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Linda Collinge-Germain

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# The Aesthetics of Revealing/ Concealing in "The Killers" by Ernest Hemingway and in its Adaptation by Robert Siodmak

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- 1 Ernest Hemingway's "The Killers" was first published in *Scribner's Magazine* in March 1927, then again in the same year in the collection *Men Without Women*, during the "roaring twenties" when prohibition and prosperity went paradoxically hand in hand. It is a crime story whose theme Hemingway did not extensively pursue but which influenced writers of the hard-boiled school of crime-writing such as Dashiell Hammett whose *Maltese Falcon* was published only three years after "The Killers" in 1930. And it was the crime story that interested Robert Siodmak, a Hollywood film director of German descent, influenced by German expressionism and who, though virtually unknown to the general public today, actively participated in developing in the 1940's what later became known as the "film noir" genre. Anthony Slide provides the following useful definition of the genre:

The term [*film noir*] was used to designate a group of films that was different from the usual crime and gangster films, both visually and structurally. Visually, the high-key lighting used in most Hollywood films was replaced by a repeated use of low-key lighting, so that the screen was often literally in the dark. Structurally, the redemptive elements of the gangster and crime film—the police win; the city is cleaned up; the gangster dies—are replaced by a narrative in which no one is able to win, especially not the hero. (73)

- 2 Siodmak entitled his 1946 adaptation of Hemingway's story *The Killers*. Its status as a *film noir* masterpiece makes it a compatible companion to Hemingway's story and the dynamics created between the two works makes them worthy of study. Such, as we know, is not always the case: excellent stories can be adapted into mediocre films, just as excellent films can be made from less than perfect short stories.

- 3 The aim of this article is to look at the short story "The Killers" as a striking example of Hemingway's elliptical style, a paradigm of modern short story writing and its aesthetics of implicitness;<sup>1</sup> then to see how Siodmak's *film noir* fills in the gaps of Hemingway's story and how the detective figure, in his investigation and attempt to make sense of what is unsaid, is emblematic of the reader of the short story in quest of meaning, but also how the aesthetics of *film noir*, an aesthetics of revealing and concealing, is in fact akin to the aesthetics of the modern short story: both *film noir* and short story withhold information from the reader/spectator and progressively provide it, or not.<sup>2</sup>
- 4 Hemingway was able to define very early in his career the style that interested him and that would become his hallmark. "Out of Season," published in 1923, was written on his "new theory" according to which "you could omit anything [like the character hanging himself] and the omitted part would strengthen the story".<sup>3</sup> In *Death in the Afternoon*, he proposed the analogy of the iceberg that would give its name to "the iceberg theory":
- If a writer of prose knows enough about what he is writing about he may omit things that he knows and the reader, if the writer is writing truly enough, will have a feeling of those things as strongly as though the writer had stated them. The dignity of movement of an iceberg is due to only one-eighth of it being above water.  
(169)
- 5 "The Killers" offers abundant examples of such omissions. Omitted information is withheld information and withholding information is a device used to create dramatic tension, both at the diegetic and the extra-diegetic levels, and in the case of this crime story, to create a threatening atmosphere.
- 6 As is the case in most short stories, the plot of "The Killers" is limited, as is the number of characters. The plot is as follows: Two men enter Henry's lunch-room and, observed by Nick Adams seated inside, order their evening meal. After having been served, by George, the meal prepared by Sam, the two men threateningly sequester Nick and Sam before announcing that they intend to kill Ole Andreson, a customer of the lunch-room whom they plan to shoot when he comes in for supper. Once they are convinced that Ole will not show up, they leave the lunch-room. Nick goes to Ole and tries to warn him of the danger, but Ole fatalistically abandons himself to the idea that his death is now inevitable.
- 7 The story begins *in medias res*, so with very little contextualization: "The door of Henry's lunch-room opened and two men came in. They sat down at the counter" (43).<sup>4</sup> No description is given either of the geographical situation of the lunch-room, of the lunch-room itself or of the two men. In fact the story contains few descriptions, either of characters or setting, and the objective observations of the narrator-whom Genette identifies as an external focalizer<sup>5</sup>-reveal no information about the feelings of the characters. Indeed, in his definition of external focalization, Genette calls attention to an observation made by Michel Raimond and establishes a link between mystery and the use of external focalization: "Michel Raimond has rightly observed that in the adventure story 'in which mystery is a crucial element,' the author 'doesn't immediately reveal to the reader all he knows' and indeed many adventure stories begin with external focalization" (207, my translation).<sup>6</sup> In "The Killers," the very limited number of narrated passages contain little more than objective stage-direction-like indications defining the characters' movements. Very few adjectives or adverbs are used to interpret the facts:

George put the two platters, one of ham and eggs, the other of bacon and eggs, on the counter. (45)

The little man walked after Nick and Sam, the cook, back into the kitchen. (46)

The door from the street opened. A street-car motorman came in. (48)

George had cooked the sandwich, wrapped it up in oiled paper, put it in a bag, brought it in, and the man had paid for it and gone out. (48)

The cook opened the door from the kitchen when he heard Nick's voice. (52)

- 8 Only three manifestations of a narrator's subjectivity appear in the story. They appear in the form of comparisons:

Their faces were different, but they were dressed *like twins*. (44, my emphasis)

[Al] was *like a photographer arranging for a group picture*. (47, my emphasis)

George watched them, through the window, pass under the arc-light and cross the street. In their tight overcoats and derby hats *they looked like a vaudeville team*. (49, my emphasis)

- 9 The comparison in the last excerpt could of course be attributed to George as he is the focalizer in this passage, but for our purposes the effect is the same: subjectivity is limited.

- 10 The short story is almost completely composed of dialogue, text which is unmediated by a narrator. Reporting clauses are often omitted before or after the direct speech, leaving the speaker unidentified, often pushing to the reader's limits the amount of omitted information that can be tolerated, as the following example illustrates:

'What's the idea?' George asked.

'None of your damn business,' Al said. 'Who's out in the kitchen?

'The nigger.'

'What do you mean the nigger?'

'The nigger that cooks.'

'Tell him to come in.'

'What's the idea?'

'Tell him to come in.'

'Where do you think you are?'

'We know damn well where we are,' the man called Max said. (46)

- 11 And as this excerpt also illustrates, with only three exceptions in the story the reporting verbs are limited to "said" or "asked". No adverbs are used to describe the manner in which the character speaks or to indicate tone, not even "coldly" or "flatly" for example which could have indicated an absence of feeling on the part of the characters.

- 12 The title of the story potentially introduces characters-killers-and consequently a possible event-killing. Yet the story itself begins with a description of the characters entering the diner limited to "two men", the plural implying that they are perhaps the killers of the title, but only suggesting it. Though the aggressive language and boisterous behavior of the two men as well as the "black overcoat" and "gloves" continue this suggestion, confirmation of their intentions and therefore of their identity as "the killers" of the title comes much later, five pages into the ten-page story<sup>7</sup> when they announce: "We're going to kill a Swede" (47). This information was indeed withheld from the reader just as it was withheld from the other characters in the story-Nick, George and Sam-in spite of their insistence: "'What's the idea?'" says Nick when told to "go around on the other side of the counter," a question that is repeated twice and answered evasively either with "'There isn't any idea'" or "'None of your damn business'" (45). Similarly, when George asks the question "'What are you

going to do with [Sam]?", Al, one of the "two men," avoids providing information when he answers: "Nothing [...] What would we do to a nigger?", and when George insists, asking: "What's it all about?", the two men answer by returning the question: "What do you think it's all about?" (46). This tantalizing game of cat and mouse, of withholding vital information, is continued by Al and Max as they refuse this time to explain the motive of their killing in spite of George's repeated question "What are you going to kill Ole Andreson for?" (47). Max's *uninformative* answer "We're killing him for a friend" is nevertheless ironically considered by Al to be *excessively* informative as he accuses his partner of "talk[ing] too goddam much."

- 13 "Talking too much" is precisely what Hemingway avoids as his open-ended story does not allow the reader to know if the killers do indeed "kill the Swede." George only speculates in the end that "[t]hey'll kill him" (52), just as he only speculates about the motive for the imagined crime: "Double-crossed somebody. That's what they kill them for" (53). Ole's ambiguous explanation for the motive of the potential crime—"I got in wrong"—does not allow Nick or the reader to determine if Ole indeed deserves punishment or if he is simply the victim of circumstances.
- 14 This very threatening story proposes a world vision in which violence is latent, unexplained and inevitable (Ole's room at Hirsch's rooming house is at "the end of a corridor" [50]), possible at any time (the clock is omnipresent in the story though not reliable) and in any place, even places as familiar as Henry's lunch-room or Hirsch's rooming-house.
- 15 Robert Siodmak had several reasons to be attracted to Hemingway's story.<sup>8</sup> First of all, as previously mentioned, the text is made up almost solely of dialogue, making it ready for performance and eliminating the difficulty of adapting narrative voice. Secondly, it is a short story and offers the major advantage the short story does over a novel for feature-film adaptation: it proposes a plot but offers the possibility of expansion; for the filmmaker, adding material in the film-making process is potentially more artistically satisfying than subtracting material. Finally, it is a potential crime story but without a crime or a motive. The unanswered questions in the short story can then be answered in the film adaptation, making the story's implicit explicit. We could even amusingly wonder if Siodmak was not applying Hemingway's iceberg theory to his adaptation, as the twelve-minute prologue of the ninety-eight-minute film, almost exactly one-eighth of the film, is the mostly faithful transcription of "The Killers," what is "visible" to the reader (with two significant and necessary modifications: Ole is shot to death by Al and Max as he lies in his room at the rooming-house after having confessed to Nick: "Once I did something wrong," a blatant admission of guilt that is absent in the ambivalent "I got in wrong" of the story). The remaining eighty-six minutes of the ninety-eight minute film, literally seven-eighths of the iceberg, are Siodmak's speculation on what might have motivated the crime, what Hemingway left unsaid, what he left under the surface of the visible part of the iceberg. In adding this material, Siodmak creates two new stories which Dominique Sipièrre describes in his introduction to *Les récits policiers au cinéma* as being a specificity of crime fiction:

In the crime novel: *Two stories* coexist and interconnect: first of all the story which led to the *crime* and which is often continued in the narrative; secondly the story of the *investigation*, which constitutes the majority of the novel. The aim of the second story (the investigation), is to reconstruct the first one (the crime). (4, my translation)<sup>9</sup>

- 16 The primary device used by Siodmak to fill in the gaps left in Hemingway's story and explain the motivation for the crime (Ole's murder) is the flashback, a device used as well by most other filmmakers of the noir genre.<sup>10</sup> In order to understand why Ole was killed, his past has to be reconstructed. The "second story," to use Sipière's terminology, features the detective whose role is to conduct the investigation and perform this reconstruction using the collected information. Gilles Menegaldo individually analysed the eleven flashbacks of Siodmak's film and observed that "the incursions into the past do not follow any specific pattern but [...] concern more and more important witnesses and [...] lead us closer and closer to the truth [...] with no strict chronological ordering"(159). I would intensify the qualifier "important" witnesses and suggest that the flashbacks progress from memories of innocent witnesses to those of guilty witnesses: the investigator progressively penetrates the criminal world, his work becomes more and more dangerous, a source of dramatic tension in the film.
- 17 The second of the eleven flashbacks<sup>11</sup> is one of the first to provide information about Ole's past though it portrays a scene from the very end of Ole's secret life. The character remembering is Queenie, the chamber maid who visited Ole's room on the night he learned that a woman had betrayed him, the *film noir's* mandatory *femme fatale*-Kitty-whom Siodmak introduced in spite of Hemingway's story being published in the collection entitled *Men Without Women!* Queenie, on the other hand, is not a *femme fatale* and her complete innocence contrasts with the violence of the scene in which Ole furiously ransacks the room and attempts suicide following the departure of an unidentified woman. The technique used to introduce the flashback is one that is repeated at regular intervals throughout the film to present eleven different episodes of Ole's life: a medium shot is used to frame and isolate the investigator and the witness, the investigator questions the witness (here "Why did you think he'd killed himself?"), a reverse shot is then used to frame the witness who is filmed close-up, a dissolve and a sound bridge are used to move from present to past, the witness remembers, a dissolve and sound bridge are used to return to the present. It should be noted that the dissolve editing procedure was a relatively complex one in 1946. Using it so extensively meant a certain mastery of technique which I will be referring to later.
- 18 The second point I would like to make concerning this expansion of the short story is that the investigation is led by a private detective whose job is not only to question, but also to interpret, to put the pieces together, and that he is emblematic in this respect of the reader who constructs meaning by filling in the gaps. The detective's search for truth can be easily associated to the short story reader's search for meaning, recreating order from, if not chaos, then at least confusion. Denis Mellier has observed that the "interpretative project of all detective stories can be considered as a metadiscourse on writing, the text and reading" (12, my translation),<sup>12</sup> but this fact seems to be particularly relevant in the case of the reading of the modern short story. In *The Killers*, Siodmak devotes three scenes to the reconstruction and interpretation of Ole's past by Reardon, the investigator.<sup>13</sup> The scenes take place in the daytime, contrary to most of the other scenes in the film, clearly a metaphor for understanding: Reardon sheds light on the subject. The second of the scenes<sup>14</sup> takes place in the office of the Company director after Reardon has interrogated five characters (Siodmak added twelve characters and dozens of extras to Hemingway's story) whose witnessing appears in the form of the flashbacks previously mentioned. This reconstruction scene comes after

eight flashbacks: Reardon is then putting into chronological order eight episodes presented previously both to him and to the spectator in no chronological order. The script is as follows, the numbers in parentheses corresponding to the order of the flashbacks in the film:<sup>15</sup>

Reardon: This [the scarf] is the one that was used in that hold-up. (8)

Boss: How do you know that?

Reardon: Follow me. Take an ex-pug the name of Swede (3), falls for a girl named Kitty Collins. (4) He takes a three-year rap for her. (5) When he gets out, he's brought into a robbery set-up through (7) an old-time thief named Charleston. (5) There's a girl present the night of the big pow-wow. Charleston wouldn't name names but my guess is that same Kitty Collins. (7)

Boss: Go on.

Reardon: The Prentiss Hat robbery was July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1940. (8) That same night the Swede and an unidentified woman check into a small hotel in Atlantic City. Two days later the woman takes a powder and the Swede tries to pile out a window. A chamber maid saves his life and he's grateful enough to leave her his insurance. (2)

Boss: That all?

Reardon: Just about. Until six years later we find the Swede in Brentwood. As far as anyone knows, a filling-station attendant. Except, he's waiting for some killers to come and get him. (1) Nice of them to hang on to this (6) wasn't it? Without it, I'd have gone on about my business and the whole thing would have blown over. (my emphasis)<sup>16</sup>

- 19 The contrast between the order of the flashbacks in the film and their order in the reconstruction (8, 3, 4, 5, 7, 5, 7, 8, 2, 1, 6) is evidence of Reardon's capacity to make order out of confusion, his injunction "Follow me" signifying the complexity of the undertaking.<sup>17</sup> Reardon also makes it clear that he is filling in the gaps left in the witnesses' testimony: "Charleston wouldn't name names but my guess is that same Kitty Collins."
- 20 But if Hemingway appreciated Siodmak's adaptation as he apparently did, it was probably *not* because Siodmak filled in the gaps. Hemingway said, once again: "the omitted part would *strengthen* the story" (my emphasis). Hemingway's appreciation was perhaps due instead to Siodmak's *aesthetics* of omitting, an aesthetics in which not everything is revealed, the aesthetics, precisely, of the *film noir*: chiaroscuro.<sup>18</sup>
- 21 Chronologically, Edward Hopper was inspired *first* by Hemingway's story. He painted "Nighthawks"<sup>19</sup> in 1942, a painting which in turn inspired Siodmak for his own adaptation of the story four years later. Both artists clearly took their cue from Hemingway's story, whose very limited number of descriptions are often devoted to lighting (when not to the characters' movements as mentioned previously), and especially to the contrast between light and dark, already creating a chiaroscuro effect:

Outside it was getting dark. The street-lights came on outside the window. (43)  
George watched them, through the window, pass under the arc-light and cross the street. (49)  
Outside the arc-light shone through the bare branches of a tree. Nick walked up the street beside the car-tracks and turned at the next arc-light down a side-street. (50)  
Nick walked up the dark street to the corner under the arc-light (52)
- 22 Siodmak used dramatic lighting techniques, as other German filmmakers of the Expressionist movement had before him, not only to create a threatening mood, but also as a means to formally reveal and conceal, to *visually* withhold information. The techniques include the use of sharp contrasts between light and dark, of low-lighting (whether natural or artificial, the light source provides minimal lighting: the moon, the



stars, a table lamp, a candle) and the use of shadows and silhouettes. In addition to the major source of light, a small secondary light source may even be a detail used to thematize light. Such techniques can often be seen as a means to visually represent metaphors such as "to be left in the dark" or "to shed light on something." Of course black and white are the most appropriate "colors" for such treatment of light and they provide a distanced and therefore unreal representation of reality, a feature which also must have attracted Hemingway.<sup>20</sup>

- 23 A number of examples illustrate these techniques used in *The Killers*. In the establishing shot of the diner's exterior,<sup>21</sup> an obvious allusion to Hopper's painting, light sources are both visible and invisible. The street lamp and the small outdoor light on the building are visible, while the light behind the diner, whose source is not visible, creates more light than the visible sources. This invisible source creates the shadows of the diner and of the characters on the pavement in front of the diner. The silhouettes and the shadows both reveal and conceal the characters: we see their contour, but not the details within the contour. During the scene at the morgue following Ole's shooting,<sup>22</sup> the source of light is a ceiling lamp which sheds light on the coroner who has the knowledge about Ole's death. Reardon and Nick Adams are still "in the dark," as Gilles Menegaldo has remarked (160). Their identity is first concealed (they are only silhouettes and their backs are to the camera), then slowly revealed as they turn to face the camera and come into the light.<sup>23</sup> In the scenes of Ole's funeral and the prison cell occupied by Ole and Charleston,<sup>24</sup> the light source is the moon and characters appear once again either as silhouettes or with the same half-lit faces that Hopper features in "Nighthawks."
- 24 But certainly one of the most striking chiaroscuro images of *The Killers* comes within the context of Lieutenant Lubinsky's first flashback.
- 25 Ole has just lost his boxing match and though Lubinsky tries to encourage his friend, Ole walks away alone into the brightly lit street.<sup>25</sup> I consider this image as a paradigm of the aesthetics of revealing and concealing in its defamiliarizing juxtaposition of light and dark. It functions at several levels, first of all for the character himself. Ole has just lost his fight and is forced to abandon his boxing career. His future is now a threatening blank, unrevealed to him. The strong light into which he walks (too strong in fact to be realistic) is paradoxically symbolic of the *unknown* and not of a revelation to the character.<sup>26</sup> Additionally, the light produces a silhouette, concealing the character's features, symbolizing his loss of identity. The blinding light is also proleptic of Ole's future blindness, his incapacity to see that he is being double-crossed by Kitty. For Lubinsky, Ole's friend, the light is also paradoxically the photographic negative of a "black hole." As Ole walks into the light, Lubinsky says "After that I *didn't* see much of Ole" (my emphasis). And for the spectator, the information about Ole that the flashback was intended to provide is withheld.
- 26 The mastery of technique that is apparent in Siodmak's use of chiaroscuro is visible in Hemingway's stories as well and also what many short story writers foreground when they talk about their work.<sup>27</sup> They work again and again to master the technique of concision, of concealing and revealing, in which every word counts, honing the text until it becomes a gem, similar to this gem proposed to the viewer by Robert Siodmak.



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## NOTES

1. In his introduction to the JSSE Special Issue on Hemingway's short stories, Rédouane Abouddahab draws attention to studies devoted to Hemingway's stylistic method (especially Geneviève Hily-Mane's *Le Style d'Ernest Hemingway: la plume et le masque*, 1983) and to specific aspects of his writing style, including omission (G. Brenner, *Concealments in Hemingway's Works*, 1983; K. Johnston, *The Tip of the Iceberg: Hemingway and the Short Story*, 1987; S. Beegel, *Hemingway's Craft of Omission: Four Manuscript Examples* 1988), (33) and includes in his bibliography "Hemingway et l'écriture du silence", Rédouane Abouddahab, 1999.
2. Contrary to Hemingway's story, Siodmak's film was produced *after* enforcement of the Hays Code in 1934. Censorship is therefore also a potential source of discretion in the film, but one I will not dwell on here.
3. Recounted in "Hunger Was Good Discipline." *A Moveable Feast* (63). The idea was present in a December 24<sup>th</sup>, 1925 letter to F. Scott Fitzgerald: "At that time [...] I wanted to write a tragic story *without* violence. So I didn't put in the hanging. Maybe that sounds silly. I didn't think the story needed it." (*Selected Letters*, 180-181).
4. All page numbers in the article refer to the 2004 Arrow Books Edition of the story.
5. "...external focalization [was] made popular in the 20s and 30s by Dashiell Hammett's novels in which the hero acts before us without our knowing his thoughts or feelings, and by certain short stories by Hemingway, such as "The Killers" or even more so "Hills Like White Elephants" in which discretion is pursued to the point of enigma (207, my translation). "...le récit à focalisation externe, [fut] popularisé entre les deux guerres par les romans de Dashiell Hammett, où le héros agit devant nous sans que nous soyons jamais admis à connaître ses pensées ou sentiments, et par certaines nouvelles d'Hemingway, comme *The Killers* ou davantage encore *Hills Like white Elephants* (*Paradis Perdu*), qui pousse la discrétion jusqu'à la devinette."
6. "Michel Raimond remarque justement que dans le roman d'intrigue ou d'aventure, 'où l'intérêt naît du fait qu'il y a un mystère', l'auteur 'ne nous dit pas d'emblée tout ce qu'il sait', et de fait un grand nombre de romans d'aventures [...] traitent leurs premières pages en focalisation externe."
7. In the 2004 Arrow Books Edition of the story.
8. Several of these are mentioned in Marguerite Chabrol's presentation of Hemingway's story and Siodmak's film in the Bonus section of the Collector edition of *The Killers*.
9. "Dans le roman policier: *Deux histoires* coexistent et se croisent: d'abord celle qui a conduit au crime, et qui se poursuit souvent dans le récit; ensuite celle de l'enquête, qui constitue l'essentiel du récit proprement dit. La seconde histoire (l'enquête) a pour objet de reconstituer la première (le crime)."
10. Anthony Slide remarks that "Flashbacks become crucial for *film noir*, as a mood of hopelessness and fatality is established by beginning the film with the protagonist defeated [...] and then flashing back to see how this state was brought about" (73).
11. Time code 21.29 to 22.37 in the Collector edition of *The Killers*. All other references are to this edition.
12. "On sait que le projet herméneutique de tout récit policier constitue l'abyme parfait où lire un métadiscours sur l'écriture, le texte et la lecture." Charles E. May, in his brief presentation of Arthur Conan Doyle's story "The Adventure of the Speckled Band," notes that the story is "particularly interesting for its focus on the readerly interpretation of clues by the detective figure" (145).
13. The spelling "Reardon" is as it appears in the film, on the investigator's office door at 22.51 for example.
14. Time code 57.48 to 58.51.
15. Order of the flashbacks in the film by names of witnesses: 1) Nick Adams; 2) Mary-Ellen Daugherty, the chamber maid; 3) Lieutenant Lubinsky; 4) Lily; 5) Lieutenant Lubinsky; 6)

Charleston; 7) Charleston; 8) The newspaper article; 9) Blinky Franklin; 10) Blinky Franklin; 11) Kitty Collins.

16. The spelling "Prentiss" is as it appears in the film, both in the newspaper clipping (55.21) and on the gate at the scene of the robbery (55.33).

17. In his chapter "The 'tough' investigative thriller," Frank Krutnik insists on the virility of the investigator which this reconstruction exemplifies: "[Riordan's] effectiveness as a masculine investigator is signified by his success in constructing a coherent picture of the 'truth' from the disordered network of clues" (115, 116).

18. An aesthetics which is complementary to the narrative structure of withholding described by Odile Bächler in her essay "Origines et fonctions du flash-back dans le film policier américain": "In a crime film, placing the murder or the motivation for it in the past makes it possible to begin the story with the investigation and to hide the murderer or the motive. Withholding information is essential to the genre" (26, my translation). "Dans un film policier, placer le meurtre ou le motif du meurtre dans ce qui est révolu permet de commencer le récit par l'enquête et de cacher meurtrier ou motif. La rétention du savoir est essentielle au genre."

It must also be observed that the absence of chronology in the flashbacks is an obstacle to comprehension and though Reardon reconstructs the story, his oral account does not have the power to completely override the impact that the visual representation of the events has had on the viewer. The viewer must still construct meaning; Reardon's reconstruction does not suffice.

19. "Nighthawks" portrays two men and a woman being waited on at a diner in the evening. Contrast between light and dark is an essential feature of the painting. For a more detailed study of the two works, see for example Rédouane Abouddahab, "Scène américaine et scène textuelle: Hopper et Hemingway."

20. The first films in color appeared in the late 1930's.

21. Time code 2.00 to 2.15.

22. Time code 14.14 to 15.10.

23. In the morgue, Reardon lifts the sheet from Ole's corpse. Though this is not an example of chiaroscuro, it is an example of play on revealing/concealing. The corpse is revealed to the investigator but concealed from the spectator.

24. Time codes 44.50 and 46.23 to 48.44 respectively

25. Time code 34.05 to 34.11. This still can be seen at the following address: [https://buddwilkins.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/thekillers1946\\_2.jpg](https://buddwilkins.files.wordpress.com/2011/07/thekillers1946_2.jpg).

26. ...as well as being an interesting contrast to the Western's more upbeat final image of the cowboy riding off into the sunset.

27. See for example the anthology of interviews by short-story writers in the special issue of the *Journal of the Short Story* n° 41.

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## ABSTRACTS

L'article étudie la nouvelle d'Ernest Hemingway « The Killers », paradigme de l'écriture moderniste dans son usage de l'implicite, et l'adaptation filmique de Robert Siodmak. Le film de Siodmak remplit les blancs de la nouvelle et met en scène une figure emblématique de la quête du sens, le détective, figure à rapprocher du lecteur de la nouvelle moderniste. Néanmoins, Siodmak adopte une esthétique du caché/montré (notamment le clair-obscur) proche de

l'esthétique de Hemingway. Ainsi film noir et nouvelle privent le spectateur/lecteur d'information puis progressivement la divulguent, ou pas.

## AUTHORS

### LINDA COLLINGE-GERMAIN

Linda Collinge-Germain is an Associate Professor at the University of Angers where she teaches English language and literature and is an active member of the Centre de Recherches Interdisciplinaires en Langue Anglaise. She is the author of *Beckett traduit Beckett: de Malone meurt à Malone Dies, l'imaginaire en traduction* (Droz, 2000), a study of Beckett as self-translator, and has also published articles on the subject which have appeared in *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui* or thematic collections. Her areas of interest are the bilingual works of Samuel Beckett, reception theory and more currently, cultural in-betweenness in short-story writing, and film adaptations of short stories as a form of translation. She was co-editor of the *Journal of the Short Story in English* from 1997 to 2012 and has been editor since 2012.