Science & Popular Culture

fall 2016 - hsci 2133

[This course uses a blended/hybrid format which meets in-class on Tuesdays. Students participate in interactive online modules in place of a second on-campus class meeting.]

Ideas about science and ideas from science appear in our everyday lives in ways we take for granted: in how science and scientists are portrayed in media culture, in the games we play, during Shark Week! and at school science fairs, and when we excavate past civilizations and look out at the night sky and imagine other worlds.

In this class we’ll look closely at what happens when science and popular culture meet across time through online research projects, discussions, reading and short essays. We’ll think about the call of the wild in a highly technological age (and about animals at home and in zoos), see the ways in which scientific knowledge circulates, consider how literary genres like science fiction and fantasy relate to science fact, and compare the introduction of the telegraph in the 19th century to the personal computer in the 1970s & 1980s.

The only prerequisite: curiosity and a willingness to explore.