Science Fiction Cinema

# Essential understanding

The purpose of Science fiction “is to use science fiction as a vehicle for critiquing current issues and events, and [to use] the knowledge we construct to consider perspectives on what the future might hold.” Keeping in line with the purpose, the ultimate goal of this elective is to teach you to read science fiction critically and to draw relationships between what you read and actual events in the real world. In accomplishing this task, you will have learned just one of many means by which you can examine critically the current events of our time.



*“Today we live in a society in which spurious realities are manufactured by the media, by governments, by big corporations, by religious groups, political groups... So I ask, in my writing, What is real? Because unceasingly we are bombarded with pseudo-realities manufactured by very sophisticated people using very sophisticated electronic mechanisms. I do not distrust their motives; I distrust their power. They have a lot of it. And it is an astonishing power: that of creating whole universes, universes of the mind. I ought to know. I do the same thing.”  
―*[***Philip K. Dick***](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/4764.Philip_K_Dick)

# Overview

This course will examine science-fiction films—both historical and contemporary—focusing on the issue of what constitutes, and is opposed to, “the human,” whether the “non-human” is technological, alien, or monstrous. In this context, the course addresses representations of gender, sexuality, race, and class, as well as concepts of “posthumanism,” within science fiction cinema.



**Black Mirror**

Black Mirror is a British science fiction television anthology series created by Charlie Brooker. It centers around dark and satirical themes that examine modern society, particularly with regard to the unanticipated consequences of new technologies.

**Guiding Question 1: Does human nature stay consistent regardless of setting?**

# Lessons

\_\_\_\_ Human Nature

\_\_\_\_ Satirical themes

# Group work

**\_\_\_\_\_ Socratic Seminars at the end of every class (create discussion questions using lesson topics, readings, podcast, and films) (every class)**

**Black Mirror Episodes:**

\_\_\_\_\_ 10/2517 “Playtest” (season 3, episode 2)

\_\_\_\_\_ 11/01/17 “Hated in the Nation” (season 3, episode 6)

\_\_\_\_\_11/08/17 “Men Against Fire” (season 3, episode 5)

\_\_\_\_\_ 11/15/17 Field Trip to Hayward Theaters

\_\_\_\_\_11/29/17 “The Waldo Moment” (season 2, episode 3)

\_\_\_\_\_12/06/17 “Shut Up and Dance” (season 3, episode 3)

\_\_\_\_\_ 12/13/17 “Fifteen Million Merits” (season 1, episode 2)

\_\_\_\_\_ 12/20/17 “Nosedive” (season 3, episode 1)

# Individual work

**\_\_\_\_ Personal Reflections --- (150 word response) (every class)**

You will keep a journal in which you will reflect on class readings and discussions. The writing can be exploratory in nature, it can be expressive of your personal opinions, and it should also explore your own thinking through lesson topics, readings, and Socratic Seminars.

\_\_\_\_ 12/20/17 **Human Nature Graphic Organizer**

# Assessment

\_\_\_\_**Student Led Lesson**---- For the final project you will teach the class. This critical analysis includes three important talking points:

1) The ability to read science fiction and discover relevant themes and values. These

themes and values may be those of the director, those of your own, or those of a

given culture’s.

2) The ability to think about these themes and values in relation to current events, or

the events of the author’s time. And finally,

3) The ability to extrapolate on the intersection between science fiction and the present

in order to construct some kind of interpretation of what the future might hold.

Now, you have the opportunity to show how well you can engage in this process on

your own. You may do this through one of the following Science Fiction series listed on Netflix.

**Note:** Sign up dates will be on googleclassroom

# Extensions

See Mr. Almanza

# Readings

***Chapter 3: The Nature of Human Nature: Philosophical Perspectives on Human Development* by James S. Fleming, PhD**

# links

<https://www.vox.com/>

<http://www.philosophybites.com/>