

# Science Fiction

September 5. Introduction

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# Our mission

1. To understand science fiction as a *genre*
2. To analyze the *historical development* of science fiction
3. To interpret science fiction *literature*: its textual media
4. To *disaggregate* science fiction

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4. To *disaggregate* science fiction / SF / sci-fi / scientific romance / fantastic fiction / fantasias of possibility / speculative fiction / weird fiction . . . . .

# Our stance

Do you have to be a fan?

No.

Can you be a fan?

Yes.

In those heady early days, we used to call ourselves Aca/Fen...  
(Henry Jenkins, on fan studies in the early 1990s)

# Some opening texts

Huxley, *Brave New World* (1932)

What kind of narrative is this? What matters here?

Gibson, *Neuromancer* (1984)

What does this do? What doesn't it tell you? Why?

What does it do differently from Huxley?

# Some opening texts

A long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away...

# Some opening texts

([www.starwarsuncut.com/newhope](http://www.starwarsuncut.com/newhope))

What does this tell you about the *audience*?

What does this tell you about *who makes science fiction*?

# Requirements

## Participation (10%)

Out of 4. Full marks for  $\leq 2$  absences.

## Two short papers (20% each)

One slightly longer paper (40%), due at the end of term

## Blogging (10%)

Each entry credit / no-credit

Out of 4. Full marks for  $\leq 1$  no-credit.



# Blogging

You are in either Group 1 or Group 2; take turns  
This week everyone should try out the blog

**[sf-f13.blogs.rutgers.edu](http://sf-f13.blogs.rutgers.edu)**

guide:

**[sf-f13.blogs.rutgers.edu/blogging](http://sf-f13.blogs.rutgers.edu/blogging)**

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351:335, Fall 2013

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## Blogging guide

The best way to engage analytically with the readings is to write regularly about them. The SF community itself developed partly through the publication of readers' written discussions of SF stories in the pulp magazines themselves: "fandom" is not just a readership but also a group of writers, known to one another. In this course, you join this tradition of public reader discussions of science-fiction stories. We will not be making our own pulp magazines, but we will be using one of the closest equivalents our own time offers—the medium of the communal blog.

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## Welcome!

[📌 Sticky](#) [📁 Meta](#)

This is the main website for 351:335, Science Fiction, taught by Prof. [Andrew Goldstone](#).  
This site will always have the most up-to-date [syllabus](#). Before posting on the blog, please  
read the [blogging guide](#).

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# Blogging prompt

Choose a single sentence in either of the readings that seems striking to you. Quote it and cite the text. Make a note (no more than a sentence) to remind yourself what strikes you.

# next time

Wells, “The Star” (in *Wesleyan Anthology*)

Rokeya, “Sultana’s Dream” (bookstore; otherwise, online)

\*Online text-readers: bring your text to class and have it ready for discussion.