

Book Report

due 12/2/14

Some of the best and, in some senses, most reasonable descriptions of extraterrestrials occur in science fiction novels. These can range from the 18 inch long creature in Mission of Gravity to the solar system size creature in The Black Cloud. Your assignment is to read one science fiction novel, which relates to this course. You will then turn in a report about the book (details below). Some suggested novels are given in the following list. However, you are free to choose novels not on the list; just get my approval before you start reading.

Approved novels:

In the Ocean of Night, Gregory Benford

Great Sky River, Gregory Benford

Iceborn, Gregory Benford and C. Carver

Mars, Ben Bova

Mission of Gravity, Hal Clement

Iceworld, Hal Clement

2010, Arthur Clarke

Rendezvous with Rama, Arthur Clarke

The Songs of the Distant Earth, Arthur Clarke

Neptune Crossing, J. Carver

A Thunder on Neptune, G. Eklund

Dragon's Egg, Robert Forward

The Listeners, James Gunn

The Black Cloud, Fred Hoyle

The Jupiter Theft, Don Moffitt

Ringworld, Larry Niven

Contact, Carl Sagan

The Ophiuchi Hotline, J. Varley

The Cassiopeia Affair, C. Zerwick and H. Brown

Length: 5 pages minimum

Format: Double spaced, 12 pt font, 1" margins on all sides

Other technical instructions: Print double-sided if your printer has that option. Please do NOT include a cover page or any sort of folder or folio. Just staple the pages in the upper, left-hand corner.

Instructions on substance of report:

- Provide a minimum 1 page story synopsis.
- Provide a minimum 1/2 page description of the principle alien life forms in your story. -
OR-
- Provide a minimum 1/2 page description of how the story relates to this course.
- Comment on the realism of the alien life forms and their living environment (minimum 1 paragraph). -**OR-**
- Comment on the realism of the scenario presented in the story (minimum 1 paragraph).
- If humans interact with the life forms in your story, how was first contact made? (minimum 1 paragraph) -**OR-**
- If human contact has not been made, but the book discusses some alien life form, speculate on how we might discover life forms like the ones in your book. (minimum 1 paragraph) -**OR-**
- If no specific alien life form is presented in your book, speculate on alternate ways humans might react to the scenario in your book. (minimum 1 paragraph)
- Science fiction authors often use the vehicle of alien beings to teach us lessons about ourselves. What lessons were there in your novel? Were any contemporary themes explored in the book? (minimum 1 page)