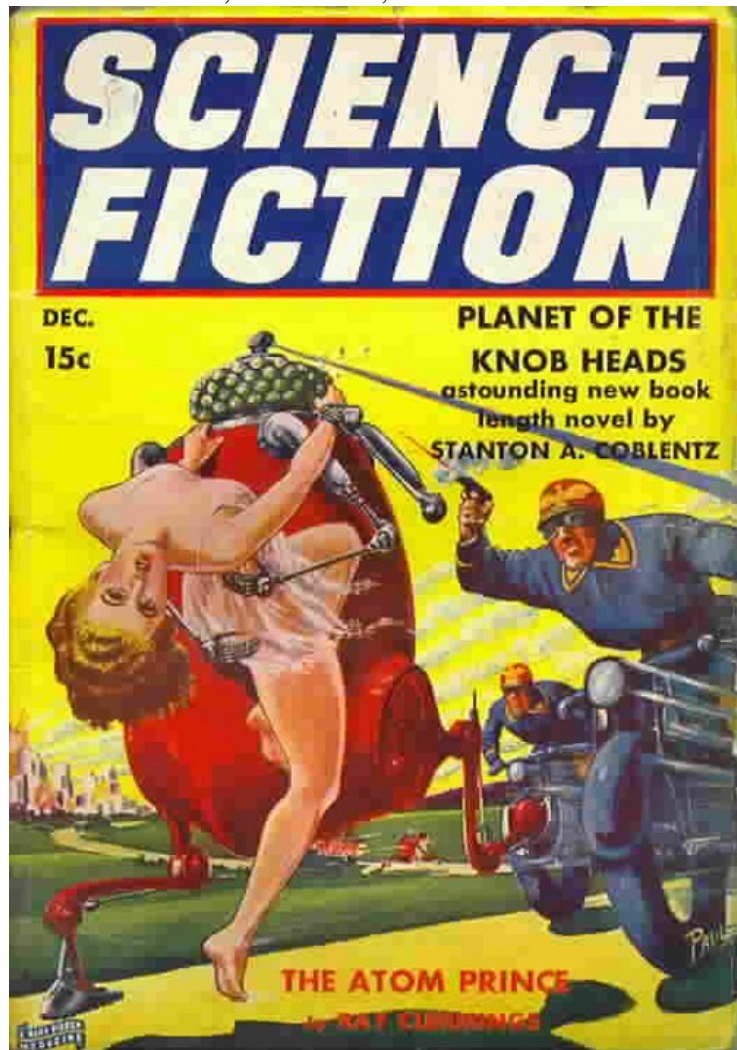


English 257

Charles Baldwin, ENGL 257, Fall 2006



Art by Frank R. Paul for December 1939 *Science Fiction Magazine*

ENGL 257: Science Fiction and Fantasy

Fall 2006, 230-320pm MWF,
Stansbury 46A

Professor Sandy Baldwin

charles.baldwin@mail.wvu.edu

293-3107x33452

Office: Stansbury 139 (Center for
Literary Computing)

Office Hours MWF 1-220pm and by
appointment

The Shortest Science Fiction Story:
"The last man on earth sat in his room.
There was a knock at the door."

"Any sufficiently advanced
technology is indistinguishable from
magic."- Arthur C. Clarke

"It is obvious that an imagined world,
however different it may be from the
real one, must have something – a
form – in common with it." –
Wittgenstein

"Toto, I think we're not in Kansas
anymore." - Dorothy

Course Catalog Description

A study of the history and nature of science fiction from H. G. Wells to the present, with special attention to those features of prose narration that science fiction shares.

Course goals include: 1) to read fun and interesting science fiction and fantasy; 2) to gain a critical understanding of these works as historical genres and culture texts. Topics include:

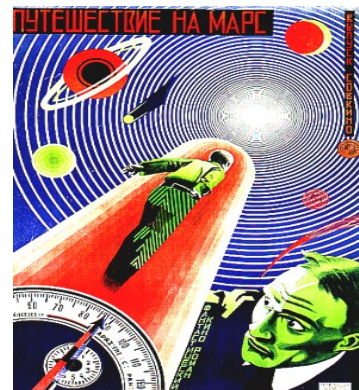
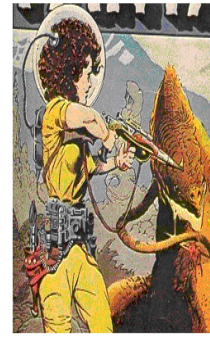
- Sciences? Fiction? And what about Fantasy?
- Literature or not? The cultural work of science fiction.
- The language of science fiction (“...monopole magnet mining operations in the outer asteroid belt of Delta Cygni ...”)
- Techno-science and Cyborg Bodies
- Alien Invasions and Human-Alien Hybridization
- Nostalgia for the Future
- High Fantasy vs. Swords and Sorcery vs. Horror

Required Texts

The WVU Bookstore offers copies of the required texts. Other editions are OK.

- Ray Bradbury, *The Martian Chronicles*
 - Octavia Butler, *Bloodchild and Other Stories*
 - Philip K. Dick, *The Philip D. Dick Reader*
 - Ursula LeGuin, *A Wizard of Earthsea*
 - China Miéville, *The Scar*
 - Neal Stephenson, *The Diamond Age*
 - H. G. Wells, *The Island of Dr. Moreau*
 - H. G. Wells, *The War of the Worlds*
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- [ER] = WVU Electronic Reserve at <http://ereserves.lib.wvu.edu/>. Username: Baldwin, Password: 737.
 - Texts followed by a URL are web-based.
 - Note: You must print and bring to class Electronic Reserve and Web-based items. Talk with Professor Baldwin if you need access to a printer.

Films on reserve at the downtown library media center.



Invasion of the Body Snatchers (movie, 1956)

Lord of the Rings: Return of the King (movie, 2003)

Minority Report (movie, 2002)

Class Format

The primary format will be discussion, both in large and small groups. In some cases, Professor Baldwin will lecture to fill in context and frame the reading. Your participation is a fundamental part of your classroom experience and your final grade.

Attendance Policy

A great deal happens in-class. Your attendance is important. Attendance will be taken in every class after the first week. You are allowed three unexcused absences. Subsequent unexcused absences will lower your final grade up to an entire letter. Professor Baldwin will determine what constitutes an excused absence.

Late work

Unexcused late work will be lowered a grade for every calendar day after the due date. Professor Baldwin will determine what constitutes excused late work.

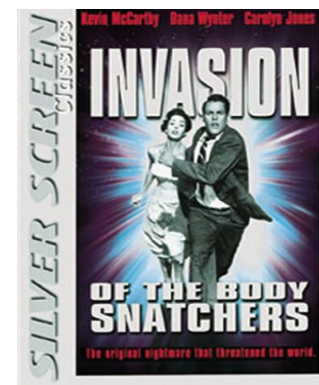
Assignments

- Group Presentation 15% Groups of four. Start the class, frame and introduce the discussion.
- 5 Short Papers 50% Reflections on the reading in response to a prompt. 1-2 pages, 12 point font, 1" margins. Reflections are due in class.
- Draft of Final Paper 10% One page proposal and four page (minimum) draft.
- Final Paper 25% 5-7 page analytical essay on *A Wizard of Earthsea* or *The Scar*.

Grading Criteria

All grades will be converted to a 4 point scale, i.e. 4.0=A, 3.7=A-, 3.3=B+, 3.0=B, 2.7=B-, 2.3=C+, 2.0=C, 1.7=C-, 1.3=D+, 1=D, 0.7=D-, <0.7=F.

- A papers fulfill the assignment; they also exceed expectations



through sophistication and originality of thought, expression, and research. At the macro-level, they are logically and persuasively organized. They make extensive and convincing use of examples and reference to the course materials. They are stylistically and formally impeccable.

- *B* papers fulfill the assignment. The basic organization is effective and logical. Sufficient evidence is presented to justify the argument. They also meet all stylistic and formal rules
- *C* papers meet the assignment in some minimal way, without really fulfilling what is required. There is some organization, though it may not be logical. There is some evidence.
- *D* papers show some work but do not fulfill the assignment. The formal, organizational, stylistic, and evidential standards are not met.
- All assignments are due on the day indicated on the schedule, unless otherwise noted. No late assignments will be accepted. Similarly, all reading or movie viewing is to be completed by the dates indicated on the syllabus.

Academic Integrity

West Virginia University expects that every member of its academic community shares the historic and traditional commitment to honesty, integrity, and the search for truth. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating and dishonest practices; and forgery, misrepresentation, or fraud. WVU's Academic Integrity Statement is at <http://www.arc.wvu.edu/admissions/integrity.html>.

Social Justice Statement

" West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and nondiscrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangement with Disability Services (293-6700)."

Date Topic and Reading (all reading/viewing must be completed for class)

Aug 21 Introduction

Due in Class (unless otherwise noted)

Aug 23 Ballard, "Fictions of Every Kind" (handout), Csicsery-Ronay, "The Seven Beauties of Science Fiction" <
<http://www.depauw.edu/sfs/backissues/70/icr70art.htm> >;
Neyir Cenk Gökçe "Definitions of Science Fiction" <
http://www.panix.com/~gokce/sf_defn.html >

Essay 1: What is science fiction? What makes it different from other fiction? Complete the readings and write a one page definition of science fiction. You can refer to the readings, but use your own words and thoughts.

Aug 25 Wells, *Island of Dr. Moreau I-VII*

Aug 28 Wells, *Island of Dr. Moreau VII -XIV*

Aug 30 Wells, *Island of Dr. Moreau XIV-end*

Sep 1 Wells, *Island of Dr. Moreau*

Sep 4 Labor Day

Sep 6 Butler, "The Evening, The Morning, and the Night,"
"Speech Sounds," "Positive Obsession"

Sep 8 Bear, "Blood Music" [ER]

Sep 11 Dick, "Minority Report," *Minority Report* (movie)

Sep 13 Dick, "We Can Remember it for you Wholesale,"
"Paycheck"

Sep 15 Work on Essay 2 in class

Sep 18 Dick, "The Father Thing" "Sales Pitch," "Pay for the
Printer," "Foster, You're Dead!"

Essay 2 Due

Sep 20 Dick, "Second Variety," "War Veteran"

Sep 22 Stephenson, *Diamond Age*, through "Hackworth Departs
from Dr. X's Laboratory"

Sep 25 Stephenson, *Diamond Age*, through Part the First

Sep 27 Stephenson, *Diamond Age*, through "Miranda receives an
unusual ractive message"

Sep 29 Stephenson, *Diamond Age*, through "The Hackworth's have
a family reunion"

Oct 2 Stephenson, *Diamond Age*, through end

Oct 4 Wells, *War of the Worlds*

Essay 3 Due

Oct 6 Wells, *War of the Worlds*, through Book I

Oct 9 Wells, *War of the Worlds*, through end

Oct 11 Wells, *War of the Worlds*

Oct 13 Bradbury, *Martian Chronicles*, through "The Third
Expedition"

Oct 16 Bradbury, *Martian Chronicles*, through "The Off Season"

Oct 18 Bradbury, *Martian Chronicles*, through end

Oct 20 Bradbury, *Martian Chronicles*

Oct 23 Brown, "Arena," [ER]; Lovecraft, "The Color out of Space" **Essay 4 Due**
[ER]

Oct 25 *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* (movie)

Oct 27 Cancelled

Oct 30 Butler , “Amnesty,” “Bloodchild”
Nov 1 Defining Fantasy, discuss final paper
Nov 3 Howard, “The Queen of the Black Coast,” <
<http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks06/0600961h.html> >, “The
Tower of the Elephant” [ER]
Nov 6 Cancelled
Nov 8 *Lord of the Rings: Return of the King* (movie)
Nov 10 Cancelled
Nov 13 Leguin, *A Wizard of Earthsea*

Essay 5 Due

**Final Paper Proposals
Emailed to Professor
Baldwin**

Nov 15 Leguin, *A Wizard of Earthsea*
Nov 17 Leguin, *A Wizard of Earthsea*
Nov 20, Thanksgiving
22, 24
Nov 27 Miéville, *The Scar*, through Part 2
Nov 29 Miéville, *The Scar*, through Part 3
Dec 1 Miéville, *The Scar*, through Part 4
Dec 4 Miéville, *The Scar*, through Part 6
Dec 6 Miéville, *The Scar*, through end
Dec 8 Workshop
Dec 11

**Final Paper Due by
Email or in Professor’s
mailbox**