



UTOPIAS AND DYSTOPIAS



UTOPIA

- ❖ Definition: a place, state, or condition that is ideally perfect in respect to politics, laws, customs, and conditions
- ❖ Term first used by Sir Thomas More for his 1516 book *Utopia* about a fictional island in the Atlantic Ocean
- ❖ Used to describe both planned communities that attempt to create an ideal society and fictional societies portrayed in literature



DYSTOPIA

- ❖ Opposite of utopia
- ❖ Definition: an imagined place or state, often presented as a utopia, where control over society is held by an oppressive force
- ❖ Dystopias in works of fiction are often used to make a criticism of a current trend, social norm, or political system



CHARACTERISTICS OF DYSTOPIAN SOCIETY

- ❖ Information, independent thought, and freedom are controlled by an oppressive force
- ❖ Propaganda is used by the oppressive force to control the citizens of the society
- ❖ A figurehead, concept, or idea is worshipped by the citizens of the society
- ❖ Citizens fear the world outside their society
- ❖ The natural world is banished and distrusted
- ❖ Citizens conform to their society's expectations
- ❖ Society is an illusion of a utopia

TYPES OF DYSTOPIAN CONTROL

- ❖ Corporate
- ❖ Governmental
- ❖ Technological
- ❖ Philosophical/Religious
- ❖ Post-Apocalyptic



THE DYSTOPIAN PROTAGONIST

- ❖ Feels trapped by oppressive dystopian force and struggles to escape
- ❖ Questions the status quo of society
- ❖ Believes that something is horribly wrong with society and typically believes that it is up to him/her to fix it
- ❖ Through the protagonist's perspective, the audience recognizes the negative aspects of the dystopian world



NOTABLE WORKS OF DYSTOPIAN LITERATURE

- ❖ *1984* - George Orwell
- ❖ *Fahrenheit 451* - Ray Bradbury
- ❖ *Brave New World* - Aldous Huxley
- ❖ *Anthem* - Ayn Rand
- ❖ *Lord of the Flies* - William Golding
- ❖ *The Giver* - Lois Lowry



EXAMPLES OF DYSTOPIAN FILMS

- ❖ *The Matrix = technological*
- ❖ *Minority Report = governmental*
- ❖ *V for Vendetta = governmental*
- ❖ *WALL-E = post-apocalyptic*
- ❖ *I, Robot = technological/corporate*
- ❖ *Equilibrium = governmental*
- ❖ *The Terminator = technological*
- ❖ *28 Days Later = post-apocalyptic*