

The Second Paper

Preliminary annotated bibliography due Thursday, November 21, at 10 p.m.

Rough draft due Wednesday, November 27, at 10 a.m.

Final draft due Wednesday, December 18, at 10 p.m. (extended).

Research and write a paper of approximately 2500–3000 words making an interpretive argument related in some way to the themes of the course. Your essay should incorporate extensive analysis of at least one novel or film we have studied together (which you did not write about in paper 1). Your essay should also engage constructively with at least two **scholarly sources** you have located. Your essay **may**, subject to my approval, also discuss an additional primary science-fiction source (literary or visual) you yourself seek out.

You need not review the full scholarly literature on your subject. Engaging with secondary sources does not mean simply summarizing that work or quoting it in order to agree. Engagement means building on, complicating, or disputing the other scholar's salient claims. This can be done with something as small as a single footnote or as large as a several-paragraph section of your paper.

Begin your research forthwith so that you will have time to find and read all your sources. I will work with each of you to help you find interesting and worthwhile research materials; in the end, however, the main focus remains analyzing primary sources.

REQUIRED WORK

Annotated bibliography due November 21. For the preliminary annotated bibliography, briefly describe your motivating question in a short paragraph, then provide full bibliographical information for all sources you plan to use (so far). Each source should be followed by remarks (a sentence or two) about the use you plan to make of the source. You can complete this assignment before you have read all your material: skim intelligently.

You will not be committed to the topic or sources you describe, but it is important to begin your thinking and to do it in writing.

Rough draft due November 27 (3 or more pp.). On November 27 (Wednesday, but Friday classes meet), we will have a peer workshop day. Incomplete drafts are fine: you are required only to prepare at least some pages of analysis and argument.

Final paper due December 16. If you have an exam or another large paper deadline, and you contact me in advance, I will consider a one or two-day extension. If you do not have an extension, the maximum grade you can receive on a late paper is a 3.0.

FORMAT

Your paper should have 1.5-inch left and right margins, with text in twelve-point serif font (e.g.: Garamond, Hoefler Text, Palatino, Baskerville, or, less appealingly, Cambria, Times), and between single and one-and-a-half spacing. *Number all pages.* The paper should have your name and the date on the first page. Give your paper a meaningful title. Cover pages are wastes of imaginary paper.

Submit your paper electronically via the Canvas Assignments tool. E-mail submissions are not acceptable.

Digital submissions should be in Portable Document Format (PDF) if possible. Native word-processor formats (.doc, .docx, .pages, .odt) are acceptable. All word processors can produce PDF files, through a “Save As...” option, an “Export” command, or a “Print to PDF” option in the print dialog.

STYLE

You must proofread carefully.

Quotations should be carefully transcribed, punctuated, and attributed. All sources must be documented appropriately, either in a MLA-style in-text citation (with “Works Cited” bibliography) or in Chicago-style footnotes. Waste no space: repeated citations to a single text need nothing more than a page number in parentheses. If you use someone else’s work, including someone’s informal comments inside class or out, *you must cite that work.* Using someone else’s work without specific citation is plagiarism. Consistency and thoroughness in citation is more important than exact fidelity to either MLA or Chicago style. Fairly brief guides to both styles are available on the Purdue OWL site: owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/.

Please follow the conventions of standard written American English. I am non-prescriptive about things like the split infinitive, the sentence-final preposition, and “they” used as a gender-neutral singular pronoun. The passive voice is an excellent grammatical resource and can be used freely, provided it is used wisely. The best resource on matters of usage is the *Merriam-Webster Dictionary of English Usage*. For detailed information about current and past word uses, the fundamental source is the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

GRADING

The syllabus explains the general meaning of marks on the four-point scale. The chief criteria of assessment are:

Evidence. Has textual evidence been cited extensively, chosen well, and interpreted effectively in support of claims?

Motive. Does the paper make its central problem interesting? Does it participate cogently in an intellectual conversation with other scholars? Does it aim to show something unexpected, something that needs an analysis to be convincing?

Argument. Is the argument focused, logical, convincing?

Line of thought. Does the paper develop its ideas in connected, orderly fashion? Does the conclusion follow from (and differ from) the opening?

Style. Is the paper clearly written? Is it free from typographical, grammatical, and other errors?

IN GENERAL

An A-range (3.5–4.0) paper is strong by all these criteria; a B-range (2.5–3.5) paper has well-chosen, well-analyzed evidence but does not fully develop its argument or its motive; a C-range (1.5–2.5) paper lacks evidence or uses evidence only to summarize plot; and a D-range (0.5–1.5) paper is too short or ignores the assignment.

If you submit work that is not your own, you will not receive credit for the assignment, and you will face disciplinary consequences. Any part of your paper that is not by you must be correctly attributed to its source; misrepresenting work written by someone else or generated with an online aid (including “AI”) as your own is plagiarism. See the Rutgers academic integrity policy on the website academicintegrity.rutgers.edu.