

Professor E. Guerrero Spring '16
MAP - "Expressive Cultures" Weds 12:30 - 4:30, Cantor
Office: Cinema Studies Rm. 642
Office Hrs. Thurs 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. (and by appointment).

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 'sci fi' to fantasy and horror, extending from the 1950s to the present, 'near 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 'post-human condition; 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 George Orwell, Ray Kurzweil, Paul Verilio, Aldous Huxley, among others.

Course Requirements:

- [1] Approximately 12 page minimum, final essay due (tba). (50% of the final grade).
- [2] Three 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 the recitation and/or the general screening/lecture 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:

Blade Runner by Scott Bukatman

Open Sky by Paul Verilio

Running on Emptiness by John Zerzan

Against Civilization ed. By John Zerzan

Screening and Writing Schedule

1/27 *The Day the Earth Stood Still* (1951)
2/3 *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (1956)
2/10 *Lost Horizons* (1937) *** First 'Critical Response Paper Due

2/17 *Forbidden Planet* (1956)
2/24 *1984* (1954 Brit. version)
3/2 *Dr. Strangelove* (1964)
3/9 *The Birds* (1963)
3/16 ***Spring Break***
3/23 *Zardoz* (1974) *** Second 'Critical Response Paper' Due ***
3/30 *The Thing* (1982)
4/6 *Gattica* (1997)
4/13 *Blade Runner* (1982)
4/13 *Fight Club* (1999)
4/20 *Solaris* (2002) *** Third 'Critical Response Paper' Due***
4/27 *Koyaanisquatsi* (1983)
5/4 TBA
5/12 *** Final Paper Due by 5 p.m.***