

Department of English & Writing Studies
Film Studies Program

Special Topics in Film Studies: Cinemas of Dystopia
Film Studies 2198A (001)
Fall 2022

Instructor: Dr. C.E. Gittings

Screenings: **Asynchronous online viewing**

Course Day/Time: Tuesday 3:30-5:30 pm
Synchronous via Zoom

"nations will be happy, when either philosophers become kings, or kings become philosophers."

"As long as there is property, and while money is the standard of all things, I cannot think that a nation can be governed either justly or happily; not justly, because the best things will fall to the share of the worst men; nor happily, because all things will be divided among a few (and even these are not in all respects happy), the rest being left to the absolutely miserable."

Thomas More, *Utopia*

Course Description

Dystopia is, according to the OED, "[A]n imaginary place or condition in which everything is as bad as possible." It is the opposite of Utopia. Dystopian literature and cinema take contemporary social and political concerns and displace them to fictional universes, sometimes imagined futures, to better illuminate and interrogate real-world perils facing viewers in their present. Beginning with Thomas More, this course will consider the concept of dystopia in select cinema and television through the vectors of philosophy, history, aesthetics, genre studies, and ideology, and with reference to nation, race, class, gender and sexuality.

Objectives:

This course functions as an introduction to cinemas of dystopia in select cinema and television, emphasizing both close textual analysis and key critical approaches to visual dystopias. In addition to examining the key figures in the development of the idea of dystopia on screen and

Learning Outcomes: