

EN2F5-30 Introduction to Alternative Lifeworlds Fiction (Science Fiction, Fantasy and the Weird)

20/21

Department

English and Comparative Literary Studies

Credit value

30

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module aims to orient students within the field of alternative lifeworld literature, film, and culture, providing them with a working knowledge of the entwined history and development of the related genres of sf, science fiction, fantasy and the weird. In addition to gaining a broad overview, the module will introduce students to the genres' relation to specific social, political and intellectual issues such as Labour, Technology, the Environment, Rationality, Utopia, Apocalypse, and Futurity.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

This module aims to orient students within the field of alternative lifeworld literature, film, and culture, providing them with a working knowledge of the entwined history and development of the related genres of sf, science fiction, fantasy and the weird. In addition to gaining a broad overview, the module will introduce students to the genres' relation to specific social, political and intellectual issues such as Labour, Technology, the Environment, Rationality, Utopia, Apocalypse, and Futurity.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be

covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Term 1: Shapiro

Week 1 - Introduction

Week 2: HG Wells, *The Island of Dr Moreau*

Week 3 - "The Poetics and Politics of Exhibiting Other Cultures" in *Representation*. Please read from I Introduction to the end of section 4.6 Summary. You can bypass the selected readings in the text. Think about how our texts can function museumologically and technographically. Octavia Butler, *Dawn* [1st book in the *Xenogenesis/ Lilith's Brood* trilogy]. All three can be purchased here.

Week 4: tentatively - "Spectacle of the Other" in *Representation*

Week 5: Nalo Hopkinson, *Midnight Robber*

Reading Week

Week 7: Joe Haldeman, *The Forever War*

Week 8: *Westworld*, Season 1 (2016); "Genre and Gender: The Case of Soap Opera" in *Representation*

Week 9: Ray Bradbury, *The Martian Chronicles*

Week 10: E. L. Konigsberg, *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*
Macdonald

Week 1 - Strugatsky Brothers, *Roadside Picnic*

Week 2 - Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

Week 3 - China Miéville, *The City and the City*

Week 4 - Stanislaw Lem, *Solaris*

Week 5 - SF Short Films: Chris Marker's *La Jetée* and others (shown in class with discussion).

Reading Week

Week 7 - Michel Faber, *Under the Skin* Under the Skin Handout

Week 8 - Nnedi Okorafor, *Lagoon*

Week 9 - Margaret Atwood, *Oryx and Crake* Oryx and Crake critical excerpts

Week 10 - Jeff VanderMeer, *Annihilation* (*The Southern Reach Trilogy* Vol. 1)

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Acquire knowledge of key theoretical and literary concepts and cultural and critical contexts within which to situate the set texts;
- Formulate analytical and critical skills through close reading/viewing of the set texts;
- Adjust to scholarly standards and protocols of presentation;
- Employ a main method for reading texts within the context of alternative lifeworld cultures;
- Demonstrate a broad knowledge of selected texts and concepts relating to alternative lifeworld cultural production;
- Indicate a broad understanding of critical, analytic, and creative approaches to produce knowledge;
- Exhibit an effective command of written English together with a wide-ranging and accurate vocabulary;
- Display textual analysis and critical argument;
- Conduct independent research through self-formulated questions.

Indicative reading list

All primary texts are available for easy purchase with selected texts to be provided in electronic copy. Copies of required theoretical reading will be provided as a module reading pack.

Bibliography includes aforementioned primary texts and these indicative readings:

- M. Keith Booker and Anne-Marie Thomas, *The Science Fiction Handbook*, (Blackwell, 2009)
- Mark Bould, Andrew M. Butler, Adam Roberts and Sherryl Vint, *The Routledge Companion to Science Fiction*, (Routledge, 2009)
- Mark Bould and Sherryl Vint, *The Routledge Concise History of Science Fiction*, (Routledge, 2011)
- Mark Bould and China Miéville, *Red Planets: Marxism and Science Fiction*, (Pluto: 2009)
- Gerry Canavan and Eric Carl Link, *The Cambridge Companion to American Science Fiction*, (CUP, 2015)
- Gerry Canavan and Kim Stanley Robinson, *Green Planets: ecology and science fiction*, (Wesleyan UP, 2014)
- Istvan Csicsery-Ronay Jr., *The Seven Beauties of Science Fiction*, (Wesleyan UP, 2008)
- Carl Freedman, *Critical Theory & Science Fiction*, (Univ. New England, 2000)
- Nick Hubble and Aris Mousoutzanis, *The Science Fiction Handbook*, (Bloomsbury, 2013)
- Edward James and Farah Mendlesohn, *The Cambridge Companion to Science Fiction*, (CUP, 2003)
- Fredric Jameson, *Archaeologies of the Future: The Desire Called the Future and Other Science Fictions*, (Verso, 2005)
- Rob Latham, *The Oxford Handbook of Science Fiction*, (OUP, 2014)
- Roger Luckhurst, *Science Fiction*, (Polity, 2005).
- Andrew Milner, *Locating Science Fiction*, (LUP, 2012)
- Tom Moylan, *Scraps of the Untainted Sky: Science Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia*, (Westview, 2000)
- David Seed, *A Companion to Science Fiction*, (Blackwell, 2005)
- – *Science Fiction: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford, 2011)
- Sherryl Vint, *Science Fiction: A Guide for the Perplexed*, (Routledge: 2014)
- – *Science Fiction and Cultural Theory: A Reader*, (Routledge, 2016)
- M. Keith Booker (ed) *Dystopia*, (Salem, 2013)
- – (ed) *Contemporary Speculative Fiction*, (Salem, 2013)
- Sherryl Vint, *Animal Alterity: Science Fiction and the question of the animal*, (Liverpool University Press, 2010)

Subject specific skills

Employ a main method for reading texts within the context of alternative lifeworld culture

Demonstrate a broad knowledge of selected texts and concepts relating to alternative lifeworld culture

Transferable skills

Acquire knowledge of key theoretical and literary concepts and cultural and critical contexts within which to situate the set texts

Formulate analytical and critical skills through close reading/viewing of the set texts

Adjust to scholarly standards and protocols of presentation

Indicate a broad understanding of critical, analytic, and creative approaches to produce knowledge
Exhibit an effective command of written English together with a wide-ranging and accurate vocabulary
Display textual analysis and critical argument
Conduct independent research through self-formulated questions

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Seminars	18 sessions of 1 hour 30 minutes (100%)
Total	27 hours

Private study description

Reading & research.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time
Assessed Essay 1 3,000 words	40%	
Assessed Essay 2 3,000 words	40%	
Group Video Project Citation and bibliographic exercise/Blogpost review	20%	

Feedback on assessment

Written comments; opportunity for further oral feedback in office hours

Availability

Courses

This module is Optional for:

- UCXA-QQ37 Undergraduate Classics and English
 - Year 2 of QQ37 Classics and English
 - Year 2 of QQ37 Classics and English
- UPDA-Y304 Undergraduate English & Cultural Studies
 - Year 2 of Y304 English & Cultural Studies
 - Year 2 of Y304 English & Cultural Studies
- Year 2 of UENA-Q300 Undergraduate English Literature
- Year 2 of UENA-QP36 Undergraduate English Literature and Creative Writing
- UFRA-QR3A Undergraduate English and French
 - Year 2 of QR3A English and French
 - Year 3 of QR3A English and French
- ULNA-QR37 Undergraduate English and German
 - Year 2 of QR37 English and German
 - Year 3 of QR37 English and German
- UHPA-QR34 Undergraduate English and Hispanic Studies
 - Year 2 of QR34 English and Hispanic Studies
 - Year 3 of QR34 English and Hispanic Studies
- Year 2 of UENA-VQ32 Undergraduate English and History
- ULNA-QR38 Undergraduate English and Italian
 - Year 2 of QR38 English and Italian
 - Year 3 of QR38 English and Italian
- Year 2 of UTHA-QW34 Undergraduate English and Theatre Studies
- Year 2 of UFIA-QW25 Undergraduate Film and Literature
- Year 2 of UVCA-LA99 Undergraduate Liberal Arts
- Year 2 of UPHA-VQ52 Undergraduate Philosophy, Literature and Classics
- MV21 Law with Humanities