

Veranstalter	Prof. Dr. Ute Berns
Thema	Shelley, Mitchell, Atwood: Science, Fiction and Film or <i>Frankenstein</i> to <i>Cloud Atlas</i> [AA-V3a/b, ENG-12, AA7 , AA-10, LAA9, LAA12, AA-MA1, AA-MA2, AA-MA6, AA-W, AA-WB]
Art der Veranstaltung	Sem. II
Veranstaltungsnummer	53-548
Zeit	Mo 14-16
Raum	Phil 1219
Beginn	12. Oktober 2015

Course description:

The controversy about the earliest intersections of literature and the sciences is still raging. As far as the novel is concerned, however, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus* (1818), coinciding with the emergence of the modern life sciences, is often called the first example of the science fiction novel. Since then narrative thought experiments based on scientific ideas and speculating about alternative environments have taken very different generic forms, being associated, variously, with romance/fantasy, historical literature or a reinvented realism. Especially in the last two decades the themes and practices of science fiction haven been increasingly adopted by so-called canonical authors thus realigning the genre once again. Moreover, the 'What-If' literature has been appropriated and continues to be explored by the cinema that visually creates these imagined environments.

In this seminar we will analyse different constellations of science, the novel and film. How do literature and the cinema, in their different ways, frame the anxieties and desires bound up with scientific discoveries, and which forms do these media find to represent the practices and people involved? And how, precisely, are the social and political issues of the present linked to these novels and films and their visions of the future? What do they tell us about a given time, i.e. how do visions of, for instance, artificially created life relate to the historical context of the early nineteenth century (*Frankenstein* 1818) or of the early twenty-first (Atwood, *Oryx and Crake* 2003, Mitchell, *Cloud Atlas* 2004)? In addition to the three novels, we will discuss the films *Mary Shelley's Frankenstein* (Branagh 1994) and *Cloud Atlas* (Tom Tykwer, Andy Wachowski and Lana Wachowski 2012) among others.

Course requirements:

Regular attendance, excellent knowledge of texts and films, course assignments during the semester and (to receive the maximum credit points) a term paper.

Introductory reading:

David Seed, *Science Fiction: A Very Short Introduction*. 2011.

Sprechstunde in der Vorlesungszeit:	Di 16-17 Phil 1253
Sprechstunde in der vorlesungsfreien Zeit:	28.8. ab 10, 16.9. ab 12 und 28.9. ab 11 Uhr in Phil 1253