THE NUCLEAR AGE

Professor Deborah Nelson
413 Walker
Office Hours: Thursday 2:00-3:00 and by appointment

PURCHASE AT SEMINARY COOP
Richard Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*
Arkady Strugatsky, Boris Strugatsky, *Roadside Picnic*
Joe Masco, *Theater of Operations*

All other readings can be found on Canvas.

Week 1 – The what/how/why of the course An introduction
Reading: explore *The Atomic Bulletin* online
Three articles from a special issue in *Nature* on interdisciplinarity and collaboration

Week 2 – CP-1 and Big Science
Lecture: Robert Rosner, Professor Depts. of Astronomy and Astrophysics, Enrico Fermi Institute, Computation Institute, and the Harris School of Public Policy; Founding Co-Director of the Energy Policy Institute

Week 3 – The Legacy of the Atomic Scientists
Lecture: Kennette Bennedict, Senior Advisor and former Executive Director of the *Atomic Bulletin*, former Director of International Peace and Security at the MacArthur Foundation
Reading: finish Rhodes, *The Making of the Atomic Bomb*, pp. 357-442

Week 4 – The Racial Politics of Civil Defense
Lecture: Jessica Hurley, Harper Schmidt Assistant Professor, Society of Fellows
Reading: William Tenn’s “Generation of Noah” (1951); Langston Hughes “Radioactive Red Caps” (1961); “Hypothetical Hiroshimas” in David Monteyne’s *Fallout Shelter*

Week 5 – The Nuclear Imagination in the US: Unremitting Banality and Inconceivable Terror
Lecture, Deborah Nelson, Professor of English
Screen *Dr. Strangelove*, Screening TBA
Read: Susan Sontag, “Imagination of Disaster”; John Hersey, “Hiroshima”

Week 6 -- Nuclear Medicine: New Biomedical Horizons in the Nuclear Age
Lecture: Chin-Tu Chen, Associate Professor of Radiology, Committee on Medical Physics
Reading: Leon Jacobson, “From Atom to Eve,” in *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine*

Site Visits: Argonne National Laboratory, MSI, Fermi Lab, National Archives

Week 7 – Hiroshima, Fukushima, and In-Between
Lecture: Norma Field, Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus in Japanese Studies in East Asian Languages and Cultures
Screening of *Hibakusha at the End of the World* (2003) TBA

Week 8 – The Problem of Sovereignty and International Governance in the Atomic Age
Lecture: Jim Sparrow, Professor of History
Readings: Lilienthal-Atcheson “Report on the International Control of Atomic Energy” (March 1946), especially Part III (30-50) and Part IV (pp. 51-61); George Kennan Memorandum “International Control of Atomic Energy” (Jan. 1950), 22-44.

Week 9 – The Soviet Zone
Lecture: Robert Bird, Associate Professor of Slavic Languages and Culture and Cinema and Media Studies
Reading: Arkady Strugatsky, Boris Strugatsky, *Roadside Picnic*

Week 10: Nuclear Politics in the Twenty-First Century
Lecture: Joe Masco, Professor of Anthropology
Reading: Masco, *Theater of Operations*, Chapters 1-3

Sections: The structure of this course is a Tuesday lecture and a Thursday section. Obviously, both are mandatory. In section, you will work out how to bridge, synthesize, and otherwise work with the expert analysis in the lectures, the material and concepts covered by events in Nuclear Reactions, the findings from site visits, and the variety of documents, both secondary and primary for your reading/viewing. Sections are going to be “think tanks,” which rely on their own research as well as input from outside experts to address large, complex problems. Except for week one, readings should be completed before lecture to insure the best possible Q&A.

Site Visits: In week six, there will be a range of site visit possibilities. You must attend one. Details to follow in section.

Events: There are many, many events associated with the Nuclear Reactions program in commemoration of CP-1. You will choose three based on your interests and time schedule. Discuss with your section leader.
Assignments: 5 short essays (1-2 pages, 12-point type): One preliminary (ungraded), three event write-ups, one site visit write-up. These will be spread across the quarter. More details in section. (20%)

Midterm: Proposal for final paper (one to two paragraphs) with annotated bibliography of 4-5 sources (20%)

Final: A submission to the *Atomic Bulletin* from one of its categories. Approximately 5-6 pages. (30%)

Lectures: 10%
Sections: 20%