FYS: After The End: Post-Apocalypse Novels in the 20th & 21st Centuries  
Spring 2021

Instructor: David L. Hoover
Tuesday: 2:00-4:30 pm
Office Hours: T 11:30-12:30, Th 1:00-3:00

Required Texts (note that this class has a heavy reading load):
Assorted short fiction, available online.

Graded Work:

- **A weekly quiz** 25%
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 (4-5 pages each)** 30%
These must addressing one or more of the readings.

  - 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, where 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.

- **A final paper (10-12 pages)** 30%

- **A presentation opening one of the class discussions** 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.

Learning Objectives:

$ Cultivate analytical and critical thinking
$ Advance multimodal communication and presentation skills
$ Use short-form and long-form writing to explore ideas
$ Introduce modes of inquiry and research in the disciplines represented in the College of Arts and Science
$ Incorporate issues of ethics and diversity
$ Develop intellectual curiosity through academic mentoring and engagement with the liberal arts

Policies:

$ 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, or TXT files). No Pages documents, please. 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. 26 Introduction to the course, to apocalypses, and to text-alteration

Wyndham, The Day of the Triffids (256 pages)

Feb. 2 Recommended (?) There is bad film version: The Day of the Triffids (1962), and a much better BBC miniseries (1981).

Feb. 9 Walter Van Tilburg Clark, “The Portable Phonograph”
Ray Bradbury, “The City”

Feb. 16 Burdick and Wheeler, Fail Safe (288 pages)
Ray Bradbury, “There Will Come Soft Rains”

Feb. 23 Philip K. Dick, “To Serve the Master”
PAPER #1 DUE
Mar. 2  Atwood, *Oryx & Crake* (389 pages)  
Recommended: Read the sequels, *The Year of the Flood*, and *Mad Adam*.

Mar. 9  Christopher, *The Death of Grass* (224 pages)  

Mar. 16  SPRING RECESS

Mar. 23  Mandel, *Station Eleven* (336 pages)

Mar. 30  Stephen Vincent Benét, “By the Waters of Babylon”  
PAPER #2 DUE

April 6  McCarthy, *The Road* (324 pages)

April 13  Shute, *On the Beach* (320 pages)

April 20  Forster, “The Machine Stops”

April 27  Tepper, *The Gate to Women’s Country* (336 pages)

May 4  Le Guin, *The Lathe of Heaven* (240 pages)  

May 11  FINAL PAPER DUE