

Assignments and Resources

Overview of the course

This is a tentative schedule. Especially homework of lecture topics can still change

Week	Idea development	Homework + idea development	Lecture discussion
1	2 February	3 February	5 February
		Course overview	Liberal Arts Teaching & Assessment. Realistic expectations
2	9 February	10 February	12 February
		"The Human predicament"	Trends that shape the future
3	16 February	17 February	19 February
		"How Big Oil conquered the world"	Systems that predict the Future
4	23 February	24 February	26 February
		Vaccines	Self-development discussion
5	3 March	3 March	5 March
	Idea phase 1 - Noon	The climate	How life shaped the biosphere
6	9 March	10 March	12 March
		Men and Women	Open-ended development of individuals
7	18 March	17 March	19 March
	Idea phase 2 - Midnight	Extremists and activists	Ontological security
8	23 March	24 March	26 March
		A progressive liberal arts college	Wrap-up
9	31 March	31 March	2 April
	Idea phase 3 - Midnight		Theory reflection assignment

Resources

Course links

- [Syllabus](#)
- [Shared directory](#) (Google Drive)

Videos

- [Shared directory](#)
- [Intro and preform analysis](#) (Video, 55 min)
- Preform responses (anonymized, spreadsheet)
- [Realistic expectations](#) (Video, 20 min)
- [Trends that shape the future](#) (Video, 45 min)
- [Systems that predict the future](#) (Video, 35 min)
- [Closing the system](#) (13 min) This is a very important topic because this is what technology does. But it is also what bureaucracy and dictatorship does. Closing the system is a way to make it more predictable and more controllable. But also less vibrant and lively. It characterizes many school systems, companies, the military, fundamentalistic religions and in fact everything governed by the coping mode.
- [Understanding & Life paths](#) (11 min) This theory video is about the life-paths that sometimes lead to dangerous and unviable situations and hopefully more often lead to unproblematic and high viability situations. This leads to conceptions of understanding that make as much sense for bacteria as for humans.
- [Complexity and human values](#) (4 min) This theory video is about the intimate relation between dealing with complexity and the structure of human values.
- [Different depictions of agency](#) (7 min). This theory video is about different graphics depictions of agency that become progressively simpler and abstract and eventually connect to core cognition and lead to clear measure of cognitive success.
- [Open ended identity development in adolescents and how that connects to information processing](#) (60 min). This video is about the many aspects of developing adolescents. Florence Denham interviews me.
- [Building & refining your worldview by integrating and rejecting narratives and information](#) (32 min). This video is very much about how I react to your homework.
- [Coping and co-creation: one attempt and one route to well-being](#) (48 minutes)

Papers

- [Coping and co-creation: one attempt and one route to well-being](#) (preprint, 12000 words)

Assignments and deadlines

Deadline	Code	Task
April 2nd, Midnight	SVL_Theory	<p>Please send only plain text! start the subject line with SVL-Theory. You can find the grading rubrics in the syllabus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write a 750-1250 word freeform text about what you have gained (or not) from the material: the homework, the ideas, the lectures, and the group discussions. Try to address a number of your connection/conclusions/insights/realizations and/or try to place these in the context of your individual development and/or in the context of the course. (In either way you put them in context). Try to make it into a pleasant and informative read. You will be judged on all these aspects. • Optional: In the last few years people have commented on the difference in the type of learning that occurs in SVL compared to most other courses. Can you comment on that. Is it desirable? And how should this type of learning be assessed? <p>Do not forget: start the subject line with SVL-Theory and send in as regular mail (not as attachment).</p>
March 13, Midnight	Post Test	Fill in the Post Test questionnaire
March 13, Midnight	SVL-Idea3	<p>Add your idea description to Notion (via email link)</p> <p>Only the stuff that you post to Notion will be used to evaluate the product. The material in the drive (Idea 1 and 2) are used to evaluate the process. You can find the grading rubrics in the syllabus</p>
Tuesday Noon, March 23rd	SVL-HW7	<p>Equity and inclusion =?= Oneness and sameness.</p> <p>I have tried to get you out of your comfort zones for weeks now. So it is fair, in some sense, that we close the homework sessions with something that brings me out of my comfort zone. Something I find fascinating and scary. It is a rough, never quite finished three part documentary on what happened at Evergreen College in 2017. It was a normal, progressive, and very peaceful college before these events.</p> <p>Here a group of students, a very small but very vocal minority that shared a specific ideological narrative (racism, patriarchy, and intersectionality explains all), completely took over the college. They were helped by the senior administrator. They behaved in a particular manner that eventually led to the exclusion of everyone who did not actively support them.</p> <p>You really need to listen on multiple levels concurrently and you might be able to apply concepts like peak stupidity, diffusions, foreclosures, coping, et cetera in a "real-world" context.</p>

		<p>Your task is simple to formulate and difficult to address: answer the question “What the hell is happening here?”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can find the three parts as the first three videos on the playlist of the “Grievance Study Affaire” (90 minutes total). • The fourth part of the playlist, is optional since it is a more than two hour (video) podcast that not all is relevant. Listening to the first part does help a lot to understand what you just saw in the three part doc. <p style="text-align: center;">You know the drill Use SVL-HW7 in the subject line.</p>
<p>Friday March 16, 1 pm</p>		<p>Watch the paper talk-trough (48 minutes) of the paper ... that I have been talking about.</p> <p>It starts with a rehash of the background that you already know and then applies it on the topics of Ontological Security and Psychological Safety.</p> <p>We will use this in class to think about how society might develop positively and negatively. And how you can contribute.</p>
<p>Wednesday. March 17, Midnight</p>	<p>SVL-Idea2</p>	<p>For round 2 of your idea development we go to a decent definition of your topic and a precise definition of your key terms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Start a new document with whatever you want to copy from Idea 1 • Indicate clearly what is new stuff. Do not let me have to figure what you added or changed in round 2. Precisely define the topic: it must be clear what is and what is not your idea • Identify and define the key-terms: precision, consistency, and completeness is now important. I will focus on this in the talk through. • Give meat to your topic: you do not have to work out everything in detail, but you have to indicate what the main content and message will be. <p style="text-align: center;">Changed text: Use the same directory as before, but indicate Idea-2 in some form and indicate what is new!</p> <p style="text-align: center;">You can sign-up for the talk-through here</p> <p>Note that you have to send in the final and complete version in two weeks (Wednesday 31st of March, Midnight).</p>
<p>March 16, Noon</p>	<p>SVL_HW6</p>	<p>This week’s homework consists of two amazing documentaries by Deeyah Khan, a “Western” Muslim.</p> <p>In “White Right: Meeting the Enemy” (56 min) she meets extreme right activists. In “JIHAD” (49 min) she meets Muslim extremists.</p> <p>Notice that those interviewed are incredibly honest and open. And the right wing extremists are weirdly welcoming the documentary maker who represents all (liberal, dark, Muslim) they oppose.</p>

		<p>Yes they do bad things, but are they bad people? What really drives them? (Perhaps what identity structure do they have?)</p> <p>Use SVL-HW6 in the subject line.</p>
March 12		<p>This week's lectures provide theory and a lot of additional information about identity development, information processing and even mental health.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open ended identity development in adolescents and how that connects to information processing (60 min). This video is about the many aspects of developing adolescents. Florence Denham interviews me. • Building & refining your worldview by integrating and rejecting narratives and information (32 min). This video is very much about how I react to your homework. Again Florence interviewed me.
March 9th, Noon	SVL-HW5	<p>This week's focus is on comfort zones and listening. The homework is a documentary, the Red Pill, and a Tedx-talk by its maker, Cassie Jaye. The documentary addresses men's right activists (MRAs).</p> <p>It is your task to use the table on page 3 of the Building & Refining text (perhaps read it first) about "Recognizing builders and refiners" to evaluate the behavior of a diversity of the participants in the movie. Explain why you conclude they act and speak as either builders or refiners?</p> <p>Your homework for this week (best done in this order) involves two videos. Take your time for it. Total video duration is 2 hours and 15 minutes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Watch the Red Pill (2 hours). Use the builder/refiner characteristics to evaluate a diversity of its participants including Cassie Jaye. The movie is on YouTube, but you have to pay 4.50€ for it. It was only very shortly on Netflix. Last year the students found all kinds of other ways to watch the movie. So I'm sure you can as well. 2. Watch the Tedx talk by Cassie Jaye (15 min) the maker of the Red Pill. <p>Combining the documentary and the Tedx-talk, what do you think is this week's homework is really about?</p> <p>Do not forget: only use plain or formatted mail text (no attachments) And use SVL-H5 in the subject line.</p>
March 5th		<p>Watch my 70 min lecture of last year "How life shaped the biosphere" https://youtu.be/u1hOnQv55YQ</p>
March 2nd, Noon	SVL-HW4	<p>Climate is the average of 30 year weather patterns</p> <p>Climate change: is any change in measurable aspects of the climate</p> <p>Global warming: a manifestation of climate change where the average temperature increases (and rain likely increases since warm air contains more moisture)</p> <p>Global cooling: a manifestation of climate change where the average temperature decreases (and rain likely decreases since warm air contains less moisture)</p>

Anthropogenic climate change: human caused climate change

Weather: a turbulent redistribution process of heat and water (evaporated or as droplets) locally manifested.

Ice-age: a prolonged period (100kys) of lower temperature on Earth leading to large parts of continental areas being covered by glaciers

Interglacial period; relative short (10kys) warmer period between ice-ages (we are currently in one)

This week's homework focused on the topic of climate change. It is also about entertaining thoughts that might be new and conflicting with your opinions of the climate.

These are mostly presentations that help you understand some of the science behind climate change and they bring it in an accessible way. I advise you to watch them in order.

- [The first video](#) (1 min) is a short informational video by NASA Goddard about research published in Nature in 2016.
- [2015 Annual GWPF Lecture](#) (42 min) - Patrick Moore - Should We Celebrate Carbon Dioxide?
- [World In Midst of Carbon Drought](#) (23 min) Interview with physicist Prof. William Happer, Princeton University. Probably a better alternative is to watch [this presentation called "How to Think About Climate Change"](#) (45 min) that does a good job of explaining the basics of climate science. The last 10 min question time is also useful. (This video is only a few days old and had less than 3600 views when I saw it by chance).
- [Namoi Seibt speech](#) at CPAC 2020 (3 min)
- a 2015 presentation by [Nobel Prize winning physicist Ivar Giaever](#) (32 min).
- And here an optional [list of climate predictions](#).

Your homework task for this week is to watch these videos and, at the same time, observe your emotional and rational response to them. Perhaps you notice how your information processing switches between protecting your existing beliefs and improving them. Try to address all videos.

Your task is simple, describe both your response to the information in these videos and your (emotional) attitude towards the information and the speakers. Try to be honest.

As a bonus question (for extra words): Why did or didn't you know about this perspective on climate change?

**Do not forget: only use plain or formatted mail text (no attachments)
And use SVL-HW4 in the subject line.**

<p>March 3rd Noon</p>	<p>SVL-Idea1</p>	<p>What do you have to produce for this phase?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Summary (drawing, infographic, mindmap, video message) ● Explanatory text (bulleted is fine): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ clear and complete description of across-domain idea ○ selections & (more or less) precise definitions of key terms ○ inventory of different relevant angles to the issue ○ motivation and (personal) relevance ○ “justification” of your across domain link ○ references ● Clear, but not perfect and enough to discuss <p>The talk-through, 20 min each, is postponed to Monday and Tuesday March 8 and 9. You can sign-up here.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">In the shared drive/Ideas session outcomes, please create a folder accessible to Marleen and Tjeerd in which you put a document with the name: First-name_Idea_1</p>
<p>February 25, 13.00</p>		<p>This week we have four shorter videos. On a number of different topics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Closing the system (13 min) This is a very important topic because this is what technology does. But it is also what bureaucracy and dictatorship does. Closing the system is a way to make it more predictable and more controllable. But also less vibrant and lively. It characterizes many school systems, companies, the military, fundamentalistic religions and in fact everything governed by the coping mode. ● Understanding & Life paths (11 min) This theory video is about the life-paths that sometimes lead to dangerous and unviable situations and hopefully more often lead to unproblematic and high viability situations. This leads to conceptions of understanding that make as much sense for bacteria as for humans. ● Complexity and human values (4 min) This theory video is about the intimate relation between dealing with complexity and the structure of human values. ● Different depictions of agency (7 min). This theory video is about different graphics depictions of agency that become progressively simpler and abstract and eventually connect to core cognition and lead to clear measure of cognitive success. ● The two modes of thought (12:36 min) Many know that we have two brain hemispheres. But what few realize is that the hemispheres are weakly coupled. And that entails that they cannot remain fully in tune even if they want to. This leads to two weakly coupled minds that, as it seems, provide complimentary outlooks on the world. This video lists many of the characteristic differences that all have to do with the properties of open and closed systems. <p>The task is class will be similar as in previous weeks and/or we will try a</p>

		discussion.
February 23, Noon	SVL-HW3	<p>This week one of the most controversial topics: vaccines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vaxxed – From Cover Up to Catastrophe (2016) (90 min, you might have to download before you can view it. This is) the controversial documentary associated with a website that hosts 125000+ stories of vaccine injuries. It is no longer available on YouTube (except via VPN in the US) or Amazon. <p>Wikipedia (2020) describes the documentary as follows:</p> <p>Vaxxed: From Cover-Up to Catastrophe is a 2016 American pseudoscience documentary film alleging a cover-up by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) of a purported link between the MMR vaccine and autism. According to Variety, the film "purports to investigate the claims of a senior scientist at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention who revealed that the CDC had allegedly manipulated and destroyed data on an important study about autism and the MMR vaccine"; critics derided Vaxxed as an anti-vaccine propaganda film.</p> <p>Secondly a presentation by Stephany Seneff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Stephanie Seneff on Vaccines, Toronto, March 27, 2018 (49 min). This is a science heavy presentation with references to lots of papers, about one reference per powerpoint page (that you can check). <p>You can go to her webpage at MIT for many presentations (pdf or powerpoint). Wikipedia (2020) describes her as follows:</p> <p>In 2011, she began publishing controversial papers in low-impact, open access journals on biology and medical topics; the articles have received "heated objections from experts in almost every field she's delved into," according to columnist Ari LeVaux.</p> <p>In 2011, Seneff began publishing articles on topics related to biology and medicine in low-impact, open access journals, such as Interdisciplinary Toxicology and eight papers in the journal Entropy between 2011 and 2015. According to food columnist Ari LeVaux, Seneff's work in this area has made her "a controversial figure in the scientific community" and she has received "heated objections from experts in most every field she's delved into". In 2013, she coauthored a paper that associated the herbicide glyphosate with a wide variety of diseases such as cancer and disorders such as autism. Discover magazine writer Keith Kloor criticized the uncritical republication of the study's results by other media outlets. Jerry Steiner, the executive vice president of sustainability at Monsanto, said in an interview regarding the study that "We are very confident in the long track record that</p>

		<p>glyphosate has. It has been very, very extensively studied." Seneff's claim that glyphosate is a major cause of autism and that, "At today's rates, by 2025, half the kids born will be diagnosed with autism," has also been criticized.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optional, if you do not yet have had enough: Introducing the new edition of the book Virus Mania, Dr. Sam Bailey (12 min, and a very thick New Zealand accent) <p>Your task is simple: listen well to what is said and make sense of this mess! Are the videos disinformation or are these genuine attempts to inform? And what is the role of Wikipedia here? Justify your choices. And perhaps address questions like "Who benefits from misinformation?" and "Who has the means to misinform you?"</p> <p>Use SVL-HW3 in the subject line.</p>
Friday 19, Noon		<p>Watch the video Systems that predict the future and come up with discussion topics. In class you will formulate, in break out groups, 2 questions for me pertaining to the video.</p>
Tuesday February 16, Noon	SVL-HW2	<p>Observations on the first homework:</p> <p>Disrespectful of other opinions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many are much better supported than your own • Often a complete ignorance of your own knowledge state • Lots of arrogance: "I know best, although I am just parroting others and have not validated my knowledge or gained relevant experience" • Authoritarianism: "Me and my in-group are correct, and everyone else has to adapt/comply" <p>Imprecise in representing the media content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lots of added bias: you heard what you expected, not what was said. • Bad listening <p>Sweeping generalizations entail a lack of nuance and precision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The true value of high quality thinkers is in the nuance and precision <p>Not referring to the material!</p> <p>Pretty dark outlook on the future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change, even destruction, lead to opportunities • Humans are the problem (are they?) • You (!) need/want leaders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experts should solve this mess (not me) • Realistic expectations? <p>A lot of in-group—out-group thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will be a central topic later in the course • You are a very special in-group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How? And how are you biased? • In-groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know very little about out-groups • Think out-groups represent their own worst properties

		<p>Optional: I appreciate it if you reflect a bit on my comments on the first homework. It helps me tune my response to the homework to you.</p> <p>The homework this week is just over 2 hours of media. Not easy for your generation with minimal attention spans :-)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch James Corbett's documentary How Big Oil Conquered the World. (70 min). The full text with copious links to sources are available on this page. This is a densely packed documentary with great visuals. • One of James' sources is Norman Dodd. In the 1950's he was interviewed (50 min) about his role in studying the charities – tax-exempt foundations – of Big Oil. He was interviewed in the early 1980s where he accounts of his direct interactions with the players in the documentary. This interview is slow, but a story well-told. More importantly, it contains a number of important informational gems. Perhaps best to listen to as a podcast. <p>It is your task this week to write something meaningful and well-founded on how the documentary and the interview change, or not, your worldview or understanding. Again about 300 words. I'll be alert for unsupported opinions, superficiality, bluff, word salads, and emptiness. Ensure you either build on the main message, or use their key ingredients in your text.</p> <p>Note that you need some “settle” time to produce something of sufficient depth, so do not start too late.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Do not forget: only use plain or formatted mail text And use SVL-HW2 in the subject line.</p>
<p>Friday February 12, 13.00</p>		<p>Watch and understand Trends that shape the future. Come up with discussion topics.</p> <p>In class you will formulate, in break out groups, 2 questions for me pertaining to the video.</p>
<p>Tuesday February 9, Noon</p>	<p>SVL-HW1</p>	<p>This week's homework set the stage for the course and at the same time it is also preparation for next week.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch: What was the message of Limits to Growth? (10 min) • Watch this interview with Naomi Seibt (9 min) • Watch the presentation by Nate Hagen "The Human Predicament" (55 min). You may want to watch this twice: it is dense with deep insights. <p>Your task for this week is to write something “profound” and argumentative about our future while referencing the three videos. So whatever you conclude or argue for (or against) must be based</p>

		<p>on decent arguments. I'll be alert for unsupported opinions, superficiality, bluff, word salads, and emptiness.</p> <p>Note that you need some "settle" time to produce something of sufficient depth, so do not start too late.</p> <p>Do not forget: only use plain or formatted mail text (no PDF, no Word) And use SVL-HW1 in the subject line.</p>
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