

Study Questions on Film Noir  
HUM 376 | SFSU  
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1. What social and cultural elements, relations, values, and changes do Borde / Chaumeton use to define film noir in “Toward a Definition of Film Noir”?
2. What elements of style—the visual language of cinema—mark film noir?
3. What forms, movements, styles in the history of cinema were foundational to the development of the noir style?
4. How can we think beyond the ways Borde/Chaumeton characterize the figure of the femme fatale? How is the femme fatale related to economic and social changes in the 1940’s?
5. How do noir films both reflect and critique gender roles and norms?
6. If any of the films you watch feature race, how does that illustrate the social construction of race during this time period?
7. What other important styles of filmmaking in the 40’s and 50’s can be connected to noir?
8. How is film noir related to Fascism?
9. What do you think is unique about San Francisco noir?