 1.00-2.15, 1049 Wescoe

Up to one in four novels sold in France is a roman policier. This course will look at the French polar, its characteristics, its variety - and its history. Enigmatic literature is as old as writing itself: Oedipus' riddle, and stories like that of the search for the Holy Grail are precursors of the genre. The polar begins in the late 18th/early 19th c. after the Industrial Revolution led to urban expansion and the exponential growth of Paris. Turbulent socio-political change and a rise in criminality led to the formation of more structured police forces, and a scientific interest in crimes and criminals. This course charts the history of the polar, and we'll study some significant examples from the beginnings to the present day, and some film and TV examples of the genre. The graduate section will feature additional meetings, theoretical readings and articles - and at least two works (Simenon, Vargas) may be counted on the 20th c reading list. To contemplate the polar is also a consideration of the history of the novel.