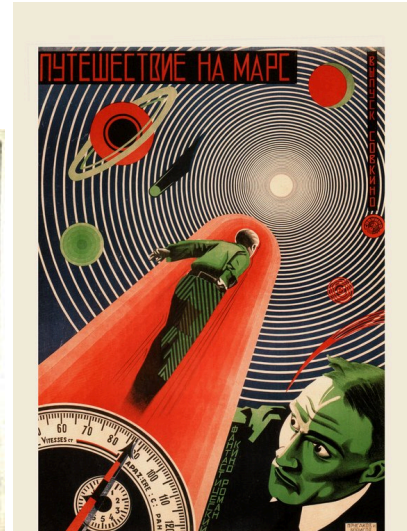
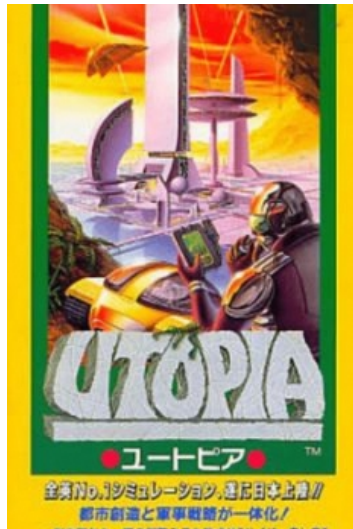


## UTOPIA AND THE FUTURE



Thursday 630-9:30 | ICC 214  
bt446@georgetown.edu | OH By Appointment

**A. Course Description:** This interdisciplinary course will seek to understand and analyze human visions of our planet's future. We will move between history, literature, political theory and cinema to explore contesting visions of Utopia. Philosophers, priests and artists around the globe have long speculated about the nature of the "perfect society," how to achieve it and where to find it. However, it was an Englishman, Sir Thomas More, who coined the name we all use today: "utopia". In the 503 years since More's book *Utopia* appeared, changes in human history, including enormous advances in science and technology, the spread of liberal democracy, the challenges of climate change and globalization, have radically altered the deployment of the word. How can we understand the word in the 21st century? How has it been articulated in non-Western worlds? Particular attention will be paid to feminist works, as well as Russian and Japanese articulations.

### B. Requirements:

#### 1. Class Participation (40% of the final grade)

- Weekly attendance.
- Weekly written responses online (in response to prompt)
- Leading discussion with a peer once in the semester (details TBA)

#### 2. Midterm paper (20% of the final grade)

#### 3. Final Research Paper and Presentation (40% of the final grade)

### C. Readings:

Course texts will include the following and may be expanded or reduced depending on the class size and aptitude:

Thomas More, *Utopia*  
HG Wells, *Time Machine*

Tiwari, 2019

Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*

Charlotte Gilman, *Herland*

Ursula K. LeGuin *The Dispossessed*

Octavia Butler, *Bloodchild*

Yevgeny Zamyatin, *We*,

Tom Stoppard, *The Coast of Utopia*

Haruki Murakami, *Hard-boiled wonderland and the End of the World*

Ernest Callenbach, *Ecotopia: The Notebooks and Reports of William Weston*

Tilie Walden, *On a Sunbeam*

**Various short essays, uploaded on Canvas by authors including:** Hakim Bey, Michel Foucault, Frederic Jameson, Paul Tillich, Donna Haraway and others

#### **D. Films:**

Dviga Vertov, *Man with a Movie Camera*

Fritz Lang, *Metropolis*

Ridley Scott, *Blade Runner*

Spike Jonze, *Her*

Patty Jenkins, *Wonder Woman*

George Miller, *Mad Max Fury Road*

Andrei Tarkovsky, *Stalker*

Alexander Sokurov, *Russian Ark*

Mamoru Oshii, *Ghost in the Shell*

#### **E. Grading:**

The papers are graded numerically. The letter grade equivalents of the numerical grades are: below 60 = F, 60-69 = D, 70-72 = D+, 73-75 = C-, 76-78 = C, 79-81 = C+, 82-84 = B-, 85-87 = B, 88-90 = B+, 91-93 = A-, 94-100 = A

#### **F. Policy Notes:**

1. Laptops and other screens are not allowed in class. I will grant exceptions in cases of learning disability issues.
2. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's ideas without giving him or her credit for them. This includes the use of online sites such as Wikipedia. Any instance of suspected plagiarism will be reported to the University's Honor Council.
3. This syllabus is a blueprint for our course. As we build our learning base, we may discover the need to alter minor matters. This syllabus may thus change a little as the semester proceeds. If you are in doubt about a policy, a date change, a course requirement or text please ask me. I will update you on any changes as well.
4. Email is the best way to reach me, but I may take as long as 24 hours to respond. I do ask that emails be written in a somewhat structured and formal manner. I have weekly office hours and encourage you to attend. I do not read paper drafts, but am happy to discuss ideas and arguments in person.

#### **G. Weekly Schedule:**

Tiwari, 2019

## **August 29--Introductions and definitions**

## **September 5th--Beginnings**

Thomas More, *Utopia*.  
Additional essays TBA

## **September 12th--Place or time?**

H.G. Wells, *The Time Machine*  
Michel Foucault, TBA  
E. M. Forster, "The Machine Stops"

## **September 19--The Promise of Modernity**

David Burluk, Alexander Kruchenykh, Vladimir Mayakovsky, Victor Khlebnikov, "A Slap in the Face of Public Taste"  
Stan Brakhage, "Metaphors on Vision"  
Tom Gunning, "Cinema of Attractions"

Dziga Vertov, *Man with a Movie Camera*  
Stan Brakhage, *Garden of Earthly Delights* (in-class)

## **September 26--Film and Dystopia**

Walter Benjamin, "Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"  
Fredric Jameson, TBA

Fritz Lang, *Metropolis*

## **October 3--Postmodern worlds**

Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*

Ridley Scott, *Blade Runner*

## **October 10--Midterm paper due**

Donna Haraway, "A Cyborg Manifesto"  
Rosalind Delmar, "What is Feminism?"

Spike Jonze, *Her*

## **October 17**

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LeGuin, Ursula K. *The Dispossessed* and "The Day Before the Revolution"  
Emma Goldman, "Anarchism: What It Really Stands for"

### **October 24**

Charlotte Gilman, *Herland*  
Octavia Butler, *Bloodchild*

Patty Jenkins, *Wonder Woman*

### **October 31**

Ernest Callenbach, *Ecotopia*  
Hakim Bey, Selections from *T.A.Z.*

George Miller, *Mad Max Fury Road*

### **November 7**

Zamyatin, Yevgeny. *We*

Andrei Tarkovsky, *Stalker*

### **November 14**

Tom Stoppard, *The Coast of Utopia*

Alexander Sokurov, *Russian Ark*

### **November 21**

Haruki Murakami, *Hard-boiled wonderland and the End of the World*

Mamoru Oshi, *The Ghost in the Shell*

### **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

### **December 5--Last class--Conclusions and student paper presentations**

Tilie Walden, *On a Sunbeam*

### **December 15 Papers due via email**