

**Sense of Wonder: Stories of Science Fiction and Fantasy**  
**Dr. Richard L. Poss**  
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**Spring 2018**

Science fiction is a modern art form closely tied to advances in science and technology. It generates an imaginary space where a new development in science can be imaginatively tested for its possible effects on humanity. Some scenarios are cautionary, while others are hopeful and exhilarating. When combined with the fantasy genre, these stories set the imagination free to soar. This seminar will examine the experience of fantasy and science fiction through a series of novels, short stories, movies, and TV shows. We will examine the current field of science fiction, including book and magazine publishing, online series, conventions, etc. and consider the future of the field. Class sessions will be a combination of lecture and wide-ranging discussion. **The course meets from 9 – 12 Friday mornings in the Rubel Room at the Poetry Center.**

1. Jan. 19 Introduction. Science fiction or fantasy? Sub-genres. Jules Verne. H. G. Wells. Hugo Gernsback. John W. Campbell. Daniel Keyes, “Flowers for Algernon.”
2. Jan. 26 Frank Herbert, *Dune*. James Tiptree, Jr., “The Women Men Don’t See.”
3. Feb. 2 Case Studies: Ken Liu, “The Paper Menagerie.” John Kessel, “A Clean Escape.” Anne McCaffrey, “The Ship Who Sang.” Ted Chiang, “Exhalation.”
4. Feb. 9 Science fiction movies: *Arrival*. *Ex Machina*. *Interstellar*. *Passengers*. Ted Chiang, “Story of Your Life.”
5. Feb. 16 Anne McCaffrey, *Dragonflight*.
6. Feb. 23 Arthur C. Clarke, *Childhood’s End*. Ted Chiang, “What’s Expected of Us.”
7. Mar. 16 Cixin Li, *The Three-Body Problem*.
8. Mar. 23 Neil Gaiman, “And Weep Like Alexander.” Ted Chiang, “The Evolution of Human Science.” Ted Chiang, “The Merchant and the Alchemist’s Gate.” Poul Anderson, “Tau Zero.” Joanna Russ, “Towards an Aesthetic of Science Fiction.”
9. Mar. 30 TV series: *Black Mirror*. *Humans*. *Continuum*. *Orphan Black*. *Dr. Who*.
10. Apr. 6 Connie Willis, *To Say Nothing of the Dog*. Neil Gaiman, “A Study in Emerald.”

**Required Texts:**

Ted Chiang, *Stories of Your Life and Others*. Vintage Books, 2016.

Arthur C. Clarke, *Childhood's End*. Del Rey Books, 1987.

Frank Herbert, *Dune*. Ace Books, 1990.

Cixin Liu, *The Three-Body Problem*. Tor Books, 2016.

Anne McCaffrey, *Dragonflight*. Ballantine Books, 1986.

Connie Willis, *To Say Nothing of the Dog, or, How We Found the Bishop's Bird Stump at Last*. Bantam Books, 1998.

The following readings are posted on the virtual site Box@UA.

Registered students **will receive the link** to that site in order to download these readings.

1. Daniel Keyes, "Flowers for Algernon."
2. James Tiptree, Jr. "The Women Men Don't See."
3. Ken Liu, "The Paper Menagerie."
4. Anne McCaffrey, "The Ship Who Sang."
5. Ted Chiang, "Exhalation."
6. Ted Chiang, "What's Expected of Us."
7. Neil Gaiman, "And Weep Like Alexander."
8. Poul Anderson, "Tau Zero."
9. Neil Gaiman, "A Study in Emerald."