

## EL 48C

### Humanism to Posthumanism: The Human Condition in Fiction

(Spring 2020)

**Instructor:** Cihan Yurdaun Ph.D. cihan.yurdaun@boun.edu.tr

**Class Hours:** Tuesday 4 (12:00-13:00), Friday 3,4 (11:00-13:00)

**Office hours:** TB 425, Tuesday 14:00-15:00, Friday 14:00 -15:00

What makes us human? This is the fundamental question we are going to tackle in this course by studying three exceptional novels: *Frankenstein*, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* Although these novels are written approximately seventy years apart, and the two on different continents, they share a very significant common point which enables us to group them. In all three works, we see a nonhuman or a posthuman entity opening up to discussion, in different contexts but similar ways, the fundamental question of what it means to be human. To trace the connections between these texts and our core question embedded in the dialectic of Humanism and Posthumanism, we are going to benefit from several theories of critics such as Julia Kristeva, Georges Bataille, and Donna Haraway while exercising more freedom in creative criticism and interpretation compared to a survey class.

#### Class Requirements

- **Attendance is mandatory;** if you do not attend **%80 of the classes**, you will not be able to take the **final exam**.
- **Participation** is the key to success in this course. Your contributions will earn you **extra points up to %4**.
- Read the **assigned material for each week**, including the documents uploaded to **Moodle**, which will include the secondary readings, and come to class prepared.
- You are going to write three detailed and structured **assignments** based on a **discussion question** that will ask you to employ both primary and secondary readings in an original way. You need to upload your papers to "**www.turnitin.com**"; no hardcopies or emailed version will be accepted.
- **Assignments** will constitute **% 30** of your final grade. **Midterm** is **%30** and the **final** is **%40**.
- I will maintain an "**open-door**" **policy** during the office hours. You may come to discuss any aspect of the course. You do not need an appointment. If you wish to see me outside those posted hours, please make a prior appointment in advance via email.

## Weekly Schedule

**Week 1** (February 6) Introduction

**Week 2** (February 11, 14) Primary Reading (PR) **Mary Shelley** *Frankenstein*  
Secondary Reading (SR) excerpts from **Bruno Latour**, *We Have Never Been Modern*

**Week 3** (February 18, 21) (PR) **Mary Shelley** *Frankenstein*  
(SR) excerpts from **Julia Kristeva**, *Powers of Horror*

**Week 4** (February 25, 28) (PR) **Mary Shelley** *Frankenstein*

**Week 5** (March 3, 6) (PR) **Mary Shelley** *Frankenstein*

**(First Assignment Due March 6)**

**Week 6** (March 10, 13) (PR) **Oscar Wilde** *The Picture of Dorian Gray*  
(SR) excerpts from **Frederick Nietzsche**, *The Will to Power*

**Week 7** (March 17, 20) (PR) **Oscar Wilde** *The Picture of Dorian Gray*  
(SR) **Walter Benjamin**, "Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"

**Week 8** (March 24, 27) (PR) **Oscar Wilde** *The Picture of Dorian Gray*  
(SR) excerpts from **George Bataille**, *The Accursed Share*

**Week 9** (March 31, April 3) (PR) **Oscar Wilde** *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

**Week 10** (April 7, 10) (PR) **Oscar Wilde** *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

**(Second Assignment Due March 31)**

**(Midterm)**

**Week 11** (April 14, 17) (PR) **Philip K. Dick** *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

(SR) **Donna Haraway**, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s"

**Spring Break**

**Week 12** (April 28) (PR) **Philip K. Dick** *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

(SR) excerpts from **Albert Camus**, *The Myth of Sisyphus*

**Week 13** (May 5, 8) (PR) **Philip K. Dick** *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

**Week 14** (May 12) (PR) **Philip K. Dick** *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*

**(Third Assignment Due May 12)**