IS 204: WI / Themes in Popular Culture: The Zombie Apocalypse & Other Doomsday Beliefs

W: 11:30—2:00 (CRN #62499)
Palanakila 214

INSTRUCTOR: Malia Lau Kong
OFFICE: Palanakila 136
OFFICE HOURS: MW: 9:45—11:15am
Also by appointment
TELEPHONE: 236-9132
EMAIL ADDRESS: maliakon@hawaii.edu
 EFFECTIVE DATE: Fall 2014

ARE YOU PREPARED?

WINDWARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

Windward Community College offers innovative programs in the arts and sciences and opportunities to gain knowledge and understanding of Hawai‘i and its unique heritage. With a special commitment to support the access and educational needs of Native Hawaiians, we provide O‘ahu’s Ko‘olau region and beyond with liberal arts, career and lifelong learning in a supportive and challenging environment — inspiring students to excellence.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

An interdisciplinary study of a specific event, person, idea, or process in popular culture which will bring together various methodologies and conceptual tools to create a complex analysis. Topics covered will include: the concept of popular culture, how elements of popular culture are created and circulated, how elements of popular culture connect to historical, political, social, symbolic and intellectual history, how different groups in society are related to the elements of popular culture, and how popular culture plays a role in the lives of individuals. (3 hours lecture)

CATALOG DESCRIPTION APPLIED TO THIS THEME IN POPULAR CULTURE
An interdisciplinary study of the zombie apocalypse and other doomsday beliefs in popular culture which will bring together various methodologies and conceptual tools to create a complex analysis. Topics covered will include: the concept of apocalyptic beliefs in popular culture, how apocalyptic beliefs are created and circulated in popular culture, how elements of apocalyptic beliefs in popular culture connect to historical, political, social, symbolic, and intellectual history, how different groups in society relate to apocalyptic beliefs, and how apocalyptic beliefs play a role in the lives of individuals.

**WRITING INTENSIVE COURSE HALLMARKS**

- Writing promotes learning of course content.
- Writing is considered to be a process in which multiple drafts are encouraged.
- Writing contributes significantly to each student's course grade.
- Students do a substantial amount of writing, a minimum of 4,000 words. Depending on the types of writing appropriate to the discipline, students may write critical essays or reviews, journal entries, lab reports, research reports or reaction papers.
  *To allow for meaningful teacher-student interaction on each student’s writing, the class is restricted to 20 students.*

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to do the following:

- Identify the connection between the theme in popular culture with larger political, social, and intellectual patterns in society.
- Analyze the connection between the theme in popular culture and other themes, either contemporary or historical.
- Participate effectively in group discussions, given evidence of thoughtfulness and an engagement with other people's positions.
- Connect local elements of popular culture to global economic and political systems.
- Explain and justify an evaluation of the role of popular culture in the student's life.

**COURSE TASKS**

This course will analyze, through writing & seminar-style discussions, the popular culture rage that is The Zombie Apocalypse (and other Doomsday Beliefs) in order to use apocalyptic beliefs & scenarios as a mirror to understanding ourselves and modern day society. After all, apocalyptic beliefs are relevant to the times & circumstances in which people live. In this way, then, we are no different from the peoples of the past who also believed that they were living in the end of days. From the Anglo-Saxons who barely survived the savage Viking attacks in the so-called Dark Ages to the Japanese who lived through the chronic civil war stemming from the rise of a warrior elite in the Age of the End of Buddhist Law ("Mappo") to those who fell victim to the the Black Death in the 14th century, the world was and is continuously threatened by at least one of the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse. But why is it that the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse are ever present in our lives? To answer this, we will thus explore our historical & religious roots, going back to Ancient Mesopotamia and the original “Doomsday Prepper” Utnapishtim (and his Hebrew counterpart Noah), who survived the original apocalypse (The Flood). Furthermore, we will weave in the religious beliefs of Zoroastrians, Hebrews, and Christians so that we can examine the role that religion plays in how people understand history and their place in the world. We will also apply historical examples, international relations paradigms, and psychology to what we today could expect in a true Doomsday scenario, whether it be from zombies rising from the grave, an Ebola pandemic, severe climate change, or a rogue nation initiating M.A.D., so that we can ultimately survive the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse.

In order to meet the course SLOs and fulfill the Writing Intensive Hallmarks, this course will revolve around the following course:

- **Write 2 Analysis Papers (MINIMUM 750 words; MAX 1250 words) on the following topics:**
  - **Analysis Paper #1:** Analyze the way in which people survive the apocalypse in either One Second
Guidelines for Analysis Papers:

- Must be typed, double-spaced, include footnote citations, have a topic sentence for each paragraph, have an introduction, body, & conclusion, make use of transitions between sentences, include a word count and be grammatically and mechanically correct. **No first-person statements allowed.**

- Final drafts are due on SPECIFIC days at the BEGINNING of class according to the class schedule. A paper, regardless of reason, is considered late if not turned in at the beginning of class on these specific days. If you are emailing me your paper, make sure that you email it to me as a Word Document by the beginning of class. Please note that once you turn in a final draft, you will not be able to revise your paper.

- First drafts of paper are due on SPECIFIC days according to the class schedule in order to give me enough time to review it for you. After this date, I will NOT accept any more first drafts. **It is mandatory that you turn in a draft of Paper #1 (if you fail to turn in a draft of Paper #1, you will automatically fail the class). You will also need to attend a mandatory conference with me regarding your Paper 1 draft. Failure to attend this conference will result in automatic failure for the class.** For Papers #2 you are advised to turn in a first draft for my review; however, this is optional.

- Please remember that when turning in your paper drafts, I am not your spell checker or editor. Although I will point out grammatically incorrect sentences and spelling errors, I will not fix your paper for you. If you find that you need help with writing, please visit the Ka Piko Writing Center for further assistance.

- Time management is a MUST in this class. Since the due dates are not a surprise, I expect you to turn in your paper on-time regardless of how fantastic your reason is.

- Each Analysis Paper is worth 50 points total. Late papers will be assessed 5 points PER CLASS PERIOD in which it is late **regardless of reason.** Failure to turn in Paper #2 when due will result in failure for the class as grades are due ASAP.

**Write 6 Reaction Papers (MINIMUM 500 words; MAX 750 words) on designated readings according to the class schedule.**

- Guidelines for Reaction Papers:
  - Only 2 paragraphs. No more, no less. Each reaction paper should be **evenly divided** between analysis and personal reaction.
    - 1st Paragraph: write an analysis of the assigned reading. Be sure to include the main ideas/arguments of author and supporting evidence used by the author to evidence these main ideas/arguments. No first person statements in this paragraph.
    - 2nd Paragraph: write your personal reaction to the assigned reading (i.e., what did you like, dislike, find enlightening, irritating, confusing, impressive, surprising, **AND why**). This is the place to use first person statements.

- Must be typed, double-spaced, have a topic sentence for each paragraph, make use of transitions between sentences, include the word count, and be grammatically & mechanically correct.

- Reaction Papers are worth up to 10 points total and are due on specific days according to class schedule. If you are absent on the day in which a Reaction Paper is due, you must email me your paper before the start of class so that your paper is not considered late. Late papers are penalized 2 points per class period in which it is late, **regardless of reason.**

**Write 8 Social Commentary & Philosophical Analyses (MINIMUM 250 words; MAX 500 words) on designated readings from World War Z **OR** designated episodes of The Walking Dead according to the class schedule.**

- Guidelines for Social Commentary & Philosophical Analyses:
  - For this assignment, you are using the designated readings from World War Z or the
Complete a variety of in-class activities (35 points total)

- Produce 1 Disasters in History Visual (i.e., a PowerPoint, display board, pamphlet, etc.) and present to class this visual. Students will need to sign up for a specific Disaster in History to research. This assignment is worth 25 points (20 points for Visual + 5 points for Presentation) and is due on the designated day according to the class schedule, and will be assessed a 3-point penalty for each day it is late, regardless of reason. The Disasters in History Visual must convey the following information:
  - What happened in this disaster?
  - Classify this type of disaster: natural, epidemic, biological, terrorism
  - How many people were affected?
  - How did the communities respond?
  - What could have been done better to prepare?
  - What would you recommend to others?
  - How would this information help you in an emergency?

- Complete a variety of in-class activities (35 points total)
  - Produce at least one of the following books in your analysis: 1) *Leviathan*; 2) *Civilization & Its Discontents*; 3) *Theories of International Politics & Zombies*.
    - Must be typed, double-spaced, have a logical flow of ideas, include the word count, and be grammatically & mechanically correct.
    - Social Commentary & Philosophical Analyses are worth up to 10 points total and are due on specific days according to class schedule. If you are absent on the day in which a Reaction Paper is due, you must email me your paper before the start of class so that your paper is not considered late. Late papers are penalized 2 points per class period in which it is late, regardless of reason.
  - Have you recommended to others?
  - Do you believe you have the skills to make-up these activities, regardless of reason, if class is missed? However, your first 3 absences will automatically be excused (meaning you are able to make-up the points for these days). On the other hand, any absences beyond these first 3 absences will NOT be excused, regardless of reason (unless, of course, the zombies are walking the earth, which though, in this case, grades would be the least of your worries). After your 3rd unexcused absence, your final grade will automatically drop one letter grade.
  - Participate in class by being physically, as well as mentally, present and respectful of others. This includes turning off your cell phone, not talking story with friends, not listening to music, and coming to class on time. This also includes not monopolizing class discussion with your own point-of-view and not being respectful of what your classmates have to say. The class is a designated Safe Zone. Negative comments will NOT be tolerated. Please prepare yourself to face the consequences if you engage in any disrespectful behavior. Please note that plagiarism also falls in the category of disrespectful behavior and will result in automatic failure for assignment &/or class.
ASSESSMENT TASKS AND GRADING

2 Analysis Papers x 50 points each = 100 points (34% of final grade)
8 Social Commentary & Philosophical Analyses x 10 points each = 80 points (27% of final grade)
6 Reaction Papers x 10 points each = 60 points (20% of final grade)
Disasters in History Visual & Presentation = 25 points (8% of final grade)
In-Class Activities = 35 points (11% of final grade)

300 points total

*Everyone starts the class with an “A” (300 points)!
What you do with your “A” is now up to you!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To keep your</th>
<th>You can’t lose more than</th>
<th>Which means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>30 points</td>
<td>A = 270 points &amp; above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>60 points</td>
<td>B = 240 points &amp; above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>90 points</td>
<td>C = 210 points &amp; above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>120 points</td>
<td>D = 180 points &amp; above</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*(Hopefully, this will not happen, but if it turns out that more than 180 points is lost, an “F” for the class will result.)*

*The “N” grade is only given in circumstances in which the student has worked conscientiously, attended regularly, finished all work, fulfilled course responsibilities, and has made measurable progress. However, either the student has not achieved the minimal student learning outcomes and is not prepared to succeed at the next level, or the student has made consistent progress in class but is unable to complete the class due to extenuating circumstances, such as major health, personal, or family emergencies. The “N” grade is NOT given in circumstances in which you have NOT made consistent progress in the class &/or attended class regularly.

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. Civilization & Its Discontents by Sigmund Freud
2. Theories of International Politics & Zombies by Daniel W. Drezner
3. One Second After by William R. Forstchen
4. World War Z by Max Brooks (Abbreviated as WWZ in class schedule)
5. Other Supplemental Readings found in Laulima (click on the “Supplemental Readings” folder in the Resources icon) or handed out in class.

METHOD OF INSTRUCTION

- This course makes use of learner-centered activities to help you learn the material. In other words, this class will not rely solely on lecture. If you find that this teaching style does not work for you, please drop the class.
- This course will utilize peer-feedback methods for your papers. You will typically be asked to share your writings in small (3—4 person) groups. You will also be expected to give constructive feedback to your group members.
RECOMMENDATIONS THAT WILL HELP YOU IN THIS CLASS

1. This class is not only writing-intensive but also reading-intensive AND thinking-intensive. Since we will move at an extremely fast pace, it is crucial for you to keep up with the readings and paper assignments.
2. You will be expected to write thoughtful & analytical papers on given topics AND keep up with all assigned readings. Seriously consider dropping the class if you find that the topic of Doomsday Beliefs does not interest you since lack of interest in a subject corresponds to a negative grade.
3. Faithfully attend class since failure to attend class on a regular basis corresponds to a negative grade.
4. Always take notes. This includes anything that is written on the board, viewed on the overhead projector, discussed with one another, gleaned from videos, etc. These notes can help you write your papers!
5. Bring required readings to class according to the class schedule. We will typically refer back to these readings in class. Also, these readings will help you complete in-class assignments. Failure to buy the required texts always corresponds to a negative grade.
6. Ask questions if you don’t understand and definitely let me know if you are having any problems in the class.

*This class is designed to be accessible to all students. Thus, please take note of the following statement:

DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT
If you have a physical, sensory, health, cognitive, or mental health disability that could limit your ability to fully participate in this class, you are encouraged to contact the Disability Specialist Counselor to discuss reasonable accommodations that will help you succeed in this class. Ann Lemke can be reached at 235-7448, lemke@hawaii.edu, or you may stop by Hale ‘Akoakoa 213 for more information

CLASS SCHEDULE*

*Note: Class schedule is subject to change. All changes will be announced in class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS DUE ON THIS DAY</th>
<th>REQUIRED READINGS FOR THIS DAY</th>
<th>CORRESPONDING CLASSROOM TOPICS &amp; EVENTS ON THIS DAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1: W 8/27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction to the Class &amp; the Apocalypse in Popular Culture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Week 2: W 9/3 | 1. Reaction Paper #1: Leviathan DUE | 1. Epic of Gilgamesh Flood Story  
2. Genesis Flood Story  
3. Leviathan | Historical, Philosophical, Political, Psychological, & Religious Context of the Apocalypse, I |
<p>| Week 3: W 9/10 | 1. Reaction Paper #2: Civilization &amp; Its | 1. The Revelation to John (Apocalypse) | Historical, Philosophical, Political, Psychological, &amp; |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>1. Reaction Paper #3: <em>One Second After</em> DUE</th>
<th>1. <em>One Second After</em> DUE</th>
<th>The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse &amp; The Breakdown of Civilization, I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 4: W 9/17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 5: W 9/24</th>
<th>1. Reaction Paper #4: <em>The Undead Martyr OR When There’s No More Room in Hell</em> DUE</th>
<th>1. The Undead Martyr: Sex, Death, &amp; Revolution in George Romero’s Zombie Films</th>
<th>The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse &amp; The Breakdown of Civilization, II</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. When There’s No More Room in Hell, the Dead Will Shop the Earth: Romero and Aristotle on Zombies, Happiness, and Consumption</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Analysis Paper #1 Draft DUE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 7: W 10/8</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>NO CLASS: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCING ON <em>ONE SECOND AFTER</em> OR THE WALKING DEAD ANALYSIS PAPER #1—PLEASE MAKE AN APPOINTMENT FOR YOUR CONFERENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Social Commentary &amp; Philosophical Analysis #1:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Week 9: W 10/22 | 1. Social Commentary & Philosophical Analysis #2: WWZ, Blame OR TWD, Season 5, Episode 2 DUE  
3. What kind of survivor & character from *The Walking Dead* are you? Take the 2 “quizzes” found in our class Laulima site and write down your results and your thoughts on your results and be prepared to share in class DUE | 1. *World War Z*, Blame  
Disasters in History Presentations |
|-----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
In-Class Group Scenario: Emergency Response Simulation |
| Week 11: W 11/5 | 1. Social Commentary & Philosophical Analysis #4: WWZ, Turning the Tide OR TWD, Season 5, Episode 4 DUE  
In-Class Individual Scenario: Doomsday Prepper Plan, Presentations, & Assessments |
The Zombie Apocalypse As Social Commentary, I |
The Zombie Apocalypse As Social Commentary, II |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Assignment Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 14: W 11/26</td>
<td>1. <strong>Social Commentary &amp; Philosophical Analysis #7:</strong> WWZ, Total War OR TWD, Season 5, Episode 7 DUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. <em>World War Z,</em> Total War</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Zombie Apocalypse As Social Commentary, III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 15: W 12/3</td>
<td>1. <strong>Social Commentary &amp; Philosophical Analysis #8:</strong> WWZ, Goodbyes OR TWD, Season 5, Episode 8 DUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Analysis Paper #2 Optional Draft DUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. <em>World War Z,</em> Goodbyes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Zombie Apocalypse As Social Commentary, IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 16: W 12/10</td>
<td>1. <strong>Reaction Paper #6:</strong> When They Aren’t Eating Us DUE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. When They Aren’t Eating Us, They Bring Us Together: Zombies and the American Social Contract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Zombie Apocalypse &amp; the Need for Community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*World War Z Analysis Paper #2 DUE ON WEDNESDAY, 12/17/14 by EMAIL (in Word Document format) OR turned in at 11:30am at Palanakila 136. If you email me your paper, be sure to check for an email confirmation from me that I received your paper (I will email you back within 24 hours). Do NOT turn in your paper to my office after 2:00pm on 12/17 if I am not present in my office to receive your paper.*