CLASS NOTES

1. All Villains are antagonists, but not all antagonists are villains

2. Villains and antagonists should be a genuine threat
   a. Goals
   b. Skills
   c. Power
   d. Smart
   e. Effect on Story World
   f. Emotional Danger

3. Give careful consideration to Motives and Goals
   a. Goal =
   b. Motive =

4. Understand the Why
   a. Why =
   b. Helps readers identify with the villain/antagonist
   c. Backstory

5. Antagonists can be loved Ones

6. Humanizing your antagonist
   a. Origin Story
   b. Family
c. Emotion
d. Likeable Traits
e. Logical Motives
f. Ambitious
g. Possible shared values with reader
h. Common Villain Characteristics

7. Villain/Antagonist as Main Character
   a. Viewpoint character can prevent caricature
   b. Needs to be subject to antagonizing forces
   c. Outflank with worse people

8. Antagonism within the Protagonist

9. Social Issue as Antagonist
   a. Avoid abstraction

10. Tragic Antagonist

11. Unseen Antagonist
   a. Mysteries
   b. Works through proxies

12. Antagonist Archetypes

13. Love interest as antagonist

14. Multiple Antagonists

15. Story Themes

16. Antagonist Examples
   a. Long John Silver – Treasure Island
b. Bob Ewell – *To Kill a Mockingbird*

c. Voldemort — *Harry Potter Series*

d. Miss Minchin—*A Little Princess*

e. Messala Severus—*Ben Hur*

f. Inspector Javert—*Les Misérables*

g. Teague—*Cold Mountain*

h. Jadis, The White Witch—*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*

**SELECT VILLAIN ARCHETYPES**

*These are by no means all villain archetypes, but this list provides many solid examples from literature and film. ALL of these are beneficial regardless of your storytelling medium/form (novel, film, short story, etc.). Please reference the recommended reading and viewing lists for specific versions.*

1. Fanatic
   a. Annie Wilkes – *Misery*
   b. Syndrome – *The Incredibles*
   c. St. John Rivers – *Jane Eyre*
   d. Inspector Javert – *Les Misérables*
2. Secret Villain
   a. _____ -- *The Spiral Staircase* (*left blank for suspense!*)
   b. _____ -- *Murder She Said* (*left blank for suspense!*)
   c. Sauron – *Lord of the Rings*
3. Parental Oppressor
   a. Anne Hamilton—*The Notebook*
   b. Humbert Humbert—*Lolita*
4. Sidekick
   a. Grover Dill—*A Christmas Story*
5. Outsider/Outcast
   a. Grendel—*Beowulf*
   b. Beast—*Beauty and the Beast*
   c. Tom Riddle—*Harry Potter Series*
   d. Heathcliff—*Wuthering Heights*
6. Violent Predator
   a. Teague – *Cold Mountain*
7. Traitor
   a. Long John Silver—Treasure Island
   b. Benedict Arnold—Finishing Becca
8. Insane
   a. Mrs. Danvers—Rebecca
   b. Bruno Antony—Strangers on a Train
   c. ______-- The Uninvited (left blank for suspense!)
9. Sympathetic Villain
   a. Humbert Humbert—Lolita
10. Authority Figure
    a. Miss Minchin—A Little Princess
11. Beast/Monster
    a. The alien--Alien
12. Bully
    a. Draco Malfoy—Harry Potter Series
    b. Curley – Of Mice and Men
    c. Carrie’s mother and her classmates – Carrie
    d. Jill Brenner- Blubber by Judy Blume (from bully’s POV)
    e. Regina George—Mean Girls
13. Femme Fatale/Seductress
    a. Phyllis Dietrichson – Double Indemnity
14. Henchman
    a. Luca Brasi – The Godfather
15. The Machine
    a. The Terminator—The Terminator
16. Personification of Evil
    a. Voldemort—Harry Potter Series
    b. Mr. Hyde—The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde
    c. Dracula--Dracula
    d. Jadis, The White Witch—The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe
17. Nature
    a. The River—The African Queen
    b. The Cold—To Build a Fire
18. Supernatural/Alien
    a. Ghost—The Uninvited
    b. The Alien—Alien
SELECT MOTIVES FOR VILLAINS/ANTAGONISTS

1. Rejection
2. Revenge
3. Justice
4. Failed career
5. Desperation
6. Desire for acceptance
7. Fear
8. Paranoia
9. Mental health issues such as depression, or even psychological conditions such as psychosis.
10. Failed romance
11. Money
12. Power
13. Freedom

COMMON VILLAIN CHARACTERISTICS

1. He believes he is in the right
2. He is proud
3. He possesses likeable traits
4. He is smart and talented
5. He is a worthy opponent, which makes the protagonist look good
6. He is persuasive
7. He envies the hero
8. He is persistent
9. He can be merciless
10. He shares numerous traits in common with the hero, but they are misguided
11. He might occasional show genuine kindness
12. He is deceitful

RECOMMENDED COURSE VIEWING: NEXT STEPS

As we discuss in the course, I recommend putting as much time into considering your antagonist as your main character. To that end, I have a number of character courses that I recommend going through if you have not already:

1. Writing Unforgettable Characters: Crafting a Character Profile (Start here. This class is about how to choose the foundational traits out of which all other traits grow). Includes a very helpful worksheet.
2. **Character Values & Beliefs: The Foundation of Your Character** *(Take this course next. It really pairs with the Character Profile course. This also focuses on foundational traits you will want to sort out that determine why your character does what he/she does. If you want consistent characters, this class will help!)*

3. **Character Flaws: Create Depth and Drive the Plot** *(Do not neglect this course for antagonists. We tend to think antagonist flaws come easy, but if you are going to make a realistic opponent, you want to be strategic with your flaws.)*

4. **Choosing a Character’s Strengths: Likeable but not Perfect** *(You want to think about your opponent’s character strengths. Otherwise he will be one-dimensional. While this course is focused on the protagonist, all of it could be used to flesh-out the opponent as well.)*

5. **Describing Traits, Actions, and Thoughts: Bring Characters to Life** *(This course is focused not on the development or pre-planning of a character, but how to write that character into the story. You want to avoid overused or uninteresting character descriptions and try to write descriptions that strategically push the plot forward and choose the most relevant aspects of your character to share.)*

6. **Write Believable Character Relationships** *(Also about writing your characters into the story, this course will help you think about juxtaposing your protagonist and antagonist so that you choose the most interesting, dramatic, strategic traits for each.)*

**RECOMMENDED READING**

*All books contain links for recommended versions ;)*

* See below for annotations on recommendations

- **Sense and Sensibility** – Jane Austen
- **Little Women** – Louisa May Alcott
- **Emma** – Jane Austen
- **Cold Mountain** – Charles Frazier
- **Treasure Island** – Robert Louis Stevenson
- **Les Misérables** – Victor Hugo
- **A Little Princess** – Francis Hodgson Burnett
- **A Christmas Carol** – Charles Dickens
- **Ben Hur** – Lew Wallace
- **Lolita** – Vladimir Nabokov
- **A Tree Grows in Brooklyn** – Betty Smith
- **The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde** – Robert Louis Stevenson
- **Rebecca** – Daphne du Maurier
- **The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe** – C.S. Lewis
- **Harry Potter Series** – J.K. Rowling
• The Lord of the Rings Trilogy – J.R.R. Tolkien
• Matilda – Roald Dahl
• Dracula – Bram Stoker
• Of Mice and Men – John Steinbeck
• Blubber – Judy Blume
• Carrie – Stephen King
• Madame Bovary – Gustave Flaubert
• To Kill a Mockingbird – Harper Lee
• Wuthering Heights – Emily Bronte
• Beowulf
• Finishing Becca – Ann Rinaldi
• To Build a Fire – Jack London
• Jane Eyre – Charlotte Bronte
• Washington Square—Henry James (film equivalent is The Heiress)
• Great Expectations—Charles Dickens
• The Maltese Falcon—Dashiell Hammett
• The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (2005, Andrew Adamson)

RECOMMENDED WATCHING

* Year and Director Listed
* All films contain links for watching ;-) 
* See below for annotations on recommendations

• The Spiral Staircase (1946, Robert Siodmak)
• The Lost Weekend (1945, Billy Wilder)
• Catch Me if you Can (2002, Steven Spielberg)
• Rebecca (1940, Alfred Hitchcock)
• The Caine Mutiny (1954, Edward Dmytryk)
• Munity on the Bounty (1935, Frank Lloyd)
• Moby Dick (1956, John Huston)
• Lolita (1962, Stanley Kubrick)
• The Maltese Falcon (1941, John Huston)
• The African Queen (1952, John Huston)
• Dial M for Murder (1954, Alfred Hitchcock)
• The Uninvited (1944, Lewis Allen)
• Wallstreet (1987, Oliver Stone)
• Double Indemnity (1944, Billy Wilder)
- The Godfather (1972, Francis Ford Coppola)
- How to Lose a Guy in Ten Days (2003, Donald Petrie)
- The Devil Wears Prada (2006, David Frankel)
- Ben Hur (1959, William Wyler)
- Sense and Sensibility (1995, Ang Lee)
- Emma (1996, Douglas McGrath)
- Little Women (1994, Gillian Armstrong)
- Treasure Island (1990, Fraser Clarke Heston)
- The Incredibles (2004, Brad Bird)
- Misery (1990, Rob Reiner)
- The Notebook (2004, Nick Cassavetes)
- A Christmas Story (1983, Bob Clark)
- Wuthering Heights (1939, William Wyler)
- Strangers on a Train (1951, Alfred Hitchcock)
- Mean Girls (2004, Tina Fey)
- The Terminator (1984, James Cameron)
- Aliens (1986, James Cameron)
- Murder She Said (1961, George Pollock)
- Silence of the Lambs (1991, Jonathan Demme)
- The Heiress (1949, William Wyler)
- Great Expectations (1946, David Lean) (This is the best version!!!!)
- A Christmas Carol (1951, Brian Desmond Hurst) (One of my all-time favorite films)
- Cold Mountain (2003, Anthony Minghella)
- Harry Potter Series (2001-2011)
- Lord of the Rings Trilogy (2001-2003, Peter Jackson)
- A Tree Grows in Brooklyn (1945, Eliza Kazan)
- Carrie (1976, Brian de Palma)
- To Kill a Mockingbird (1962, Robert Mulligan)

ANNOTATIONS ON RECOMMENDED READING/WATCHING

BOOK WITH MOVIE RECOMMENDATIONS ALSO

*All recommendations are linked. When both book and film are included, the book is listed first.
** A note on film selections: When I recommend a book, I am only also recommending a film version when I believe there is one that is also quite good. It does not replace reading the novel—they are different mediums.
and each should be respected and acknowledged as its own entity. Some of these books have films also, but I did not recommend the film because, while it may be perfectly fine, it does not do as good a job conveying the villain or antagonist, in my estimation.

**Sense and Sensibility** – Jane Austen  
*Sense and Sensibility* (1995, Ang Lee)  
Funny and endearing story of two sisters who struggle against antagonizing societal forces. Austen does a great job of using a variety of characters to be different facets of a society that privileges wealth and status while restricting the rights of women. Austen’s writing is so on point; she has a biting humor that is part of what makes her work so lasting. Do not miss either reading the actual book or watching this version of the film. Both are excellent—the movie is one of my favorite films.

**Little Women** – Louisa May Alcott  
*Little Women* (1994, Gillian Armstrong)  
Like ‘Sense and Sensibility’, the main antagonizing force is society and the main characters are sisters. The tone of this is far more sensitive and endearing and there are fewer obvious characters who easily embody the force and become a kind of villain. This makes it an excellent film to compare to Austen’s story. The 1994 film is by far the best version.

**Emma** – Jane Austen  
*Emma* (1996, Douglas McGrath)  
Good example of an endearing protagonist who is her own worst enemy. Emma manages to be both protagonist and antagonizing force, and this is the point of the story. Read and watch to learn how to give your protagonist flaws that are the focus of the story while still making her the hero. The book is fantastic, and this film version captures it well.

**Cold Mountain** – Charles Frazier  
*Cold Mountain* (2003, Anthony Minghella)  
Great example of a purely evil villain. Teague is a hunter, stalking the protagonist throughout the story. He kills without remorse, but does so in the name of his cause. Good example of villain motives being explained. We don’t like Teague, and we don’t like how he operates, but we understand where he is coming from (even if we disagree). The book is *beautifully* written. Truly a great example of lovely prose. The film is also good. Book is better.

**Treasure Island** – Robert Louis Stevenson  
*Treasure Island* (1990, Fraser Clarke Heston)  
Phenomenal example of a sincerely likeable antagonist who is as close to a protagonist while not being one as you can get. Long John Silver manages to be the worst of the worst as pirates go, and yet we find ourselves rooting for him. The book is superbly written—very action oriented while also having quality prose. The film is not to be missed. This is a truly enjoyable movie.
**A Christmas Carol** – Charles Dickens

*A Christmas Carol* (1951, Brian Desmond Hurst) (*One of my all-time favorite films*)

Excellent example of an antagonist as the protagonist and also as a protagonist who is his own antagonizing force. A beautiful tale of redemption. Gorgeously written. The book and *this specific version of the film* are essential reading/watching. Really consider how, given how bad Scrooge is, Dickens has us cheering for him. Also note how happy we are when he repents – this is because of the high contrast in Scrooge before and after.

**Ben Hur** – Lew Wallace

*Ben Hur* (1959, William Wyler)

This is a gorgeous epic/romance. The focus of the story is a tale of revenge and learning to let go. Messala Severus is a unique and nuanced villain. He and the protagonist, Ben Hur, were boyhood friends, and at the start of the story you can see both men want to remain such. Due to various turns of events, the friendship falls out, but you see considerable strain on both men due to their past relationship. The book is wonderful, and this version of the film is fantastic.

**Lolita** – Vladimir Nabokov

*Lolita* (1962, Stanley Kubrick)

Very solid example of a narrator/protagonist who is absolutely the villain as well. He is written to be a sympathetic villain, and because we are in his headspace and he has his own antagonizing forces, the reader is set up to empathize with him. BUT, he is absolutely a terrible person, and this is part of the conflicting emotion the book is designed to render in the reader. The book is an excellent example of well-written prose, and this version of the film is well done.

**A Tree Grows in Brooklyn** – Betty Smith

*A Tree Grows in Brooklyn* (1945, Eliza Kazan)

A great example of a tragic antagonist. The protagonist’s father is a good man who loves his family very much, but also hurts them a great deal. Also good story told from a child’s perspective. The book is beautiful. This is a fine film, not great but worth watching.

**Rebecca** – Daphne du Maurier

*Rebecca* (1940, Alfred Hitchcock)

GREAT story. This has an unseen antagonist as well a villain who stems from insanity. This is a mystery, drama, romance—the book is wonderful, the film is *fantastic*. Do not miss either of these!!!!
*The Lion the Witch and the Wardrobe* – C.S. Lewis

*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (2005, Andrew Adamson)

Beautiful children’s story. This is a wonderful example of a purely evil villain who truly is terrible, but who is also written with a child audience in mind. Her wickedness is highlighted by the goodness of Aslan. The book is lovely. This version of the film is a respectable adaptation—the best one currently.

*Harry Potter Series* – J.K. Rowling

*Harry Potter Series* (2001-2011)

Voldemort is a pure villain. What makes him interesting is the amount of backstory he is given. Consider how, despite the amount of history we are given about him, we still find him reprehensible. Definite good vs evil story.

*The Lord of the Rings Trilogy* – J.R.R. Tolkien


Solid example of a pure villain who is mostly unseen, operating instead by numerous proxies—each with his/its own skills/formidable characteristics. Good vs. evil epic. Really consider the nuances in some of the antagonizing forces and villains, including the force of the ring on Frodo and Gollum.

*Carrie* – Stephen King

*Carrie* (1976, Brian de Palma)

Solid example of teenage bullying. This is horror, it is rather grisly. I will say, I do not care for books like this, and *Carrie* is no exception, but that is personal preference. It is a good example of the genre. If horror/bullying is of interest, it is worth the watch and read. King truly writes bullies you do not like.

*To Kill a Mockingbird* – Harper Lee

*To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962, Robert Mulligan)

This is a beautiful story. The film and the book are fantastic—both are not to be missed. VERY solid example of societal antagonizing forces that are embodied by a truly villainous character. The child’s perspective is spot on. There is so much nuance to beautiful writing in the book, and the movie adapts it splendidly. Definitely read and watch!

*Wuthering Heights* – Emily Bronte

*Wuthering Heights* (1939, William Wyler)

Solid example of a hero who is also an antagonist. This is a very nuanced story in which it seems everyone is an antagonist in some way. If you are looking to write complex characters and situations, this is the book for you. The film is good also, but it definitely over simplifies (and shortens) the plot of the book.
**Washington Square**—Henry James (film equivalent is *The Heiress*)

*The Heiress* (1949, William Wyler)

Solid example of a well-intentioned father who operates as an antagonizing force and a beguiling young man who serves as the real villain in the story . . . and the girl in the middle. The book is excellent, the film is a wonderful adaptation.

**Great Expectations**—Charles Dickens

*Great Expectations* (1946, David Lean) *(This is the best version!!!!)*

One of my favorite stories. There are a number of antagonizing forces in this book, but pay close attention to Miss Havisham, Estella, Magwitch, and even Pip (among others). Different characters are opposition forces at different times. There is much nuance here and it is not a predictable story. The book is wonderful, funny, poignant. This is a great film adaptation, also.

**The Maltese Falcon**—Dashiell Hammett

*The Maltese Falcon* (1941, John Huston)

Fabulous crime genre fiction. Essential reading if that is your intent. Numerous antagonists, all unique and many oddly likeable. This book is a gritty, fast-paced style. It moves at a clip. The film is *fantastic*. I prefer it to the book.

**BOOK-ONLY RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Les Misérables** – Victor Hugo

Beautiful book. This version is the best in my estimation. Translations can be tricky. I like this one because it is unabridged and because I think the translation best captures the beauty of the original language. Great example of a well-intentioned but wrong antagonist. There is a bit of the tragic here as well. One of the great works of literature.

**The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde** – Robert Louis Stevenson

Pure evil vs very good all in the same person. True psychological drama. Short book, but powerful and beautifully written.

**A Little Princess** – Francis Hodgson Burnett

I enjoy this story tremendously. It is one I can read again and again. Miss Minchin is a fantastic villain who, by virtue of her position but certainly not her personality is formidable. There are quite a number of clashes between her and Sara. Great children’s story. A fast, likeable read.

**Matilda** – Roald Dahl

Matilda faces quite a number of villains—designed more or less to be caricature. Because that is the design and Dahl executes it well, it really works, going to show you that sometimes “flat” characters work just fine. I do not know of a film version that captures the book.
Dracula – Bram Stoker
Pure evil. A dark story but well written. If gothic fiction is your aim, this is a must-read.

Of Mice and Men – John Steinbeck
Very sad book, and a solid example of an adult bully. This is a quick read, but there is a lot packed into it. Notice the conflict the reader has between right and wrong. If you are looking to put a lot of emotion into your story, I recommend reading this.

Blubber – Judy Blume
Great example of a school bully who is the main character. This is a unique book and a worthy read.

Madame Bovary – Gustave Flaubert
The protagonist is also the antagonist. She is unlikeable and yet we follow her because she has enough other antagonizing forces coming her way. In this respect, the design is much like Lolita; however, there is a tragic aspect to Emma Bovary that is absolutely lacking in Humpert Humpert. Great work of literature and one I cite often in courses.

Beowulf
A wonderful example of an epic with an outcast villain. If you enjoy mythology, read this. You will be glad you did.

Finishing Becca – Ann Rinaldi
Fabulous example of young adult historical fiction featuring several unlikeable (and yet in some ways likeable) antagonists. This has everything a historical fiction/romance should have. It is pure fun.

To Build a Fire – Jack London
Very dramatic short story. The antagonist is the weather and while being extremely formidable, the book has a quietness to it. Jack London writes beautifully. Great example of bringing the setting to life.

Jane Eyre – Charlotte Bronte
Jane faces numerous antagonizing forces through this story, which gives the book considerable depth. It is a good one to read and identify the types of forces and motivations behind them. It is also not a simple black and white book or a book in which the protagonist has an obvious goal or in which it is easily described as protagonist vs. antagonist. Stories are often not that simple. Great book. There are good film versions, but none I would recommend over the book.
FILM-ONLY RECOMMENDATIONS

* Year and Director Listed
* All films contain links for watching ;-) 

The Spiral Staircase (1946, Robert Siodmak)
Wonderful example of a mystery with an unseen antagonist. This is tremendously atmospheric and gripping. I recommend it to all. Really note how they build the suspense and have you guessing who the villain is.

The Lost Weekend (1945, Billy Wilder)
Story of a man struggling with alcoholism, which is the antagonizing force. A confining story, spatially. Very well acted and great example of a protagonist outwardly struggling with overcoming a mental barrier.

Catch Me if you Can (2002, Steven Spielberg)
A story in which the protagonist is also the main antagonist. He is doing all the wrong things, but for tender-hearted or at least sympathetic reasons. Pay attention to how the film has us rooting for the wrong side but also wanting the “right” side to win out. Good film.

The Caine Mutiny (1954, Edward Dmytryk)
This is a good one to juxtapose against Mutiny on the Bounty. It is a story about a mutiny in which the captain seems by the crew to be mentally unstable. Pay attention to where your sympathies lie as you watch it and how they shift. Phenomenally acted film.

Mutiny on the Bounty (1935, Frank Lloyd)
Another story of a mutiny in which the crew considers the captain far too hateful and harsh. Like The Caine Mutiny, pay attention to where your emotions fall and the conflicting sense of who is right. A good film.

Moby Dick (1956, John Huston)
Final story of a seemingly unstable captain whose crew has had enough. The book is good, but a bit long in spots, but this version of the film is enjoyable.

The African Queen (1952, John Huston)
Wonderful example of nature as the antagonist. This is an adventure story and a love story. It is fun, gripping, well written, well-acted. You really feel the intimidating force of the river and the helplessness of the main characters. A must-watch.

Dial M for Murder (1954, Alfred Hitchcock)
Great example of a villain whose actions have deep emotional consequences for those around him. This is definite suspense without being a mystery. Extremely enjoyable film and good example of high drama in a more or less elegant space.
The Uninvited (1944, Lewis Allen)
Wonderful ghost story with a villainous ghost and additional unstable villain. Highly enjoyable and fun, but also quite eerie. Anyone interested in ghost stories should not miss this. Well acted.

Wallstreet (1987, Oliver Stone)
Good example of a corrupt villain motivated by greed. While this movie is not my cup of tea, it is an excellent example of this type of antagonist and is worth watching.

Double Indemnity (1944, Billy Wilder)
Truly wonderful example of a femme fatale—perhaps the best. There is so much suspense in this, several unlikeable and yet likeable characters. Really note how it sets you up to sometimes side with the wrong side. So so good. Watch this one for sure.

The Godfather (1972, Francis Ford Coppola)
Good example of a mob boss with henchmen. Not my favorite film, but absolutely one you should see. Pay attention to the different types of antagonizing forces, both internal and external, and how they affect the protagonist emotionally.

How to Lose a Guy in Ten Days. (2003, Donald Petrie)
Great example of a love-interest-as-antagonist. This is a silly romantic comedy, but does a wonderful job providing the reader with two characters to love as they try to beat one another at their own game.

The Devil Wears Prada (2006, David Frankel)
Great example of a film that has a likeable antagonizing force in Emily Blunt’s character of an assistant competing with the protagonist. You have a main antagonizing force in the editor, but you have several others, including the internal desires of the main character. Not a brilliant film, but fun and certainly worth watching if this genre interests you.

The Incredibles (2004, Brad Bird)
Great example of a villain whose motivation comes from being rejected. Fun movie.

Misery (1990, Rob Reiner)
I will admit, I don’t like this film. It is too twisted for me. But it is supposed to be that! If you enjoy horror, definitely worth watching. The villain is so very awful and unstable. This has a true impact on you as a viewer.

The Notebook (2004, Nick Cassavetes)
Very stereotypical romance story, but a great example of a well-intentioned antagonist in the form of a mother who loves her daughter.
A Christmas Story (1983, Bob Clark)  
Solid example of numerous well-intentioned antagonizing forces coming up against what a child wants for Christmas. Also a good example of a sidekick.

Beauty and the Beast (1991, Gary Trousdale, Kirk Wise)  
Beautiful story in which the character who starts as the antagonist is an outsider. The reader then comes to learn that the real villain is the ultimate insider.

Strangers on a Train (1951, Alfred Hitchcock)  
Wonderful suspense film in which the villain is totally unstable and yet seemingly unstoppable. This is a great and rather frightening film. Highly recommend!!

Mean Girls (2004, Tina Fey)  
Solid example of stereotyped villains. Again, stereotype can work, but ask yourself, why does it work here? What makes these characters succeed when others are flat and boring?

The Terminator (1984, James Cameron)  
Great example of a machine as villain. Part of what makes this so good is that the machine leverages skills that humans don’t have, making him extremely threatening.

Aliens (1986, James Cameron)  
Very good example of alien/monster villain. There is a lot of suspense here, which is heightened by the personal story between the protagonist and the little girl.

Murder She Said (1961, George Pollock)  
Truly fun murder mystery. This is one among a series that were done, and all are worthwhile. This is a great example of a suspense whodunnit that is also very lighthearted. The villain is unseen, but it has you guessing. So much fun.

Silence of the Lambs (1991, Jonathan Demme)  
Another film that I honestly don’t care for because I find it too disturbing, but I would be remiss not to include it in this list. Hannibal Lecter is insidious, as is another character in the film. Definitely worth watching for a compelling villain who speaks his case with grace and a twisted logic as well as to watch a highly conflicted protagonist. But it is frightening, very adult, and absolutely gave me nightmares when I watched it.
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Please also share the courses with friends using the shareable link on the course page. It makes a BIG difference.

Thank you for your support and kindness! Best of luck with your writing!

Barbara