Spring 2020 Course Description

Instructor: Apostolos Vasilakis  
Course: ENGL 318  
Title: Utopian Literature in the English Tradition

Description: Utopia, as a literary genre, has been with us since Thomas Moore’s *Utopia* was first published in 1516. Written as a travelogue, Moore’s *Utopia* reveals roots of the utopian: the impulse to look over the next rise, to imagine life is better in another valley, to wish for a future where things can be better. Though the 20th and 21st century have seen a proliferation of dystopian texts that seem to dismiss the notion of a better place as no fit place at all, even dystopian texts engage with this impulse in their own obverse way. In this course, the primary focus will be on utopian, dystopian novels, and theoretical readings. These readings will serve two functions: to provide the necessary cultural context to understand the stories and to equip the students with language and concepts to use when studying the utopian tradition.

Proposed Readings:

Moore, *Utopia*  
Cavendish, *The Blazing World*  
Zamyatin, We  
Orwell, *1984*  
Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward*  
Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Dispossessed*