

# English 236: Literature, Technology, Mass Creativity

Syllabus: also see separate course description

Prof. Christopher Newfield

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Tuesdays 6:00 PM - 8:50 PM SH 2714

Fall 2011

## 1. Sept 27 Literature, Technology, and the Innovation Crisis

Introduction to course. The storyline as such. Criticism and creation. Current condition of the academic humanities and of literary and cultural studies (LCS). The premise of our unnecessary limits.

Why “mass”? What are our key contributions to current debates? Each participant will introduce and discuss their main academic project and least one article and trend in their home discipline that they consider to be important. Review and group construction of the final syllabus. Mapping our work-sharing.

“New Italian Epic”

Andrew Bacevich, *The Limits of Power* (CN on US macroculture today)

## 2. Oct 04 Fates of Critics and Creatives

**Bolaño**, *2666* Book 1, The Part about the Critics

**Egan**, *Visit from the Goon Squad*, chs 2, 5, 7, 9, 11

**Sennett**, *The Craftsman*, Prologue, Chs 1,2,9,10

## 3. Oct 11 Innovation as Creative Destruction

**Robinson**, *Red Mars*, books 1-4

**Schumpeter**, Part 2, Can Capitalism Survive?

## 4. Oct18 Innovation as Colonization

**Robinson**, *Red Mars*, books 5-8

**Bolaño**, *2666* Book 2, The Part about Amalfitano

**Laird**, *Solar Energy, Technology Policy, and Institutional Values* (CN & ZH)

5. Oct 25      **Creation and Capability**  
**Murakami**, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle*, Books 1-2  
**Nussbaum**, *Creating Capabilities*, chapters 2, 4, 8
6. Nov 01      **Writing, Creativity, Internet**  
**Bolaño**, *2666*, Book 3, The Part about Fate  
**Murakami**, *Wind-Up* (cont)  
**Gauntlett**, *Making is Connecting*, chs 1-4; Jaron **Lanier** (CN)
7. Nov 08      NO CLASS  
finish **Murakami**
8. Nov 15      **Creativity in Catastrophic Societies**  
**Bolaño**, *2666*, Book 4, The Part about the Crimes  
**Sorokin**, *Day of the Oprichnik*  
**Vaughn, Diane**, *The Challenger Launch Decision* (CN)
9. Nov 22      **Literature and Innovation Theory as Such**  
**Whitehead**, *The Intuitionist*
10. Nov 29     **Unidentified Narrative Objects**  
**De Lillo**, *Falling Man*  
**Bolaño**, *2666*, Book 5, The Part about Archimboldi
11. Dec 6      **Imagining Alternative Futures**

## REQUIREMENTS

1. Articulation and development of personal academic project
2. Articulation and development of relation between the personal academic project and this course.
3. Weekly reporting, mostly minor, two major
4. Final writing project – criticism or epic

## BOOKLIST

### MOST OR ALL:

Banks, Iain M., *Excession* (A Culture Novel) (Orbit, 1996). 185723-3948  
Bolano, Roberto, *2666* (Picador, 2009) 0312429218  
Delillo, Don, *Falling Man* (Scribner's 2007) 1416546023  
Egan, Jennifer, *A Visit from the Goon Squad* (Anchor, 2011) 0307477477  
Murakami, Harari, *The Wind-Up Bird Chronicle* (Vintage, 1998) 0679775430  
Robinson, Kim Stanley *Red Mars* (Spectra, 1993) 0553560732  
Sorokin, Vladimir, *Day of the Oprichnik* (FS&G, 2011) 0374134754  
Whitehead, Colin, *The Intuitionist* (Anchor, 2000), 0385493000

### PARTIAL:

Gauntlett, David, *Making is Connecting: The Social Meaning of Creativity, from DIY and Knitting to YouTube and Web 2.0* (Polity, 2011) 0745650029  
Laird, Frank N., *Solar Energy, Technology Policy, and Institutional Values* (2001: Cambridge UP, 2006) 0521034296  
Nussbaum, Martha, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach* (Harvard UP, 0674050549  
Schumpeter, Joseph, *Capitalism, Socialism, Democracy* (1947; Harper 2008) 0061561610  
Sennett, Richard, *The Craftsman* (Yale UP, 2009) 0300151190  
Vaughn, Diane, *The Challenger Launch Decision: Risky Technology, Culture, and Deviance at NASA* (Chicago, 1997) 0226851761