Instructor: David L. Hoover
Tuesday: 2:00-4:30 pm
Office Hours: T 11:00-12:30, Th 12:30-2:00

Required Texts:
Atwood, Margaret. *Oryx & Crake*. 2003
Burdick, Eugene, and Harvey Wheeler, *Fail Safe*, 1962 288
Christopher, John. *The Death of Grass*. 1956
Clarke, Arthur. *Childhood's End*. 1953 224
Mandel, Emily St. John. *Station Eleven*, 2014
Shute, Neville, *On the Beach*. 1957 320
Tepper, Sheri. *The Gate to Women’s Country*. 1988
Wyndham, John. *The Day of the Triffids*. 1951

Graded Work:
The quizzes will be either a series of short-answer questions or a one-page response to an important issue in the text to complete at the beginning of class (there are no make-ups, but an excused absence also excuses any quiz given on that day).

Two critical/interpretive papers (4 pages each) 30% These must addressing one or more of the readings.

A final paper (10-12 pages) 30% The paper can range from one involving research concerning apocalypses or the specific texts we’ve read to a longer critical/interpretive paper. Another option is a more creative paper in which you imagine your own apocalypse and discuss why you chose it, how it would work, any difficulties you encountered in creating it, or how it relates to any of the class texts. You might also consider altering (part of) one of the class texts and discussing the purpose and effect of your alterations, or any difficulties you had or any remaining problems you see with the alterations. (A more detailed list of suggested topics will be presented during the class.) You will bring your preliminary plan for this paper to a workshop on April 25 when we will discuss them together. It is recommended that you present a preliminary draft for comments. Further help in planning, writing, or revising is available from NYU faculty consultants at Writing Center.

An in-class presentation on one of the readings 5% A sign-up sheet will be circulated early in the semester and every student will need to volunteer to give a brief presentation on one of the readings.

Attendance and Participation 10% Because every class is such a large percentage of the course, normally only one absence during the semester is allowed. If possible, please let me know you are going to be absent before class.

Policies:
This is a course with a heavy reading load (about 2,900 pages), though most of the texts are very engaging and relatively quick reads.
This is a seminar in which discussion will be the primary mode of learning. Please come ready to contribute to the class. To do this, as well as to be able to complete the quizzes, you
will need to keep up with the reading and think carefully about the texts as you read. It will be very beneficial to keep some kind of reading log in which you indicate important issues addressed by the text, record any questions you have, or comment on the meaning, style, or structure of the text, or on the implications of the text for the nature, past, or future of human society or human nature. (If you find it distracting to create such a log during your reading, try to record your reactions when you have finished.) Obviously, your presence in class will also be critically important.

Unless you get special permission, submit your papers in digital form via email (Word, Open Office, Word Perfect; DOC, DOCX, WPD, RTF, PDF, or TXT files). This allows me to comment on and return them without the fuss of carrying dead trees around.

Course Schedule (readings are to be finished by the date on which they appear; the numbers of pages assigned for each class are from the editions ordered at the bookstore):

Jan. 29     Introduction to the course, to apocalypses, and to text-alteration

          Wyndham, *The Day of the Triffids* (256 pages)
Feb. 5     Recommended (?): There is bad film version: *The Day of the Triffids* (1962), and a much better BBC miniseries (1981).
Feb. 12    Clarke, *Childhood’s End* (224 pages)
Feb. 19    Burdick and Wheeler, *Fail Safe* (288 pages)
Feb. 26    Ray Bradbury, “There Will Come Soft Rains”
          Ray Bradbury, “The City”
          Philip K. Dick, “To Serve the Master”
          PAPER #1 DUE
Mar. 5     Atwood, *Oryx & Crake* (389 pages)
          Recommended: Read the sequels, *The Year of the Flood*, and *Mad Adam*.
Mar. 12    Christopher, *The Death of Grass* (224 pages)
Mar. 19    Spring Recess
Mar. 26    Mandel, *Station Eleven* (336 pages)
          Vincent Benét, "By the Waters of Babylon"
Apr. 2     Forster, "The Machine Stops"
          PAPER #2 DUE
April 9    Shute, *On the Beach* (320 pages)
April 16   Ballard, *The Drowned World* (208 pages)
April 23   Trip to the 9/11 memorial and museum
April 30   Tepper, *The Gate to Women’s Country* (336 pages)
May 7      Le Guin, *The Lathe of Heaven* (240 pages); FINAL PAPER DUE.