

# EN3F5-30 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

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## 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](#)

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### 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**

Demonstrate coherent and detailed knowledge of selected texts and concepts relating to the U.S. horror/gothic cultures

Display on appreciation of the uncertainty, ambiguity, and contradictions within alternative lifeworld cultural productions

## **Transferable skills**

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

Demonstrate a conceptual understanding that enables the development and sustaining of a critical argument

Describe and comment on recent research and/or scholarship in subject  
Make appropriate use of scholarly reviews and primary sources  
Exhibit an advanced command of written English together with a wide-ranging and accurate vocabulary  
Apply confident textual analysis and fluent critical argument to initiate and carry out an extended essay  
Conduct independent research through self-formulated questions  
Produce work that displays the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring the exercise of personal responsibility and decision-making, along with collective engagement  
Deploy the expression and communication of ideas across media forms.

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## 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.

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## Assessment

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

### Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time
Assessed Essay 1 4,000 words	40%	
Assessed Essay 2 4,000 words	40%	
Group Video Project	20%	

## **Weighting**

## **Study time**

Group Video Essay Podcast Discussion/ Critical Review

## **Feedback on assessment**

Written comments; opportunity for further oral feedback in office hours

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## **Availability**

## **Courses**

This module is Optional for:

- Year 4 of UFIA-QW25 Undergraduate Film and Literature
- Year 4 of UFIA-QW26 Undergraduate Film and Literature (with Study Abroad)