

REC Seminars/Seminários REC 2024



From Poesis to Worldbuilding: *Paradise Lost* and the Poetics of Science Fiction

This talk is part of a book project called “Science Fiction and the Fall” in which I make a three-part argument—formal, historical, and thematic—for the influence of *Paradise Lost* on the development of 20th century science fiction. First, I explore worldbuilding as a formal and aesthetic technique, with a specific focus on how contemporary practices of worldbuilding do (or do not) align with early modern analogues. Following that, I explore the particular problems posed by Eden as a subject for representation in order to highlight the analogues between Genesis commentary and science fictional extrapolation. Finally, I turn to one aspect of world building in *Paradise Lost*—the representation of the Prohibition on the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil—and, in a brief conclusion, consider how this worldbuilding shapes the development of science fiction.

Lara Dodds is Professor at Mississippi State University. She is the author of *The Literary Invention of Margaret Cavendish* (Duquesne UP 2013) and several articles on John Milton, Margaret Cavendish, and early modern women’s writing. Her most recent work is *Early Modern Women’s Writing and the Future of Literary History*, co-authored with Michelle Dowd and forthcoming from Oxford University Press.

When: 04/06/2024 7:00 pm (US 5:00 pm)

Where: REC SEMINARS - Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83340498023?pwd=MEMlhPwwzSAT3gYzC56akPMUofFZW9.1>

Meeting ID: 833 4049 8023 / Passcode: 782797