



COLT 420

The Fantastic

Professor Michaele du Plessis

Mondays and Wednesdays

3:30 PM to 4:50 PM

In order to tell reality from fantasy we must already have some idea of what the fantastic is. How do we tell fantasy from reality? What makes “fantasy”? Is there such a thing as “the fantastic”? Can it be defined so as genre? If so, to what extent does fantasy overlap with other genres? This class will examine fantastic literature and films in their multiple forms: fairy tales, the Gothic, the uncanny, sword and sorcery, science fiction and the contemporary “weird tale.” We examine texts from both popular culture and “high culture” We will read two novels, Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, and Octavia Butler’s *Kindred*. Our other readings will consist of short by Julio Cortázar, Angela Carter, Hans Christian Andersen, H.P. Lovecraft, Oscar Wilde and Silvina Ocampo, among others. Our investigations into the fantastic will also include three films: Satoshi Kon’s *Paprika* (2006), Lucille Hadzihalilovic’s *Evolution* (2015) and Cathérine Breillat’s *The Sleeping Beauty* (2011).