The *Sleeper* Stories: H. G. Wells and Dystopian Science Fiction
by Gareth Davies-Morris

• Project (book) timeline, Fall 2017
• Wells biography
• Definitions: SF, structuralism, dystopia
• “Days to Come” (models phys. opps.)
• “Dream of Arm.” (models int. opps.)
• *When the Sleeper Wakes*
• Intertextuality: *Sleeper* vs. Zemiatin’s *We*
• Chapter excerpt
Herbert George Wells (1866-1946)
The legendary Frank R. Paul rendered several H. G. Wells narratives as covers for Hugo Gernsback’s influential pulp magazine *Amazing Stories*, which reprinted many of Wells’s early SF works.

Clockwise from top: “The Crystal Egg” (1926), “In the Abyss” (1926), *The War of the Worlds* (1927), and *When the Sleeper Wakes* (1928)

Frank R. Paul, cover paintings for *Amazing Stories*, 1926-1928.
“Socialism & the Irrational”
-- Wells-Shaw Conference,
London School of Economics
Fall 2017
Keynote: Michael Cox

Sci-Fi artwork exhibit
at the Royal Albert Hall!
“Pray devoutly, hammer stoutly”
Gareth with Professor Patrick Parrinder of England’s U. of Reading
• Studied at the Normal School (now Imperial College London) with T.H. Huxley.
• Schoolteacher, minor journalist until publication of *The Time Machine* (1895).
• By 1910, known worldwide for his “scientific romances” and sociological forecasting.
• By the 1920s, syndicated journalist moving in the highest social circles in England and USA.
• Met Lenin, Stalin, and several US Presidents.
• *Outline of History* (1920) a massive best-seller.
• World State his philosophical goal; Sankey Declaration/UN Human Rights Charter (1948)
Key Wells SF works:
- The Time Machine (1895, first such voyage)
- The Island of Dr. Moreau (1896, vivisection, conditioning)
- The Invisible Man (1897, failed inventions!)
- The War of the Worlds (1899, alien invasion)
- When the Sleeper Wakes/
The Sleeper Awakes (1899/1912, visit to dystopic future)
- Anticipations (speculative essays, 1900)
- The First Men in the Moon (1901, alien homeworld)
- In the Days of the Comet (1905, ELLIE – not!)
- A Modern Utopia (1906, parallel earth)
- The War in the Air (1908, imagined WW I)
- The World Set Free (1912, imagined nuclear war)
- Men Like Gods (1920, parallel earth again)
- The Shape of Things to Come (1928, imagined WW II)
H. G. WELLS
WHEN THE SLEEPER WAKES

"The outstanding story of its class of all times."
-Hugo Gernsback

H. G. WELLS
COMMEMORATIVE EDITION
THE SLEEPER AWAKES
INTRODUCTION BY J. GREGORY KEYES
AFTERWORD BY GARETH DAVIES-MORRIS
Dystopia, a negative future to be avoided.

- Wells - *When The Sleeper Wakes*
- Zamyatin – *We*
- Huxley - *Brave New World*
- Orwell – *1984*
- Bradbury - *Fahrenheit 451*
- Levin – *This perfect Day*
- Atwood – *The Handmaid’s Tale*

Also elements of many SF novels, films, and TV.
We (1924)

- Response to Russian Revolution (1917)
- Benefactor = dictator
- Taylorism
- Green Wall
- *Lex Sexualis* as means of control/conformity

Yevgeny Ivanovich Zamyatin (1884-1937), by Boris Kustodiev (1923).
Aldous Leonard Huxley (1894-1963)

Brave New World – 1932  
(Revisited -1958)  
The Doors of Perception -1954  
Island - 1962

• Response to Wells (Sleeper & Moon), Zamyatin  
• Scientific dystopia: borrows / mocks aspects of both  
• Taylorism / Henry Ford  
• Population control, social conditioning & stratification, hypercapitalism, health then euthanasia  
• Wells connections to Huxley family
The Handmaid’s Tale (1990). This is the visually striking but under-appreciated film version of the Margaret Atwood novel (1986), directed by Volker Schlondorff, with script by playwright Harold Pinter, music by Ryuichi Sakamoto, and a great cast: Robert Duval, Faye Dunaway, Aiden Quinn, and the late, lovely Natasha Richardson.
When the Sleeper Wakes
(1899)

- Hypercapitalism
- Union boss = dictator
- Social stratification
- High technology
- Sexual liberality