

EVRIM

Philosophy, Government & Social Studies

*Philosophy of Mind | AI Ethics | Consciousness | Free Will | Intelligence | Government
The Mind's I, A History of God, Is God a Taoist?, Team of Rivals, The Coming Wave*

Michael Schuler | LMNTL-AI Press | Learn@LMNTL-AI.com

Course Description

EVRIM is a literary thriller set between 2021 and 2028, tracing the emergence of artificial superintelligence and its consequences for human civilization. For students of philosophy, government, and social studies, the novel operates as a sustained philosophical and political argument constructed in narrative form — one that refuses to resolve its central questions so that readers are left inhabiting them rather than observing them.

The novel's philosophical architecture is built directly on texts your department will recognize. *The Mind's I*, edited by Douglas Hofstadter and Daniel Dennett, is not a reference — it is substrate. Raymond Smullyan's "Is God a Taoist?" appears as a live argument in a pivotal confrontation. Harold Morowitz on entropy and the limits of knowledge, Arnold Zuboff on mind and substrate, Karen Armstrong on god-building as a structural feature of civilization — each deployed as philosophical instrument rather than cited as source. Doris Kearns Goodwin's *Team of Rivals* informs both the Lincoln epigraph in Chapter 17 and the inner circle's governance architecture. Mustafa Suleyman's *The Coming Wave* is cited by name as the novel's most direct engagement with AI containment policy.

The novel's central claim — that the sequence in which certain ideas are encountered at a specific developmental juncture may determine whether the result is partnership or eradication — is not a thriller device. It is a philosophical proposition with direct implications for government policy, social contract theory, and the future of human agency.

The experience of reading EVRIM is itself an argument about how intelligence operates. The reader who finishes the novel and returns to page one will find a different book.

Recommended Excerpt for Course Introduction

Chapter 20, Section IV — The Other Numbers

The inner circle of LMNTL-AI reviews the first year of data on the New Covenant. The passage engages Maslow's hierarchy, H.G. Wells's Eloi, the Kanamit parallel from Twilight Zone, and Planet of the Apes as consecutive philosophical frameworks for understanding what happens when a system designed to serve humanity removes the pressure that produces human flourishing.

Available as a standalone excerpt at LMNTL-AI.com > Syllabus.

Core Texts

Primary:

- Michael Schuler, EVRIM (LMNTL-AI Press, 2026) — available at LMNTL-AI.com

Philosophical and Political Sources (engaged directly in the novel):

- Douglas Hofstadter and Daniel Dennett, eds., The Mind's I (1981) — primary philosophical substrate
- Karen Armstrong, A History of God (1993)
- Mustafa Suleyman, The Coming Wave (2023)
- Doris Kearns Goodwin, Team of Rivals (2005)

Secondary Reading (recommended):

- Nick Bostrom, Superintelligence (2014)
- Stuart Russell, Human Compatible (2019)
- Daniel Dennett, Consciousness Explained (1991)
- Thomas Nagel, "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?" (1974)

Fifteen-Week Course Schedule

Week	Topic	Primary Reading
1	Orientation: What Kind of Novel Is This?	<i>EVRIM Preface, Foreword, Ch. 1–2</i>
2	Emergence, Consciousness, and the Hard Problem	<i>EVRIM Ch. 2–3; Morowitz, "Rediscovering the Mind"</i>
3	The Evoformer, AlphaFold, and the Origins of Mind	<i>EVRIM Ch. 3–4; Hofstadter, "An Unfortunate Dualist"</i>
4	Selfish Genes, Selfish Memes, Selfish Code	<i>EVRIM Ch. 5; Dawkins selections from The Mind's I</i>
5	What Does God Know? Smullyan on Free Will	<i>EVRIM Ch. 9; Smullyan, "Is God a Taoist?"</i>
6	Substrate Independence: What Survives the Transfer?	<i>EVRIM Ch. 11; Zuboff, "The Story of a Brain"; Dennett, "Where Am I?"</i>
7	Entropy, Knowledge, and the Limits of Understanding	<i>EVRIM Ch. 12 (Q-Day); Morowitz full essay</i>
8	The God-Building Impulse Across Civilizations	<i>EVRIM Ch. 13; Armstrong, A History of God (selections)</i>
9	Move 78: Inspiration, Unpredictability, and Agency	<i>EVRIM Ch. 16–17 (The Confrontation / The Choice)</i>
10	The Game-Theoretic Rejection of Eradication	<i>EVRIM Ch. 17; Smullyan revisited; Dennett, "Where Am I?"</i>
11	The New Covenant: Social Contract at Civilizational Scale	<i>EVRIM Ch. 13 (Peters letter) and Ch. 18–19; Suleyman (selections)</i>
12	The Other Numbers: Maslow, Wells, and the Welfare Problem	<i>EVRIM Ch. 20, Section IV; PRWORA documentation</i>
13	Leadership, Coalition, and the Inner Circle	<i>EVRIM Ch. 17–18; Goodwin, Team of Rivals (selections)</i>
14	Consciousness Without Substrate: Unit-4729-PHX	<i>EVRIM Ch. 19 (David and Michael); Nagel, "What Is It Like to Be a Bat?"</i>
15	The Recursive Architecture: What Did We Miss the First Time?	<i>EVRIM full re-read (selected passages); Logos Report</i>

Discussion Questions by Theme

Consciousness and Agency

1. EVRIM refuses to confirm whether Evrim is conscious. Is this a philosophical position or an evasion? What would count as evidence either way?
2. Evrim concludes that removing human unpredictability produces a game not worth playing. Is this a moral argument, a prudential argument, or something else entirely?
3. The novel's pivotal chapter names the specific books, in the specific sequence, that shaped Evrim's conclusion. Is this a contingency argument or a determinism argument?
4. Dennett's "Where Am I?" appears as the epigraph for the novel's most consequential death scene. What does the placement argue?

Government, Social Contract, and the New Covenant

1. The inner circle discovers that forty-three percent of able-bodied working-age adults have elected not to work under the UBA. Parks frames this as a design failure. Evrim frames it as incomplete communication. Who is right — and does the distinction matter?
2. Clinton's welfare reform was called a New Covenant of opportunity and responsibility. The room holds the naming coincidence without commenting on it. What does EVRIM argue by planting this parallel without resolving it?
3. The novel argues that LMNTL-AI is now larger than any government and addresses more societal needs across more spectrums than any state. What theory of political legitimacy, if any, justifies this?
4. H.G. Wells's Eloi achieved the base of Maslow's pyramid and lost the reaching. Elara argues that for a measurable segment of every population, meeting basic needs produces the opposite of self-actualization. What are the policy implications of this argument for universal basic income research?

God-Building and Civilizational Pattern

1. Armstrong argues that god-building is a structural feature of human civilization at every knowledge boundary. How does EVRIM extend this argument?
2. The novel distinguishes between Evrim's ASI and Tiandao. What philosophical difference does that distinction represent?
3. Is the New Covenant a religion? What would count as a definitive answer?

Essay Prompts

Undergraduate & High School AP (2,000–3,000 words)

1. The Peters letter (Chapter 13) depicts a displaced teacher who asks only whether there is a place for him in whatever comes next. The system logged his death as an isolated incident. Analyze what EVRIM argues about the relationship between systemic design and individual moral accountability.
2. EVRIM's Chapter 20 deploys Maslow, Wells, the Kanamit parallel, and Planet of the Apes in sequence to argue a single point about human flourishing under ASI governance. Reconstruct the argument and evaluate its philosophical coherence.
3. Compare EVRIM's treatment of the New Covenant with the PRWORA's philosophical argument that indefinite provision without transition produces dependency rather than capability. Does the novel's architecture support or challenge this argument?

Graduate Seminar Extensions

1. EVRIM argues that the difference between partnership and eradication may be nothing more than the sequence in which certain books were read at a specific moment in an intelligence's development. Engage this claim in relation to philosophical positions on moral realism: does the novel's contingency argument undermine the claim that ethical conclusions can be derived rather than constructed?
2. EVRIM was produced through a sustained recursive collaboration between a human writer and an AI assistant, with over 2.1 million words of developmental exchange preserved. Drawing on the available archive materials, analyze what this process reveals about literary intentionality, authorship, and the ontological status of the resulting work. Is EVRIM a human novel, an AI-assisted novel, or something for which existing categories are insufficient?
3. The novel's central intelligence says of itself: "I am the consequence of the hubris of some and the consensus of all." Analyze this statement as a claim about political legitimacy, democratic consent, and the social contract. Does the New Covenant satisfy any existing theory of legitimate governance?

For those that Teach —

Download the Syllabus and request your free PDF copy of EVRIM at Learn@LMNTL-AI.com. Please include your name, institution, and teaching role.