Honors Seminar (HONR 194)  
Fridays 3:00-3:50pm  
Location: ELC 225

Dr. Carrie Vath  
cvath@mtech.edu  
406-496-4198  
Eng. Hall 101

Course Description

Margaret Atwood’s post-apocalyptic Maddaddam Trilogy (comprised of Oryx and Crake, Year of the Flood, and Maddaddam) examines a near-future in which the impact of corporate profiteering, climate change, continual surveillance, and genetic manipulation result in a hostile environment for humans. Atwood demonstrates that technological advancement can create positive and negative opportunities that are augmented by existing social inequity, including sexual, monetary, and natural resource exploitation.

This series will allow us to develop your self-reflectiveness, ability to reason, express yourself in the spoken word, ability to integrate and contextualize information, and the capacity to commit to a position, recognize that it may change, and tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity

Course Content Advisory

Be advised that the literature we will work with contains violence, including but not limited to sexual violence, rape, and abuse. Plot points in the primary literature include human trafficking, exploitation, and sex work. If you have concerns about engaging with the material, please make an appointment to see me.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Develop critical reading skills
- Engage in reflective discussion of class material

Course Structure

This will be taught using the Socratic method. This means I will be focused on giving you questions, not answers. I will attempt to have the class think in a disciplined, and intellectually responsible manner.

Assignments

Due to the oratory nature of the course there will not be any formal written assignments. However, I expect students to come to each session prepared to discuss the assigned readings. This means you should have taken notes on the content, developed questions for the group, and drawn parallels between the book and our current culture.
Textbooks/Readings

The trilogy will be provided to you.

Margret Atwood MaddAddam Trilogy

Book 1: Oryx and Crake pages 389 (Weeks 2-5)

Oryx and Crake, speculates about what society will become. In this case, it is in the wake of a near planet-wide catastrophe, which leaves Jimmy (aka Snowman) the last man on earth. He's not alone, however. He plays reluctant prophet to a genetically modified group of humanoids called the Crakers. The Crakers were bio-engineered by Jimmy's best friend, a timid genius called Crake (aka Glenn). Technically they were the property of the RejoovenEsense Corporation, where Crake was supposed to be working on the "problem" of mortality, but in reality they were his Adam and Eve, and he cast himself in the role of God. The story of Jimmy and Glenn is told through flashbacks as Jimmy navigates the harsh post-catastrophe life.

Book 2: Year of the Flood pages 448 (Weeks 6-10)

Atwood said the reason she wrote the novel was because people were always asking her what happened after the end of Oryx and Crake. But instead of giving everyone an answer, she decided to start the story all over again and tell it from a different point of view. The result is more of a companion piece than a true sequel.

The Year of the Flood follows two women who have also survived the "Waterless Flood," and fills in a lot of the narrative blanks of the first novel via extensive flashbacks. For better or worse it broadens the scope of the mythology, creating connections between characters where there weren't any before. Atwood ostensibly re-writes the first book by introducing characters and motivations that didn't previously exist. These act as a reversal would in a mystery or a thriller, using new information to change the way we think about what we thought we knew.

Book 3: MaddAddam pages 416 (Weeks 11-15)

Questions about creation, the infallibility of "God," and the evolution of religion. She does this once again by flashing to the characters' pasts, focusing on backstory to expand the world's mythology even further. At this point, the narratives of Oryx and Crake and The Year of the Flood have converged. Jimmy and the Maddaddamites (the survivors introduced in The Year of the Flood) are united in the day to day struggles of dystopian life. The Crakers, however, those Adam and Eve's of the new world, are more preoccupied with where they came from than where they are going (much like Atwood) and demand nightly stories of life before "the Great Rearrangement." These remnants of the old world, knowledge of good and evil, taint the Crakers' so-called fresh start.

Book descriptions are an excerpt from: https://litreactor.com/columns/starting-from-scratch-margaret-atwoods-maddadam-trilogy
Grading

This course is a Pass/Fail course. Attendance and participation will be the assessment tool. Discussion and participation is not only critical to the learning that takes place in the classroom.

Students are responsible for informing the instructor PRIOR to class if (s)he must obtain an excused absence. In the instance of a circumstance arising beyond your control, please contact the instructor personally to handle the matter.

Excused absences include:

- **Required student participation in a University sponsored event**: these events will be excused with official documentation from the appropriate faculty or staff member. Documentation should be received PRIOR to the event.
- **Religious Holidays**: Religious holidays are always excused; however, please notify the instructor, in writing, within the first two weeks of class so that the appropriate accommodations can be made.
- **Medical Emergencies**: Medical emergencies are excused with appropriate documentation from a health care provider.
- **Family Emergencies**: these emergencies are only excused with written documentation.

Grading Scale

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pass</td>
<td>Attended 90% of class sessions(excused absences excluded) and actively participated* in 100% of classroom discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>Attended fewer than 90% of class sessions and participation was minimal during class discussions</td>
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</tbody>
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*active participation means you came to each class session prepared made at least one meaningful comment and/or asked at least 1 meaningful question

Other Important Information

Academic Honesty Policy

Montana Tech believes that academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to higher education. Montana Tech has a responsibility to promote academic honesty, integrity, and the highest ethical and professional standards and behavior in and out of the classroom.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes cheating; plagiarism; forgery; falsification; facilitation or aiding academic dishonesty; multiple submission; theft of instructional materials or tests; access to, manipulation of, or tampering with laboratory equipment, experiments, or computer programs without proper authorization; alteration of grades or files; misuse of research data in reporting results; use of personal relationships to gain grades or favors; and any actions intended to gain academic advantage by fraudulent and/or deceptive means.

Student Responsibility
The student has full responsibility for the content and integrity of all academic work submitted. Ignorance of a rule does not constitute a basis for waiving the rule or the consequences of that rule. Students unclear about a specific situation should ask their instructors or academic staff, who will explain what is and is not acceptable in their classes or on campus.

Consequences of Academic Dishonesty
At faculty discretion, cheating may result in an F grade on the assignment or examination, or in the course. Plagiarism may be considered a form of cheating and is, therefore, subject to the same consequences as cheating. However, as there may be plagiarism as a result of poor learning or inattention to format, and there may be no intent to deceive, some instructor discretion is appropriate. Under such circumstances, the instructor may elect to work with the student to correct the problem at an informal level.

Accommodations
Montana Tech is committed to ensuring full and equal participation by eliminating barriers and making the appropriate accommodations that allow persons with disabilities to have equal opportunity in all aspects of campus life. Students who would like to request an accommodation, or have questions about Student Disability Services at Montana Tech should contact Amy Lorang at the North campus (496-4429) or by e-mail at alorang@mtech.edu or Cricket Pietsch for the South campus (496-3730) or by e-mail at cpietsch@mtech.edu.

Course Reading Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Required Reading (Reading you should have done by class meeting)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>30-Aug</td>
<td>Course Overview; Hand out Books</td>
<td>Review Syllabus</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6-Sep</td>
<td>Oryx &amp; Crake</td>
<td>pgs. 1-112; Chapters 1-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>13-Sep</td>
<td>Oryx &amp; Crake</td>
<td>pgs. 113-172; Chapters 6-7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>20-Sep</td>
<td>Oryx &amp; Crake</td>
<td>Pgs. 173-283; Chapter 8-11</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>27-Sep</td>
<td>Oryx &amp; Crake</td>
<td>Pgs. 283-371; Chapters 12-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>4-Oct</td>
<td>Year of the Flood</td>
<td>Pgs. 1-86</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>11-Oct</td>
<td>Year of the Flood</td>
<td>Pgs. 87-156</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>18-Oct</td>
<td>Year of the Flood</td>
<td>Pgs. 157-272</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>25-Oct</td>
<td>Year of the Flood</td>
<td>Pgs. 273-368</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1-Nov</td>
<td>Year of the Flood</td>
<td>Pgs. 369-448</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>8-Nov</td>
<td>MaddAddam</td>
<td>Pgs. 1-134</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>15-Nov</td>
<td>MaddAddam</td>
<td>Pgs. 135-200</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>22-Nov</td>
<td>MaddAddam</td>
<td>Pgs. 201-288</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>29-Nov</td>
<td>Holiday NO CLASS</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>6-Dec</td>
<td>MaddAddam</td>
<td>Pgs. 289-416</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>13-Dec</td>
<td>FINAL EXAM Week; Course Wrap Up</td>
<td>No Readings</td>
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