English 462: Film Genres
Post-Apocalyptic and Dystopian Film
Dr. Toni Čuljak

Time: M 12:00-2:00 (lab); T W Th 12:00PM - 1:50PM
Location: Randall 115 (subject to change if possible)
Office: LL 408D
Phone: 963-1531
E-mail: culjakt @ cwu.edu
Office hours: T W Th 1:00-1:50; 2:00-2:50 and by appointment

Films:
- *H.G. Wells Things to Come* (William Cameron Menzies, 1936, 100 min.)
- *Planet of the Apes* ((Franklin Schaffner, 1968, 112 min.)
- *Testament*, (Lynn Littman, 1983, 90 min.)
- *The Day After* (Nicholas Meyer, 1983, 126 min.) (scenes)
- *The Quiet Earth* (Geoff Murphy, 1985, 91 min.)
- *The Handmaid's Tale* (Volker Schlondorff, 1990, 109 min.)
- *Children of Men* (Alfonso Cuarón, 2006, 109 min.)
- *In Time* (Andrew Niccol, 2011, 109 min.)
- *Perfect Sense* (David Mackenzie, 2011, 92 min.)
- *Elysium* (Neil Blomkamp, 2013, 109 min.)
- *The Maze Runner* (Web Ball, 2014, 113 min.)

Course Description:
This course is designed to help students to understand the nature and development of a film genre, in this case a subgenre of the science fiction film. An apocalypse predicts or enacts universal or widespread destruction or disaster; it implies the end of the world as we know it. Apocalyptic films concern themselves with such destruction and include events such as epidemic disease, environmental disaster, alien invasion, nuclear catastrophe, and global war. Post-Apocalyptic films concern themselves with the nature and structure of the society which comes into being after the apocalypse. In an large percentage of these films, the society which remains or comes in to existence is dystopic.

This course is designed an interdisciplinary broad-based, critical study of post-apocalyptic film. Through the study of selected films and readings, lectures, class discussion, and written and/or production assignments, you will learn to recognize and analyze in cinematic language the characteristics of the sub-genre and it’s relation to the time and culture in which it was set or created. By the end of the course, you will have an understanding of the many ways filmmakers and screenwriters imagine a future apocalypse and the nature of humanity left in its wake.

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Assessment Tools and Grading Percentages

Analytical paper: 15%
Class participation: 20%
Weekly viewing quizzes: 20%
Final project (with oral component): 45%

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<tr>
<th>Learner Outcomes</th>
<th>Assessments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the theory of genre and</td>
<td>Essay-based quiz discussing genre and the parameters of the subgenre.</td>
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<td>of the subgenre of Science Fiction and Fantasy, referred to as Post-Apocalyptic Film</td>
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<td>Students will be able to articulate an overview of the technical and stylistic</td>
<td>Oral and visual presentations of Final Project</td>
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<td>features of Post-Apocalyptic Film</td>
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<td>Students will be able to recognize and articulate the ideological, cultural and</td>
<td>Quizzes on the ideological, historical, cultural and social contexts of the subgenre reflected</td>
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<td>social contexts that shape post-apocalyptic film in various historical periods of</td>
<td>in a selected films; Analytic papers; Final Projects</td>
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<td>the 20th and 21st centuries,</td>
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<td>Students will be able to critically analyze and articulate issues of class,</td>
<td>Class discussion and oral presentations on post-apocalyptic social systems as depicted in</td>
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<td>diversity and gender in post-apocalyptic film as related to American and</td>
<td>American and international films. Analytic papers; Final Projects</td>
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<td>international perspectives on identity.</td>
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Academic Credit and Work Load:
- CWU stipulates that **one credit = a total time commitment of three hours each week** of the quarter.
- This is a **five credit course** and will require **15 hours of work/week**
- This takes into account **4 hours and 40 minutes of class and screening lab** (M 12:00-1:50PM; T-Th 12:00 to 12:50 pm)
- This leaves **10 hours and 10 minutes/week** for reading, discussion preparation, research and drafting of papers, and study for quizzes.

Performance Policy:
- Students are responsible for knowing all material presented in class and all assigned readings.
- Cheating on tests and quizzes or plagiarizing (i.e., failure to acknowledge the source of ideas or information that are not your own) will result in an "F" for the course.
- Deadline extensions, make-up exams, and/or incompletes will not be given except in emergency situations. In -class activities (e.g., small-group discussions) cannot be made up.
Readings:
- Reading is part of active learning; you are responsible for this material. Download the readings, read them with care, take notes, and reread them after class lectures and discussions.
- Readings will be posted in PDF form to the English 462 Canvas site. The readings and class lectures are designed to complement one another not to substitute for each other.
- Readings should be completed by the day listed in the syllabus.
- If you do not understand the reading materials, you are expected to ask questions in class or office hours.

Analytical paper:
- You will be assigned one short analytical paper (4-5 pages). The paper is designed to demonstrate your ability to view carefully, think critically, and write coherently on an assigned film topic.
- Papers should conform to the MLA Guidelines as to format and documentation.
- **Citations must be included (MLA format).** Students without a lot of experience with documentation consider using an online citation site like Easy Bib: http://www.easybib.com or BibMe: http://www.bibme.org These sites are free and will format the information according MLA if given the correct input.
- It should go without saying, but I will say it anyway, papers should be cleanly printed, properly formatted, carefully edited, and proofread.
- Students will not be allowed to revise papers to improve their grades.

Final Project:
- You may choose one of three options for your final project: a longer analytic paper, a research paper, or a screenplay and film proposal.
- The specifics of each option as well as some sample topics are detailed in the assignment sheet for the project.
- All projects require an oral presentation during final exam period.

Quizzes:
- You will be given weekly quizzes on the film of the week.
- They will consist of short answer, true/false, multiple choice questions about the week’s film, points of connection with earlier films viewed in class and readings.

Grade Scale:
Letter grades will be assigned for each assignment based on the CWU grade scale:
- 94-100 = A  
- 90-93 = A-
- 87-89 = B+  
- 84-86 = B  
- 80-83 = B-
- 77-80 = C+  
- 74-76 = C  
- 70-73 = C-
- 67-70 = D+  
- 64-66 = D  
- 60-63 = D-  
- ≤ 60 = F

Attendance, Participation, and Classroom Etiquette:
Attendance policy is based on the principle that essential demonstrations of adult responsibility and maturity are punctuality and preparedness. Your participation grade is based on your respectful and informed contributions to classroom discussions and your attendance. You are expected to attend class (to arrive on time and remain until class is
Attendance is taken via a sign-in sheet. It is the **student's responsibility to sign the sheet each day**. Frequent tardiness will impact your class participation grade. If you must miss class, please notify one of your instructors by telephone, e-mail, in writing, or in person as to when and why you will be or were absent. Our phones are equipped with voice mail so that you may leave a message.

Student athletes are expected to provide a list of dates they will be absent for sports events. **For all students, more than six (6) absences (either “excused” or “unexcused”) will result in failure of the in-class portion of this course. This does not mean that you are entitled to miss 4 class periods, rather that we make allowances for the vagaries of life including illness and emergencies.**

You are expected to behave respectfully and appropriately with your classmates and professor. You should not have private conversations during class time.

**Disability Support Services:**

Students with disabilities who wish to set up academic adjustments in this class should give each instructor a copy of their “Confirmation of Eligibility for Academic Adjustments” from Disability Support Services Office as soon as possible so we can discuss how the approved adjustments will be implemented in this class. Students without this form should contact the Disability Support Services Office, Bouillon 205 or dssrecept@cwu.edu or 963-2171.

**Incompletes:**

In accordance with university policy, incompletes are given solely as a response to emergency situations and at the discretion of the instructor. They are not given to provide a student an opportunity to raise a failing grade. In order to receive an incomplete, a student must be passing at the time of the request. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the professor and make arrangements to complete the course. To earn a grade, a student must complete the work for the course as prescribed by the instructor. You paid for the course; finish it.

**Use of CWU email:**

All official communications with current students are supposed to be sent to the student’s CWU email accounts. Many students use an alternate email account or alternate internet service provider for their email. We will only send email to and respond only to emails sent from the email address listed with the Registrar’s Office.

**Cell Phones and Computers:**

- Please obtain permission from instructor(s) to use laptops, recording devices, etc.
- Use a computer only for taking class notes. If you use your computer to surf the net or complete assignments for other classes, etc., you will be asked to leave the room and lose credit for attendance/participation for that day.
- **Turn your cell phone off and leave it in your bag or pocket.**
- Texting in class is absolutely not tolerated. If you are using your phone/texting in class, you will be asked to leave the room immediately marked absent for that day.
• If it is necessary to keep your phone on due to an emergency situation, please inform us of the situation, put the phone on vibrate, and if you receive a call leave quietly and quickly to take the call.

• Violation of cell phone and computer use policies will negatively affect participation grade, and being asked to leave due to such violations will count as a class absence.

If you have an issue with the above requirements, please see me after class or during office hours.
Week 1 —
9/23 W: Introduction
9/24 Th:

Week 2 — Technological Apocalypse
9/28 M: Film: H.G. Wells Things to Come (William Menzies, 1936, 100 min.)
   Reading: Nick Bostrom, “Global Catastrophic Risks”
9/29 T: Discussion
9/30 W: Discussion
10/1 Th: Discussion
   Quiz 1

Week 3 — Alien Invasion
10/5 M: Film: Planet of the Apes (Franklin Schaffner, 1968, 112 min.)
10/6 T: Discussion
10/7 W: Discussion
10/8 Th: Discussion
   Quiz 2

Week 4 — Nuclear Holocaust
10/12 M: Film: Testament (Lynn Littman, 1983, 90 min.)
10/13 T: Discussion
10/14 W: Film: scenes from The Day After (Nicholas Meyer, 1993, 126 min.)
10/15 Th: Discussion
   Quiz 3

Week 5 — Human Survival
10/19 M: Film: The Quiet Earth (Geoff Murphy, 1985, 91 min.)
10/20 T: Discussion
10/21 W: Discussion
10/22 Th: Discussion
   Quiz 4

Week 6 — Environmental Apocalypse and Existential risk
10/26 M: Film: The Handmaid's Tale (Volker Schlondorff, 1990, 109 min.)
10/27 T: Discussion
   Paper 1 due
10/28 W: Discussion
10/29 Th: Discussion
   Quiz 5
Week 6 — Environmental Apocalypse and Existential risk: Essentialism
11/2  M: Film: *Children of Men* (Alfonso Cuarón, 2006, 109 min.)
11/3  T: Discussion
11/4  W: Discussion
11/5  Th: Discussion
   Quiz 6

Week 8 — Epidemic Disease Apocalypse
11/9  M: Film: *Perfect Sense* (David Mackenzie, 2011, 92 min.)
11/10 T: Discussion
11/11 W: Veteran's Day Holiday
11/12 Th: Discussion
   Quiz 7

Week 9 — Disease Apocalypse and Social Stratification
11/15 T: Discussion
11/18 W: Discussion
11/19 Th: Discussion
   Quiz 8

Week 10 Overpopulation
11/24 T: Discussion
11/26 W: Thanksgiving Break
11/27 Th: Thanksgiving Break

Week 11 — Inside the Simulation
11/30 M: Film: *The Maze Runner* (Web Ball, 2014, 113 min,)
12/1  T: Discussion
12/2  W: Discussion
12/3  Th: Discussion
   Quiz 9

Final Exam Period: Thursday, December 10, 12:00-2:00PM
Final Projects due; Oral Presentations