

MAP Expressive Culture: *Utopia/Dystopia*  
Weds. 12:30 to 4:30, (V55.0750) Fall '08  
Office Hrs. Tues. 11 am to 1 pm and by Appointment  
Rm. 642, Cinema Studies, 721 Broadway, x8-1609

### *Utopia/Dystopia: Cinematic Visions of the Future*

This seminar will screen, read and discuss a range of utopian/dystopian visions of the future as forecast in our popular cinema, and literature. Our screenings will explore a range of films from from 'sci fi' to fantasy and horror, extending from the 1950s to the present, and far into the future. We will take on varied questions and issues including, the increasing prevalence of apocalyptic endings to present and future worlds; contrasts between a fragile democratic 'now' vs. an authoritarian techno-future; race, gender and sexuality in the 'scientifically' engineered and overdetermined future; class, labor and social privilege among replicants, cyborgs and humans; the consumption of virtual reality, cyber-sex, and other commodities; post-technological tribalism; future 'hoods & cityscapes; warnings of cyber-surveillance, techno-collapse and eco-disaster. And finally, we will ask: what is 'utopia,' how is it 'imagined,' and is it still possible. We will develop our seminar discussions, screenings and papers with readings from the likes of Fredric Jameson, Zygmunt Bauman, George Orwell, Ray Kurzweil, Paul Virilio, Jean Baudrillard, Aldous Huxley, among others.

#### ***Course Requirements:***

- [1] Approximately 14 page minimum, final essay due (tba). (50% of the final grade).
- [2] Four short 'critical response' papers (5 pages minimum) that will provide, and develop, the concept, premise or argument of your final paper. (30% of final grade)
- [3] Participation in the class and seminar discussions and regular attendance are essential. Each student will bring to class two written questions about the screenings/readings. (20% of final grade)
- [4] All work must be word processed and come in on time. ***No late papers will be accepted***

#### ***Required Reading:***

Consuming Life by Zygmunt Bauman  
Blade Runner by Scott Bukatman  
Pyongyang: A Journey to N. Korea by Guy Delisle  
Brave New World & Brave New World Revisited by Aldous Huxley  
Open Sky by Paul Virilio  
1984 by George Orwell  
Running on Emptiness: The Pathology of Civilization by John Zerzan

A supplemental bibliography and other articles, essays and readings t.b.a.

*Utopia/Dystopia: Screenings*

The Day the Earth Stood Still (1951)

Forbidden Planet (1956)

Dr. Strangelove (1964)

The Atomic Café (1982)

1984 (1956, British version)

Brazil (1985, the original ending, director's cut)

Zardoz (1974)

Escape From New York (1981)

Blade Runner (1982)

If (1968)

Quilombo (1984)

Fight Club (1999)

Lost Horizons (1937)

Koyaanisqatsi (1983)