

# David Goodis

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

## David Goodis

Image:Goodis.jpg

David Goodis

**Pseudonym:** David Crewe, Logan Claybourne, Lance Kermit, others

**Born:** March 2, 1917  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Died:** January 7, 1967

**Occupation:** Novelist, screenwriter

**Nationality:**  United States

**Genres:** Noir fiction, crime fiction

**Debut works:** First novel, *Retreat from Oblivion* (1939)

**David Goodis** (March 2, 1917 – January 7, 1967) was a popular American noir fiction writer.

## Contents

- 1 Biography
- 2 Bibliography
- 3 Filmography

- 4 Read
- 5 References
- 6 External links
- 7 Mentioned in

## Biography

Born in Philadelphia, Goodis had two younger brothers, but one died of meningitis at the age of three. After high school in Philadelphia, Goodis studied at Indiana University for a year before transferring to Temple University, where he graduated in 1938 with a journalism degree.

While working at an advertising agency, he started writing his first novel, *Retreat from Oblivion*. After it was published by Dutton in 1939, Goodis moved to New York City, where he wrote under several pseudonyms for pulp magazines, including *Battle Birds*, *Daredevil Aces*, *Dime Mystery*, *Horror Stories*, *Terror Tales* and *Western Tales*, sometimes churning out 10,000 words a day. Over a five-and-a-half year period, according to some sources, he produced five million words for the pulp magazines, while also scripting for such radio adventure serials as *Hop Harrigan*, *House of Mystery* and *Superman*. Novels Goodis wrote

during the early 1940s were rejected by publishers, but in 1942, he spent some time in Hollywood as one of the screenwriters on Universal's *Destination Unknown*.

His big break came in 1946 when his novel *Dark Passage* was serialized in *The Saturday Evening Post*, published by Julian Messner and filmed for Warner Brothers with Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall heading the cast. Delmer Daves directed what is now regarded as a classic *film noir*, and a first edition of the 1946 hardcover is valued at more than \$800.

Arriving in Hollywood, Goodis signed a six-year contract with Warners where he scripted *The Unfaithful* (a remake of Somerset Maugham's *The Letter*). Some of his scripts were never produced, including *Of Missing Persons* and an adaptation of Raymond Chandler's *The Lady in the Lake*.

In 1950, Goodis returned to Philadelphia where he lived with his parents and his schizophrenic brother Herbert. At night, he prowled the underside of Philadelphia, hanging out in nightclubs and seedy bars, a milieu he depicted in his fiction. *Cassidy's Girl* (1951) sold over a million copies, and he continued to write for paperback publishers,

notably Gold Medal. There was a renewed interest in his novels when François Truffaut filmed *Down There* (1956) as the acclaimed *Shoot the Piano Player* (1960).

Goodis died in 1967 of cirrhosis of the liver. After his death, his work went out of print in the United States, but he remained a popular favourite in France. In 1987, Black Lizard began to reissue Goodis titles. In 2007, Hard Case Crime will be publishing a new edition of *The Wounded and the Slain* for the first time in more than 50 years. Also in 2007 *Street of No Return* and *Nightfall* are being re-published by Millipede Press.

## Bibliography

- *Somebody's Done For* (1967)
- *Night Squad* (1961)
- *Fire in the Flesh* (1957)
- *Down There* (1956)
  - aka *Shoot the Piano Player*
- *The Wounded and the Slain* (1955)
- *The Blonde on the Street Corner* (1954)
- *Street of No Return* (1954)
- *Black Friday* (1954)
- *The Moon in the Gutter* (1953)
- *The Burglar* (1953)

- *Street of the Lost* (1952)
- *Of Tender Sin* (1952)
- *Cassidy's Girl* (1951)
- *Of Missing Persons* (1950)
- *Behold This Woman* (1947)
- *Nightfall* (1947)
  - aka *Convicted*
  - aka *The Dark Chase*
- *Dark Passage* (1946)
- *Retreat from Oblivion* (1939)

## Filmography

- *Street of No Return* (1989)
- *Descent into Hell* (1986) from *The Wounded and the Slain*
- *Rue Barbare* (1984) from *Street of the Lost*
- *The Moon In The Gutter* (1983)
- *And Hope to Die* (1972) from *Black Friday*
- *Le Casse* (1971) from *The Burglar*
- "The Alfred Hitchcock Hour" episode: "An Out for Oscar" (April 5, 1963)
- *Shoot the Piano Player* (1960) from *Down There*
- *The Burglar* (1957)
- *Nightfall* (1957)
- *Section des disparus* (1956) from *Of Missing Persons*
- *Dark Passage* (1947)

- *The Unfaithful* (1947)

## Read

- Excerpt from *The Wounded and the Slain*

## References

- Garnier, Philippe. *Goodis, La Vie en Noir et Blanc*. Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1984.
- Sallis, James. *Difficult Lives: Jim Thompson, David Goodis, Chester Himes*. New York: Gryphon Books, 1993.

## External links

- Nightfall and Street of No Return 2007 editions from Millipede Press.
- David Goodis at the Internet Movie Database
- David Goodis and the Representation of Women
- David Goodis: Poet of the Losers by Dave Moore
- David Goodis -- Gallery of book covers
- David L. Ulin reviews *The Blonde on the Street Corner*

## Mentioned in

- Paul D. Marks

Retrieved from

"[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David\\_Goodis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Goodis)"

Categories: American crime fiction writers |  
American screenwriters | American radio writers |  
American novelists | Pennsylvania writers |  
Philadelphia writers | Temple University alumni |  
People from Philadelphia | 1917 births | 1967  
deaths

---

- This page was last modified 18:33, 3 June 2007.
- All text is available under the terms of the GNU Free Documentation License. (See **Copyrights** for details.)  
Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a US-registered 501(c)(3) tax-deductible nonprofit charity.