

# WORLD SCIENCE FICTION

Ital. 2500 & Eng. 2901

Prof. Arielle Saiber

Bowdoin, Spring 2015

APEX = *The Apex Book of World SF 2*

LC = Literary Criticism (on-reserve, or online if indicated)

VS = Virtual Speaker

LMC = Language Media Center

WES = *Wesleyan Anthology of Science Fiction*

## Mon. Jan. 19

Introduction

## Wed. Jan. 21

H. G. Wells, "The Star" (UK, 1897) (WES)

Isaac Asimov, "Reason" (US, 1941) (WES)

Clifford D. Simak, "Desertion" (US, 1944) (WES)

LC: Asimov, "How Easy to See the Future!" and "The Dreams of SF"; Kincaid, "On the Origins of Genre"

## Mon. Jan. 26

Judith Merrill, "That Only a Mother" (US, 1948) (WES)

Ray Bradbury, "There Will Come Soft Rains" (US, 1950) (WES)

Arthur C. Clarke, "The Sentinel" (UK, 1951) (WES)

Juan Jose Arreola, "Baby H.P." (Mexico, 1952)

LC: Donawerth, "Body Parts: Twentieth-Century Science Fiction Short Stories by Women"

## Wed. Jan 28 \*VS: Anatoly Belilovsky (Ukraine/Russia) Microreading due between today and Feb. 16

Avram Davidson, "The Golem" (US, 1955) (WES)

Herbert Franke, "Thought Control" (Austria, 1958)

Anatoly Dneprov, "The World in Which I Vanished" (Russia, 1962)

J. G. Ballard, "The Cage of Sand" (UK, 1962) (WES)

FILM: Chris Marker, *La Jetée* (France, 1962) (LMC)

## Mon. Feb. 2

Julian Kawalec, "I Kill Myself" (Poland, 1962)

Lino Aldani, "Goodnight, Sophie" (Italy, 1963)

Shinichi Hoshi, "Bokko-Chan" (Japan, 1963)

Sandro Sandrelli, "The Scythe" (Italy, 1963)

LC: Saiber, "Flying Saucers Would Never Land in Lucca..." (online)

## Wed. Feb. 4

Stanislaw Lem, "How Erg the Self-Inducting Slew a Paleface" (Poland, 1964)

José Maria Gironella, "The Death of the Sea" (Spain, 1964)

Ilya Varshavsky, "Perpetual Motion" (Russia, 1965)

Italo Calvino, "All at One Point" (Italy, 1965)

LC: Vint, "Animal-Alterity: SF and Human-Animal Studies"

## Thurs. Feb. 5

*Sherryl Vint: "To Seek Out New Worlds: Science Fiction in a Global Perspective"*  
7pm, Main Lounge, Moulton. Required.

**Mon. Feb. 9**

Luigi Cozzi, "Rainy Day Revolution No. 39" (Italy, 1965)  
 Harlan Ellison, "'Repent Harlequin!' Said the Ticktockman" (US, 1965) **(WES)**  
 Pablo Capanna, "Acronia" (Argentina, 1966)  
 Primo Levi, "Man's Friend" (Italy, 1966)  
 LC: White, "Ellison's Harlequin: Irrational Moral Action in Static Time"

**Wed. Feb. 11**

Philip K. Dick, "We Can Remember it For You Wholesale" (US, 1966) **(WES)**  
 Arkady Strugatsky, "Wanderers and Travelers" (Russia, 1966)  
 Samuel Delany, "Aye and Gomorrah" (US, 1967) **(WES)**  
 LC: Csicery-Ronay, "SF and the Thaw"

**Mon. Feb. 16****Last day to turn in Microreading**

Sakyō Komatsu, "Take Your Choice" (Japan, 1967)  
 B. Sridhar Rao, "Victims of Time" (India, 1968)  
 Tor Age Bringsvaerd, "Codemus" (Norway, 1968)  
 Brian Aldiss, "Super-Toys Last All Summer Long" (UK, 1969) **(WES)**  
 LC: Clarke, "Hazards of Prophecy" and Gunn, "The Worldview of SF"

**Wed. Feb. 18**

Gerard Klein, "Party Line" (France, 1969)  
 Ursula K. Le Guin, "Nine Lives" (US, 1969) **(WES)**  
 Vladlen Bakhnov, "Cheap Sale" (Russia, 1970)  
 LC: Wolfe, "Coming to Terms"

**Mon. Feb. 23 \*VS: Rachel Haywood-Ferreira (on Peru)**

Eddy Bertin, "Timestorm" (Belgium, 1971)  
 José B. Adolph, "The Falsifier" (Peru, 1972)  
 Joanna Russ, "When It Changed" (US, 1972) **(WES)**  
 Gheorghe Săsărman, "Senzia" (Romania, 1975)  
 LC: Hollinger, "Women in SF and Other Hopeful Monsters"

**Wed. Feb. 25****Multiplexing due between today and March 30**

Hanmura Ryō, "Cardboard Box" (Japan, 1975)  
 David Grigg, "A Compassionate People" (Australia, 1978)  
 Gabriel Bermudez Castillo, "Opportunities Galore" (Spain, 1978)  
 Sam Lundwall, "Take Me Down the River" (Sweden, 1979)  
 LC: Miller, "The Cosmic Menagerie" **(online)**

**Mon. Mar. 2 \*VS: Pawel Frelik (Poland)**

Bob Shaw, "In the Hereafter Hotel" (Ireland, 1980)  
 Ernst Vicek, "Say It With Flowers" (Austria, 1980)  
 Elisabeth Vonarburg, "The Knot" (Canada, 1980)  
 Wolfgang Jeschke, "Haike the Heretic's Writings" (Germany, 1981)  
 LC: Atwood, "Are Humans Necessary?" **(online)**

**Wed. Mar. 4 \*VS: Miguel Ángel Fernández Delgado (Mexico)**

Tais Teng, "Disslish the Acquamancer" (The Netherlands, 1981)  
 William Gibson, "Burning Chrome" (US, 1982) (WES)  
 Federico Schaffler, "A Miscalculation" (Mexico, 1983)  
 LC: Bell, "SF in Latin America: Reawakenings"

**\*Sunday, Mar. 8 \*Synopsis of an additional short story from your country due (post on BB)**

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**Mon. Mar. 23 \*VS: Giulia Iannuzzi (Italy)**

Octavia Butler, "Speech Sounds" (US, 1983) (WES)  
 Nancy Kress, "Out of All Them Bright Stars" (US, 1985) (WES)  
 Josef Nesvadba, "The Divided Carla" (Czech Republic, 1985)  
 LC: Rosenfeld, "Why Do We Ask 'What If?' Reflections on Function of Alternate History"

**Wed. Mar. 25 \*VS: Cristian Tamaş (Romania)**

Pat Cadigan, "Pretty Boy Crossover" (US, 1986) (WES)  
 André Carneiro, "A Perfect Marriage" (Brazil, 1986)  
 Ion Hobana, "Night Broadcast" (Romania, 1986)  
 Goran Hudec, "The Ring" (Yugoslavia, 1986)  
 LC: Kelly, "Who Owns Cyberpunk?"

**Mon. Mar. 30 \*VS: Ken Liu (China)**

**Last day to turn in Multiplexing**

Zheng Wenguang, "The Mirror Image of the Earth" (China, 1986)  
 Tong Enzheng, "The Death of the World's First Robot" (China, 1989)  
 Eileen Gunn, "Computer Friendly" (US, 1989) (WES)  
 Bráulio Tavares, "Stuntmind" (Brazil, 1989)  
 LC: Wu, "Great Wall Planet: Introducing Chinese SF"

**Wed. Apr. 1 \*VS: James Patrick Kelly (USA)**

Yves Meynard, "Equinox" (Canada, 1992)  
 Silviu Genescu, "Glimpses of a Faraway World" (Romania, 1994)  
 Guillermo Lavín, "Reaching the Shore" (Mexico, 1994)  
 James Patrick Kelly, "Think Like a Dinosaur" (US, 1995) (WES)  
 LC: Yaszek, "Cultural History"

**\*Lisa Yaszek, "Afrofuturism as Global Science Fiction"  
 7pm, Main Lounge, Moulton. Required.**

**\*Mon. Apr. 6 \*Museum Visit with Sarah Montross**

Valerio Evangelisti, "Sepultura" (Italy, 1996)  
 Rosaleen Love, "Two Recipes for Magic Beans" (Australia, 1998)  
 LC: Haywood-Ferreira, "Geographical Journey Through Time in Latin American SF"

**Wed. Apr. 8**

Massimo Mongai, "Galactic Guidebook for the Gourmet" (Italy, 1999)  
 Pablo Castro, "Exerion" (Chile, 2000)  
 Hannu Rajaniemi, "Shibuya No Love" (Finland, 2004) **(APEX)**  
 LC: La Bare, "Wrapped... in That Mysterious Japanese Way"

**Mon. Apr. 13 \*VS: Vandana Singh (India)**

Vandana Singh, "Delhi" (India, 2004)  
 W. J. Maryson, "Verstummte Musik" (The Netherlands, 2005)  
 João Barreiros, "A Night on the Edge of the Empire" (Portugal, 2007)  
 LC: Reid, "Postcolonialism"

**Wed. Apr. 15****Artifying due**

Panagiotis Koustas, "Athos Emfovos in the Temple of Sound" (Greece, 2007)  
 Kristin Mandigma, "Excerpt from a Letter By a Social-Realist Aswang" (Philippines, 2007)  
 Anabel Enriquez Piñeiro, "Borrowed Time" (Cuba, 2007) **(APEX)**  
 LC: Dick, "The Postbiological Universe"

**Mon. Apr. 20**

Ted Chiang, "Exhalation" (US-China, 2008) **(WES)**  
 Nnedi Okorafor, "From the Lost Diary of TreeFrog7" (Nigeria, 2009) **(APEX)**  
 Nir Yaniv, "Cinderers" (Israel, 2009)  
 FILM: Wanuri Kihiu, *Pumzi* (Kenya, 2009; 23m) **(online)**  
 LC: Okorafor, "African Science Fiction is Still Alien" **(online)**

**Wed. Apr. 22**

Fabio Fernandes, "Nothing Happened in 1999" (Brazil, 2010) **(APEX)**  
 Rochita Loenen-Ruiz, "Alternate Girls'..." (Philippines-Netherlands, 2010) **(APEX)**  
 Gerardo Sifuentes, "Future Perfect" (Mexico, 2011)  
 LC: Ginway, "A Working Model for Analyzing Third World SF: The Case of Brazil"

**Mon. Apr. 27 \*VS: Francesco Verso (Italy)**

Francesco Verso, "Flush" (Italy, 2011)  
 Jake Kerr, "The Alien Invasion As Seen in the Twitter Stream" (USA, 2012)  
 Sergey Lukyanenko, "If You Act Now" (Russia, 2012)  
 Grace Bridges, "Max's Black Box" (New Zealand, 2013)  
 FILM: Giacomo Cimini, *The City in the Sky* (Italy-UK, 2009, 27 mins) **(online)**

**Wed. Apr. 29 \*VS: Minsoo Kang (Korea)**

Minsoo Kang, "Jing Ke Before the Principle of Order" (Korea, 2012)  
 Haihong Zhao, "1923 – A Fantasy" (China, 2012)  
 Ken Liu, "Mono no Aware" (USA, 2012)  
 Issui Ogawa, "Golden Bread" (Japan, 2012)  
 FILM: K. Jee-woon *The Heavenly Creature in Doomsday Book* (Korea, 2012; 30mins) **(Netflix, or LMC)**

**Mon. May 4 \*VS: Nick Wood (South Africa)**

Mandisi Nkomo, "Heresy" (South Africa, 2012)

Nick Wood, "Azania" (Zambia, 2012)

Kylie Thorne, "Insomnia" (New Zealand, 2013)

Karin Tidbeck, "Sing" (Sweden, 2013) (**online**)

LC: Mendlesohn, "Religion and SF"

**Wed. May 6 \*VS: Lavie Tidhar (Israel)**

Lavie Tidhar, "The Smell of Orange Groves" (Israel, 2014) (**online**)

Etgar Keret, "Pipes" (Israel, 2014)

Pavel Amnuel, "White Curtain" (Poland, 2014)

Hannu Rajaniemi, "The Server and the Dragon" (Finland, 2014)

LC: Ben-Yehuda, "Sociological Reflections on the History of SF in Israel"

**Final exam:** Tuesday, May 12, 9:00am

**Final paper or short story:** due on the last day of exams , 5pm, printed out and brought to my office

# **WORLD SCIENCE FICTION**

This course explores the local, global, and universal natures of the speculative genre of science fiction (SF) from the early twentieth century through the present. It highlights works from the Golden Age (late 1930s-'50s), the New Wave of the 1960s and '70s, cyberpunk in the 1980s, and today's various sub-genres and cross-over incarnations. We will approach the genre as a mode of thought-experimentation and world-building that problematizes actual and possible political, cultural, natural, human, and techno-scientific realities. Among the themes included are the human-machine interface, environmental apocalypse, the alien, and time travel. Readings include short stories from nearly every continent (a number of which will be accompanied by a short film or other media) and literary criticism. Integral to the course is an exhibition of Latin American SF at the Bowdoin College Museum of Art and a number of conversations with writers, artists, filmmakers, and scholars of SF from around the world. Counts for the major in English, but not for the Italian minor or Romance Languages major.

## ***Required for the course***

- 1) reading assigned materials (short stories and literary criticism) and viewing assigned short films (4) before class
- 2) finding and reading an extra story from your country of choice and writing a brief synopsis on BB "Synopses and Reviews"
- 3) Paper 1 (Microreading)
- 4) Paper 2 (Multiplexing)
- 5) Paper 3 (Artifying)
- 6) a final exam
- 7) a final paper: a critical essay (8-10pp), or a SF short story (10-15pp) with an Introductory essay. Due last day of exams.
- 8) attendance at two talks (Sherryl Vint and Lisa Yaszek)

## ***Not required, but strongly encouraged, and extra-credit***

- attending 1 other SF event (talk, film, concert, etc.) at Bowdoin this spring (see BB "Synopses and Reviews"). If you attend one and post your thoughts on the Wiki (a few sentences), you will receive +2 extra credit points on your final participation grade. Attending more welcome, of course!
- watching at least one recommended film (see BB "Synopses and Reviews"); if you watch more than 2 and write brief reviews of each (see BB), you will receive +2 points of extra credit on your final participation grade.

## ***Not required, but most welcome***

- contributing more data to the WSF timeline
- contributing to the Sci-Fi Spotify playlists
- contributing materials to any of the WSF pages
- reviewing suggested films (on BB Wiki)

## **Final Grade calculation**

Participation		15%
-attendance, assignments on time		
-participation in class and/or wikis and blogs		
Synopsis of one extra story from your country		5%
Microreading	(2-3pp)	10%
Multiplexing	(2-3pp)	15%
Artifying	(2-3pp)	15%
Final Exam		20%
Final Paper or Short Story		20%

### ***Course Materials***

#### At the bookstore

Evans, Arthur, et al., eds. *The Wesleyan Anthology of Science Fiction*. (WES)

Tidhar, Lavie, ed. *The Apex Book of World SF 2*. (APEX)

#### On reserve through the library

Most short stories and articles are on electronic reserve through the library. **You are responsible for printing out the readings and having them with you in class** on the days they are discussed. If there is a long bibliography at the end of article, feel free to save paper and not print that out for class (n.b.: online articles might have comment sections—you can also avoid printing those)

#### Required short films

There are two short films online (see the WSF website). The other two are on reserve at the LMC (one of which is also available through Netflix).

### ***Attendance Policy***

Attendance is required and will be taken each class. Please be on time. Three lates = 1 absence. It is understood that periodically things happen that prevent your attendance. Hence, you will be allowed **2 unexcused absences** throughout the semester. These absent days are to cover things such as illness, weddings, funerals, job interviews, etc. Beginning with your 3rd absence (regardless of the reasons for the first 2) 2 points will be deducted from your final participation grade each time you are absent if you are not able to document the absence with a valid excuse (e.g. doctor's note, dean's note.). If you are absent and work is due on that day, please email it to me by class. If you need an extension, please contact your dean, who will then contact me.

### ***Required Attendance at Two Guest Talks***

These are required and will be fabulous. Sherryl Vint and Lisa Yaszek are two of the most renowned SF scholars in the US. See the syllabus and the "Calendar" on BB for the dates, times, and locations. If you are unable to attend one, please let me know and we will arrange for you to attend another SF event during the semester. Bring your notebooks.

### ***Tech & Text Policy***

Let's liberate ourselves from our slavery to tech! Computers, tablets, and phones are forbidden in class. I love and adore all things tech as much as you do, but I want you experience freedom from the seduction-of-the-screen for an hour and ½ twice a week. You **must print out the stories and the literary criticism** assigned for each day's class and bring them to class, triumphantly marked up with highlights, underlines, stars, arrows, q's, etc. There are many printers around campus, so *I know you can do it*. I strongly recommend printing out the texts as far in advance as possible (I would do a few weeks of texts at a time, or maybe all of them). Always bring a notebook and writing implement, too.

### ***Chronicler and Seekers***

The tech ban, however, is lifted each class for a few students (rotating) who will be sitting in the "Bridge" (a corner of the room). One student per class will be "The Chronicler" and will be typing up, on a class Google Doc, certain things of note. The other students will be "The Seekers," ready to do searches on the country of the story being discussed, as needed. For the most part, students who have selected the respective country will be in the Bridge that day, but in some cases, other students will be Seekers if there are more than 2 stories from a single country (which there are in a few cases), so everyone gets a chance to Seek. Chroniclers and Seekers must take a vow of emailing-surfing abstinence.

### ***Internet Citation Policy***

The sources that you will be primarily citing in your papers are the short stories, assigned articles, class discussions, virtual speakers, and SF events on campus. Feel free to cite from other critical studies in academic journals (see the list of journals on the WSF website under "Articles"), from national newspapers, and from the Encyclopedia of SF. You may also cite from the blogs and magazines listed on the WSF website. There is a huge amount of SF material online—please be very careful when surfing and have a *sharp critical eye and awareness about who is writing and what their objectives are*. If you are uncertain about whether to cite a site, ask me. If you are not sure how to cite a website, check the "Citation Guidelines" on BB.

### ***Three Short Papers***

Each 700-900 words (2-3pp). See syllabus and BB Calendar for dates and guidelines.

### ***Final Exam***

The exam will focus on the terminology, concepts, and themes covered over the course of the semester. You'll need to keep up with the readings (literary and critical), lectures, and discussions.

### ***Final Paper or Short Story***

Final paper: 10-12pp.

Short story: 12-15pp.

See BB for guidelines

#### ***How to prepare for and “do” this class:***

##### **Before**

- Print out stories and mark them up (highlight, underline, star, etc. whatever you find interesting or important, or for which you have questions)
- Do all the readings before class (obviously). I've assigned between 50-100pp of reading per class (heavier amounts for Monday's classes because of the number of days between Wed. and Mon.). There are only 4 short films to view and they are each under 30 mins.
- Use the XLSX spreadsheet for taking notes, if you find that useful.
- Note questions you'd like to ask in class, and questions that you might like to explore in future papers or the final paper (or short story).
- Highlight stories you'd like to return to.

##### **During**

- **Take notes** during the discussion, and be sure to date your notes, in case you want to quote something I, a virtual speaker, or a fellow student in the class says. I'll remind people to state their names. The Chronicler will only be logging select items in the Google Doc.
- Do not be afraid to ask questions. I will pause my lecture often for q's and discussion.

##### **After**

- If we don't have time for all questions that day in class, email the class and let's see what happens!

##### **Overall**

- Keep on top of the schedule. Try not to wait until the last minute to write the three short papers.
- Be aware that the Final Exam will cover all the terminology discussed in class, as well as major themes and critical concepts. If you don't understand a term, concept, or theme, check the Encyclopedia of SF. If it still isn't clear, let me know.
- If you feel uncertain about your critical writing, or citation practices, you can come speak with me, and/or go to the [Writing Center](#), where you can set up conferences with writing assistants who will look at drafts and offer guidance on how to improve your paper's clarity, organization, style, use of sources, etc.

#### ***Other Stuff:***

- Late papers are graded down a full grade each day late (from an A to an B, A- to a B-, etc.). Note deadlines now in order to avoid conflicts later.
- You may bring drinks to class, but NOT food.
- Always bring your printed-out readings and notebook to class.
- Obviously, know the College's plagiarism policy and maintain the Honor Code.
- Prof. Saiber's office hours are Fridays, from 12:30pm - 1:30pm, and by appointment.
- Prof. Saiber loves email and is often online, but she is not always able to read and respond to emails immediately. She will, however, usually get back to you within 12 hours, and often sooner. If your communication is urgent, please flag it as such.