

**ENGL 1413-703: Critical Writing and Analysis (Butcher, Spring 2015)
1:30-2:20 (Morrill 307)**

WRITING ALTERNATIVE FUTURES: SURVEILLANCE AND DISSENT

Professor: Dr. Jeff Butcher

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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday and Friday 12:30pm – 1:15pm, Thursday 12:15pm – 2:00pm, and by appointment

REQUIRED MATERIALS

-Adams, John Joseph, ed. *Brave New Worlds (Dystopian Stories)*. San Francisco: Night Shade Books, 2012. Print.

-Shusterman, Neal. *Unwind (Unwind Dystology, Book I)*. New York: Simon and Shusterman Books, 2009. Print.

-Shusterman, Neal. *UnWholly (Unwind Dystology, Book II)*. New York: Simon and Shusterman Books, 2013. Print.

-Shusterman, Neal. *UnSouled (Unwind Dystology, Book III)*. New York: Simon and Shusterman Books, 2014. Print.

-access to a writing handbook

-access to the online classroom

-access to an active university email account

COURSE DESCRIPTION

There is power in controlling something that can do so much damage—in controlling something, period.”

-Tris, Veronica Roth's *Divergent*

In a world filled with uncertainty and chaos, control can be a powerful thing. This concept, prevalent in *Divergent* and dystopian literature as a whole, seems to translate to real life: we seek to control something tangible so as to not feel powerless. In this course, using a variety of media (novels, short stories, film, advertisements, etc.), we will examine dystopian cultural texts and explore how dystopian themes relate to our society—namely, the *idea* and *manifestation* of “control.” The idea of control often is manifested in the power relations between dominant and subordinate forces, between surveillance and dissent. Surveillance is a means to maintain and (re)inforce the status quo and dissent is a method of subversion. As we will see, evolving technology, economic crises, moral codes, civil (in)justices, and apocalyptic fears all play a role in the construction of these power relations. To this end, engaging in dystopian cultural texts allows us to comprehend disparate presentist and futuristic perspectives on society and gives us the opportunity to write our own visions of an alternative future. The course requires intensive

reading, research, and writing as well as active participation in in-class activities and discussion aimed toward creating dialogues that perpetuate and/or resist a dystopian world.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- to read critically and approach writing as a process
- to analyze, critique, complicate, and write about a given cultural text
- to locate and understand the content of texts from different media and genre
- to demonstrate an understanding of audience, purpose, and rhetorical situations of a given text
- to understand medium and genre conventions as they relate to purpose and audience
- to frame thoughts, research, and observations into essays for specific audience(s)
- to effectively organize, structure, and articulate clearly focused arguments
- to effectively research and incorporate research into an original argument
- to use structure, language, documentation, and format appropriate for your own rhetorical situation

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Writing Assignment 1 (Personal Narrative): 15%	A = 100-90
Writing Assignment 2 (Annotated Bibliography): 10%	B = 89-80
Writing Assignment 3 (Current Event Synthesis): 15%	C = 79-70
Writing Assignment 4 (Research Paper): 25%	D = 69-60
Proposal Presentation: 10 %	F = 59-0
In-class and Online Reading Responses: 10%	
Reader Reviews: 10%	
Final Reflection: 5%	

MAJOR WRITING ASSIGNMENTS (full descriptions on D2L)

Writing Assignment 1: Personal Narrative (4-5 pages)

For this assignment, you will write a personal narrative about your experience with or relation to a single type of technology (i.e., cell phone, television, social networking, security methods, Google). In your narrative, you should reflect on *either* the positive or negative impacts the technology has had on you and your life. While you might consider the effect of this technology on society as a whole, you should keep yourself in mind; by this, I mean you should stick to your perspective and your relation to the technology and society as a whole.

Writing Assignment 2: Annotated Bibliography and Proposal

For this assignment, you will write a two-page proposal for your final research paper accompanied by an annotated bibliography with at least ten sources. Then, you will present your proposal to the class.

Writing Assignment 3: Current Events (4-6 pages)

For this assignment, you will find AT LEAST four newspaper articles that discuss a topic of concern for society today (a theme in dystopian literature). The articles should feature different perspectives on the topic. You will use these articles to write a synthesis of the topic—showing opposing points of view and using the texts to support your synthesis.

Writing Assignment 4: Research Paper (7-10 pages)

For the final research paper, you will choose a topic by exploring one of the major themes in the dystopian genre. Following intensive research, you will make an original argument about how the topic relates to society in the present day, or the theme's future implications. You will use at least three primary texts (texts we used during the semester) to delineate the gravity of cultural depictions of the topic. You will also use at least eight secondary sources that speak to the topic. Ultimately, you will synthesize your sources and ideas to make an argument about whether or not the dystopian concern is culturally relevant. What's at stake in the texts? Why is it important that we consider the argument(s) made by the author(s)? What might we learn about our own cultural moment and/or future by considering the seriousness of these anxieties and warnings?

all major writing assignments must be turned in to pass the course

“THE RESPECT CLAUSE”

Because of the constant interaction between students (discussion, workshops, reader reviews, etc.), I expect you to be open-minded and respectful to everyone's ideas, beliefs, values, and contributions. Everyone has his or her own opinions and a different perspective than the next person. To be fair, friendly, and productive, it is to everyone's benefit to listen, be open-minded, and respectful to one another. The goal is not to limit discussion and presentation of ideas; rather, it is to expand discussion and presentation of ideas. To this end, negative and/or derogatory statements toward individuals or groups will not be tolerated. Also, always remember, there really are no dumb questions—so please, please feel free to ask anything!

In addition, in order to show respect for me and the rest of the class, I ask that cell phones, MP3 players, and other electronics are only used for class-related purposes (not for text messaging, listening to music, or gaming). If it is a problem, you might be excused and receive an absence.

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT POLICIES

Attendance

You are expected to be present every day your class meets, but we do allow a specific number of absences without penalty for unavoidable circumstances that may occur. Absences beyond the limit are considered excessive and result in grade reductions. The only absences that do not count toward the total allowed are those taken for mandatory military service and activities required for classes or scholarships. **No other absences will be considered excused, including absences due to illnesses, doctor's appointments, and emergencies.** Reductions will be taken on a percentage basis from the total number of points possible in the course. Students are expected to

arrive in class on time in order to be counted present. Requests for exemption from this policy must be made in writing to the Program Director. However, exemptions are extremely rare and have been granted only for the most extraordinary circumstances.

Mon/Wed/Fri: 6 absences without automatic grade reduction, 7 absences = a final grade reduction of 5% of the total points possible for the course, 8 absences = a final grade reduction of 10%, 9 absences = a final grade reduction of 15%, and 10 or more absences = failure of the course.

Tardiness: 3 tardies (arriving after class has begun) equals 1 absence
arriving 10 minutes after class has begun is considered an absence

Missed in-class work

Students absent for university-sponsored activities (which do not include social or Greek-sponsored activities, clubs, or intramural athletics) or mandatory military service may make up work missed due to such absence. Other policies regarding missed in-class work are at the discretion of the instructor.

Late work

Grades of work defined as "late" (coming in after established due date and time) will be reduced by 5% of the total points possible for the assignment each day it is late. Instructors may determine if this policy includes drafts and how weekends will be counted toward the grade reduction. Instructors may reduce the grade on a paper by up to 5% if a conference or peer editing session is missed.

Missing work

You must complete all required drafts and all final copies of the four major papers in order to receive credit for the course.

Plagiarism

According to University Policy, plagiarism is “presenting the written, published or creative work of another as the student's own work. Whenever the student uses wording, arguments, data, design, etc., belonging to someone else in a paper, report, oral presentation, or other assignment, the student must make this fact explicitly clear by correctly citing the appropriate references or sources. The student must fully indicate the extent to which any part or parts of the project are attributed to others. The student must also provide citations for paraphrased materials.”

Plagiarism can result in failure of the course or suspension from the University. For more information, see the policies listed at <http://academicintegrity.okstate.edu/>.

Daily Class Schedule

Week 1

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 1/12	Introduction to Course and Writing Assignment 1	
W 1/14	Dystopian Genre/Themes	Read “Introduction” to <i>Brave New Worlds: (Dystopian Stories)</i> AND “The Lottery” – Shirley Jackson (<i>BNW</i> , 3-10) AND “The Imagination of Disaster” – Susan Sontag (PDF, Online Classroom)
F 1/16	Conventions of Narratives / Details/ Storytelling	Read “Evidence of Love in a Case of Abandonment”– M. Rickert (<i>BNW</i> , 39-46)

Week 2

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 1/19	MLK Jr Day – NO CLASS	
W 1/21	Invention Work / Formulating Ideas and Themes	Read “Pervert” – Charles Coleman Finlay (<i>BNW</i> , 97-106) AND “Ten with a Flag” – Joseph Paul Haines (<i>BNW</i> , 23-32) AND “The Pearl Diver” – Caitlin R. Kiernan (<i>BNW</i> , 229-243)
F 1/23	Thesis Statements / Details	Read “Pop Squad” – Paolo Bacigalupi (<i>BNW</i> , 139-160)

Week 3

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 1/26	Practice Workshop	Introduction Paragraph for WA 1
W 1/28	Outlining Narratives / Organization	Read “Civilization” – Vylar Kaftan (<i>BNW</i> , 463-470)
F 1/30	Reader Review Workshop	Full Rough Draft of WA 1

Week 4

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 2/2	Introduce WA 2 and Research Paper	Final Draft of Writing Assignment WA1
W 2/4	Dystopia Multi-Media; Compare Different Media; Video Clips	Read “Minority Report” – Philip K. Dick (<i>BNW</i> , 327-356)
F 2/6	Media and Genre Conventions	“From Homogeneous to Honey” – Neil Gaiman and Bryan Talbot (<i>BNW</i> , 107-112) AND Read Proposal Samples

Week 5 **Themes**

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 2/9	Future of the Individual	Read <i>Unwind</i>
W 2/11	Romantic Love	Read <i>Unwind</i>
F 2/13	Surveillance	Read <i>Unwind</i>

Week 6

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 2/16	Family vs. Society	Read <i>Unwind</i>
W 2/18	Invention / Outlining	Read “Artie’s aren’t Stupid” – Jeremiah Tolbert (<i>BNW</i> , 401-410) AND Bring Three Topics of Interest
F 2/20	Research	Research

Week 7

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 2/23	Integrating Reviews	Bring Reviews
W 2/25	MLA	Read MLA Guide to Citations
F 2/27	Reader Review Workshop	Full Draft of WA 2

Week 8

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 3/2	Proposal Presentations	Final Draft of WA 2
W 3/4	Proposal Presentations	Presentation
F 3/6	Proposal Presentations	Presentation

Week 9

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 3/9	Introduce WA 3	Read <i>Unwholly</i>
W 3/11	Media and Current Events	Read <i>Unwholly</i>
F 3/13	More on Perspectives	Read <i>UnWholly</i>

Week 10

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 3/16	Spring Break	No Classes – Read <i>UnSouled</i>
W 3/18	Spring Break	No Classes – Read <i>UnSouled</i>
F 3/20	Spring Break	No Classes – Read <i>UnSouled</i>

Week 11

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 3/23	Human Control	Read <i>UnSouled</i>
W 3/25	Human Trade / War	Read <i>UnSouled</i>
F 3/27	Marriage / Gender / Religion	“Caught in the Organ Draft” – Robert Silverberg (<i>BNW</i> , 375-384)

Week 12

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 3/30	Overpopulation / Procreation / Mass Media	“Harrison Bergeron” – Kurt Vonnegut Jr. (369-374) AND “Sacrament” – Matt Williamson
W 4/1	Apocalypse	“Of a Sweet Slow Dance in the Wake of Temporary Dogs” – Adam-Troy Castro (431-450) AND “The Ones who Walk Away from Omelas” – Ursula Le Guin (33-38)
F 4/3	Reader Review Workshop	Full Draft of WA 3

Week 13

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 4/6	More on WA 4	Final Draft of WA 3
W 4/8	Proposal Presentation	Proposals
F 4/10	Research	Research

Week 14

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 4/13	Conferences	No Formal Class Session
W 4/15	Conferences	No Formal Class Session
F 4/17	Conferences	No Formal Class Session

Week 15

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 4/20	More on Integrating Sources	Bring All Sources
W 4/22	Workshop	Full Introduction and Outline (with quotes integrated into the outline)
F 4/24	Reader Review Workshop	Full Draft of WA 4

Week 16

Date	In-Class Topic	DUE
M 4/27	Film	Final Draft of WA 4
W 4/29	Film	
F 5/1	Film	

F 5/8: Final (the final will be a response to a reflection question about the film)