

ENGL 437 Literature and Technology: Utopia, Dystopia, and Science Fiction

Trimester 1 2016

29 February to 29 June 2016

30 Points



Image from Phoenix vol. 2, by Tezuka Osamu (VIZ Media LLC, 2004)

IMPORTANT DATES

Teaching dates: 29 February to 5 June 2016

Easter break: 24 to 30 March 2016

Mid-trimester break: 25 April to 1 May 2016

Study period: 6 to 9 June 2016

Examination/Assessment period: 10 June to 29 June 2016

Students who enrol in courses with examinations must be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the scheduled examination period.

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds.

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, or an examination, it may instead be possible to apply for an aegrotat (refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats).

CLASS TIMES AND LOCATIONS

This course is taught in a seminar format, which means formal lecturing is minimal and that your active participation determines the success of the course. You are expected to attend every scheduled meeting. You are expected to have read all the assigned materials before each seminar. To facilitate group discussion we will start most seminar sessions with one or two oral presentation on an assigned topic (based on the readings). You will each deliver such a presentation: you summarize the material and you think of a couple of fascinating questions for further discussion. You should send a one page outline of your report (email attachment) to me on the day before the seminar meets. A photocopy of this outline will be distributed to your fellow students and the attachment will be uploaded on the Blackboard course site.

Tuesday	10.00 - 12.50	Von Zedlitz VZ802
---------	---------------	-------------------

NAMES AND CONTACT DETAILS

Dougal McNeill	Dougal.McNeill@vuw.ac.nz	463-6803	vZ905
----------------	--------------------------	----------	-------

Office Hours: Thursday 1pm – 2pm

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional information will be conveyed via Blackboard.

If you are not going to use the Victoria email address set up for you, we strongly encourage you to set a forward from the Victoria email system to the email address you do use.

PRESCRIPTION

This course will explore issues between literature and technology, tracing the history of Utopia and Science Fiction. Attention is given to the role of the body as technology in literature. Literature as technology and Science Fiction's role as genre are foregrounded. Theoretical traditions are explored alongside canonical Utopian texts.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES (CLOS)

Students who pass this course *should* be able to:

School of English, Film, Theatre, & Media Studies
ENGLISH PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE ENGL 437

- 1 Discuss the major primary and secondary texts in the field of Utopia, Dystopia and Science Fiction.
- 2 Produce independent research on Utopia and SF, using primary and secondary texts.
- 3 Analyse literature as a technology through the representation of technology in literature.
- 4 Understand key concepts in advanced critical theory and SF studies.
- 5 Reflect upon and advance their capabilities in the medium of writing.

TEACHING FORMAT

The course will be taught through seminars. Students will be responsible for introducing and leading discussion seminars, and it is expected that you attend and fully participate in each seminar.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

- Submit the essays and assignments, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work)
- Sit the examination

WORKLOAD

You should expect to spend, on average, about 20 hours per week on work for this course, apart from the seminars. Note that this is a rough guide only, which will vary from student to student and from week to week.

ASSESSMENT

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Seminar Paper	10%	1	TBC
2	Two reading reports (600 words each)	20%	1,4	18/3, 22/4
3	Essay Proposal (400 words)	5%	1, 3, 4	6/5
4	Annotated Bibliography (1500 words)	10%	1,4,5	13/5
5	Major Research Essay (3000 words)	25%	1, 2, 3, 5	27/5
6	Exam 2 hours (10 June to 29 June 2016)	30%	1,3,4,5	TBA

Please note: Marks for Honours level assignments and final course grades are not finalised until feedback from the external examiner has been considered. Honours grades gained in individual courses remain provisional until the overall final classification made by the Honours programme examination committee.

SUBMISSION AND RETURN OF WORK

Each assignment is submitted in two formats:

- A hardcopy in the drop slot outside the administration office. Attach an assignment cover sheet or extension form to your assignment, found on Blackboard or outside the administration office.
- Email your assignment as a MS Word file to english@vuw.ac.nz

Your marked assignment will be handed back by your supervisor. Any uncollected assignments can be picked up from the Programme Administrator after the last day of teaching. Assignments will be held in the administration office until the end of the following trimester. You need to show your student identification to collect marked assignment from the administration office.

EXTENSIONS AND PENALTIES

Extensions

In exceptional and unforeseen circumstances an extension may be granted. To apply for an extension, email your Course Coordinator before the assignment is due. If granted, your Course Coordinator will inform you of the new due date. Tutors cannot grant extensions. **No assignment with or without an extension will be accepted after 13 June 2016**

Penalties

Work submitted after the deadline will be penalised by a 2.5 percent deduction from your total mark per work day. Late work also receives only minimal comments from your marker.

SET TEXTS

Bruce, Susan. *Three Early Modern Utopias*. OUP.

Morris, William. *News from Nowhere*. Penguin.

Bellamy, Edward. *Looking Backward*. OUP.

Le Guin, Ursula. *The Dispossessed*. Gollancz.

Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. *Herland*. Penguin.

Russ, Joanna. *The Female Man*. Gollancz.

Dick, Philip K. *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* Gollancz.

Tiptree Jr, James. *Her Smoke Rose Up Forever*. Marine.

Otomo, Katsuhiro. *Akira. Volume 1*. Del Ray.

You can order textbooks online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz.

RECOMMENDED READING

I will post suggested further readings from time to time as notices on Blackboard.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

STUDENT FEEDBACK

There were no particular requests for changes made the last time students gave feedback on this course. I welcome student suggestions, and the seminar format allows us plenty of flexibility with teaching.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at

www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

In week six or seven of the trimester your class representative will be invited to a meeting with the Programme staff. In week five your class representative will ask the class for any feedback on this course to discuss at this meeting.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract

School of English, Film, Theatre, & Media Studies
ENGLISH PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE ENGL 437

- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz

COURSE PROGRAMME

Week 1 1 Mar Introductions – no readings

Week 2 8 Mar *Utopia* and the Utopian Tradition

READINGS: (1) Thomas More, *Utopia*; (2) Fredric Jameson, "Morus: the Generic Window"

Week 3 15 Mar Cognitive Estrangement: Defining SF

READINGS: (1) Darko Suvin, "Estrangement and Cognition"; (2) Darko Suvin, "SF and the Genealogical Jungle"; (3) Fredric Jameson, "Progress vs. Utopia"

READING REPORT ONE DUE FRIDAY 18th March, 5pm

Week 4 22 Mar Utopianisms from Above

READINGS: (1) Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward*; (2) Matthew Beaumont "State Socialism and Utopia"

This seminar will be held at the Alexander Turnbull Library

Week 4 and 5 Thursday 24 to Wednesday 30 March 2016

Easter Break:

Week 6 5 Apr Utopias from Below

READINGS: William Morris, *News from Nowhere*

Week 7 12 Apr Utopian Generation

READINGS: (1) Charlotte Perkins Gilman, *Herland*; (2) Charlotte Perkins Gilman, "Do We Want a Political Party for Women?"

School of English, Film, Theatre, & Media Studies
ENGLISH PROGRAMME COURSE OUTLINE ENGL 437

Week 8 19 Apr The Body as Technology (I)

READINGS: (1) Joanna Russ *The Female Man*; (2) Russ, 'Speculations: The Subjunctivity of Science Fiction'; (3) Russ, 'Towards an Aesthetic of Science Fiction'

READING REPORT TWO DUE FRIDAY 22nd April 5pm

Mid-trimester Break: Monday 25 April to Sunday 1 May

Week 9 3 May The Body as Technology (II)

READINGS: (1) Donna Haraway, *Cyborg Manifesto*

ESSAY PROPOSAL DUE FRIDAY 6th May 5pm

Week 10 10 May Gender as Aesthetics

READINGS: (1) James Tiptree Jr, *Her Smoke Rose Up Forever*

ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE FRIDAY 13th May 5pm

Week 11 17 May The Return to Politics

READINGS: (1) Ursula Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*; (2) Samuel DeLaney, 'To Read The Dispossessed'

Week 12 24 May The Body as Technology (III)

READINGS: (1) Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (2) Carl Freedman, "The Critical Dynamic: Science Fiction and Style"

MAJOR RESEARCH ESSAY DUE FRIDAY 27th May 5pm

Week 13 31 May Literature as Technology

READINGS: (1) *Akira*

Study Period: Monday 6 to Thursday 9 June 2016

Examination Period: Thursday 10 June to Wednesday 29 June 2016