



# The Noir Western: Darkness on the Range, 1943-1962

*David Meuel*

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Beginning in the mid-1940s, the bleak, brooding mood of film noir began seeping into that most optimistic of film genres, the western. Story lines took on a darker tone and western films adopted classic noir elements of moral ambiguity, complex anti-heroes and explicit violence. The noir western helped set the standard for the darker science fiction, action and superhero films of today, as well as for acclaimed TV series such as HBO's *Deadwood* and AMC's *Breaking Bad*. This book covers the stylistic shift in westerns in mid-20th century Hollywood, offering close readings of the first noir westerns, along with revealing portraits of the eccentric and talented directors who brought the films to life.

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