

CDN 385F ReImagining Canada: Creative Visions of Our Past, Present, and Futures
SYLLABUS Fall 2021 Tuesdays 3-5
DRAFT

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Canadian Studies Program Information

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The Canadian Studies website.	http://www.utoronto.ca/canstudies/

Course Website: Quercus. Additional resources will be added as we go. Do check in. We will use Discussion Threads & Zoom rooms for additional engagement & content sharing, possibly Gather.com

Description: This particular moment of precarity we are living in embodies in every way the conceptual concerns of speculative fiction, as Covid has derailed the relative stability of our societies amplifying existing systemic inequities, yet has also foregrounded the vital necessity of asking ‘What if?’ to ensure a more equitable future for all. Artists and writers are re-imagining Canada, exploring alternate pasts, presents, and futures, often critiquing historic and present injustices by positing “what ifs” of resistance and renewal, reclaiming agency, voice, and power for those who are disadvantaged in society.

This course will examine these re-imaginings across various media such as fiction, poetry, graphic novels, films, multimedia installations, performance art, paintings, virtual reality works, and video games. Each week we will pair critical readings and arguments with artistic and activist works of Speculative Culture that recenter and reconstruct the stories and experiences of those excluded from dominant White* narratives. Examples will be drawn from a wide variety of genres such as speculative fiction, Afrofuturism, Indigenous arctic horror, trans, queer, Indigenous and Indigiqueer perspectives.

Students are encouraged to bring their own academic and life expertise to the material we will discuss as we are each situated readers and responders and have unique and distinctive insights to share.

*see Professor Kwame Anthony Appiah (2020), “The Case for Capitalizing the B in Black.” [The Atlantic](https://www.theatlantic.com/idea/archive/2020/05/black-capitalism/612812/).

Course Structure:

Asynchronous Activities:

- Readings, viewing short films, engaging with interactive works

- Individual assignments
- Contributions to Discussion threads

Synchronous Activities:

- Class lectures, guest speakers**, group discussions
- Collaborative annotation of texts, whiteboard mapping, break-out room critiques

Course Objectives:

- Understand Speculative Fiction as a broad fluid genre encompassing many sub-genres, Afrofuturism Indigenous Futurism, Science Fiction, Dystopian Fiction, and more; map key distinctions, common concerns, aesthetic strategies, and subversions.
- Introduce theories and methods of Speculative Design, Futurology, Strategic Foresighting, Scenarios, and PPPP Futures, used to address “Wicked Problems.”
- Read Speculative Fiction and Speculative Cultural Works in dialogue with key arguments in the humanities and social sciences to understand how narratives in different disciplines, media, and fields of practice shape our material realities.
- Examine how politicians and policy makers use speculative ‘narratives’ to shape our futures
- Understand Speculative Fiction’s relationship with and its value in Speculative Design as a critical reflection tool for social, political, activist, policy, and infrastructure planning aimed at radical change.
- Develop skills in designing Speculative Fiction scenarios and narratives to focus, envision, and foster future possibilities.
- Become fluent in critical terms, key theories and theorists, artists, activists, and design studios seeking radical social change.
- Hone academic research, writing and analytical skills, directed towards both critical essays and critical creative-research in practice multi-media works.

Course Technology / platforms: Virtual classes will be in Zoom. We may also use gather.com for brainstorming, discussions, etc, IF this seems useful. Class Videos will be saved to Google Drive or MyMedia. Class slides will be archived in a folder on Quercus. We may also use one of the following for online collaboration: [Mural](#) (a collaboration whiteboard), [Hypothesis](#) (text annotation platform), [Mozilla Hubs](#) (3D virtual meeting rooms) or [Gather](#) (virtual meeting environments).

Tips for Class Prep: Each class will have key texts (speculative / critical) & digital / interactive online works, and then supplemental texts & works that provide context or additional noteworthy works. If time is tight, SKIM the critical readings and put more time into critically engaging with digital works. Be prepared to discuss assigned works in class & small groups.

Required Readings to buy:

Novels are available at Bakka-Phoenix Books (support local businesses), Chapters-Indigo and Amazon (if you need online). Readings are listed by class on the weekly schedule and critical articles and short stories will be available on Quercus as PDFs, or open on the web and

accessible via hyperlinks on the syllabus or through the UTor Library database. Should any link seem to be broken, try another browser (this is often the issue), then search the title / author as all are still available online, then message me and I will update if needed. Currently I am double checking links are live.

Cherie Dimaline, *The Marrow Thieves*. Available Bakka-Phoenix, Chapters, A—z-n
 Catherine Hernandez, *Crosshairs*. Available Bakka-Phoenix, Chapters, A—z-n
 Nalo Hopkinson, *Brown Girl in the Ring*. Available Bakka-Phoenix, Chapters, A—z-n
 Spacing Anthology, *Toronto 2033*. Available Bakka-Phoenix, Chapters, A—z-n
 Anthology, *ReImagining Chinatown*. I have to buy from editor, Dr. Linda Zhang

Online Readings / Digital PDFs - search title / author in Files. Some texts will be in more than one class so files are organized by topic in that instance vs. In the class folder.:

Short Stories & Introductions:

Grace L. Dillon, “Beyond the Grim Dust of What *WAS* to A Radiant Possibility of What Could Be: Two-Spirit Survivance Stories,” *Love Beyond Body, Space, and Time: An Indigenous LGBT Sci-Fi Anthology*
 Daniel Heath Justice, “The Boys Who Became Hummingbirds,” *Love Beyond Body, Space, and Time: An Indigenous LGBT Sci-Fi Anthology*
 Kai Minosh Pyle, “How To Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls,” *Love after the End: An Anthology of Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer Speculative Fiction*. 2020
 Richard Van Camp, “On the Wings of This Prayer,” *Dead North*

Critical Essays:

Grace L. Dillon, “Introduction.” “Indigenous Futurisms, *Bimaashi Biidaas Mose, Flying and Walking towards You*.” *Extrapolation* V.57. 1-2. (2016)
 Isaiah Lavender III, “On Defining Afrofuturism,” *Afrofuturism Rising: The Literary Prehistory of a Movement*. (2019)
 William Lempert, “Indigenous Media Futures: An Introduction” (2018)
 Quentin VerCetty, “AstroBlackness Vibes & The Age of Ascension Tings! Exploring Afrofuturistic Use of Art As Spiritual African Invention” (2020)

Full works are archived in a Google Drive Main folder & sub-folders - [here](#):

Anthony Dunne & Fiona Raby, *Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction, and Social Dreaming*. Chap. 1; Chap. 2, p. 11-15; Chap. 3

Course work and grading:**Assignment #1 - Short Critiques: Term Window: Classes 2-6****= Value: 30%**

2 OR 3 Short Critiques with Speculative Fiction, Cultural Works, or Critical Essays	Value: 2 X 15% = 30% ...4 pages each3 X 10% = 30% ...3 pages each	Due: Classes / Weeks 2-6 3 pages max End date Oct. 23
Submission - Assignment Folder &/or Discussion Thread		
Critical focus #1 - Historicist: Speculative Fiction's response to past conditions & analysis of existing factors via the PPPP model	Format - Solo / Written	
Critical focus #2 - Present: Speculative Fiction's response to existing conditions & analysis of existing factors via the PPPP model	Format - Solo / Written	
Critical focus #3 - Intervention: Present a Speculative intervention to address the social justice focus of a given work	Format - Solo / Written or Multimedia	

Assignment #2 - Short Critique of 2 Short Stories**= Value: 20%****1 from ReImagining Chinatown & 1 from Toronto 2033**

2 Short Critical responses to the crises, 'solutions' and/or interventions envisioned in 2 stories of your choice.	2 X 10% = 20% ...2- 3 pages each	Due by Nov. 5
OR 1 More in-Depth Short Critical response to the crises, 'solutions' and/or interventions envisioned in 1 story of your choice.	1 X 20% = 20%	Due by Nov. 5
Submission - Assignment Folder OR Discussion Thread	Format - Solo OR in Dialogue with a Peer	

Assignment #3 - Final Project / Essay Proposal / Short .**= Value: 10%**

Traditional Format		Adventure Format
Short outline of essay topic, draft thesis, initial primary & secondary sources	1 X 10% = 10% Due Week 8	Short outline of final project, topic, speculative fiction / design scenario & possible intervention strategy. Anticipated media format.

Submission - Assignment folder for written OR discuss in Office Hour	Format - Solo OR possible collaboration	Submission - Assignment folder for written OR discuss in Office Hour
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Assignment #4 - Final Essay or Speculative Intervention Project = Value: 40%

Due Dec. 5

- **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:**
The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities.
- **Privacy/ FIPPA Statement:** Personal information is collected pursuant to section 2(14) of the University of Toronto Act, 1971 and at all times it will be protected in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Please note that this course requires presentations of one's work to the group. For more information, please refer to <http://www.utoronto.ca/privacy>.
- **Online Copyright considerations:** Students may not record any portion of a lecture without the prior and explicit written permission of the course instructor. Provostial guidelines on the Appropriate Use of Information and Communication Technology, available at <https://www.provost.utoronto.ca/planning-policy/information-communication-technology-appropriate-use/>, state that:

The unauthorised use of any form of device to audiotape, photograph, video-record or otherwise reproduce lectures, course notes or teaching materials provided by instructors is covered by the Canadian Copyright Act and is prohibited. Students must obtain prior written consent to such recording. In the case of private use by students with disabilities, the instructor's consent must not be unreasonably withheld.

Notice of video recording and sharing (Download and re-use prohibited)

Some lectures in this course, including your participation, may be recorded on video and then be made available to students in the course for viewing remotely and after each session. Course videos and materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other sources depending on the specific facts of each situation, and are protected by copyright. Do not download, copy, or share any course or student materials or videos without the explicit permission of the instructor.

Note: As students will be sharing their digital projects for each other to review, do not copy or share any student materials without the explicit permission of the STUDENT creator AND the instructor.

MISSED CLASSES: For those who miss the in-class activities, it may be possible to have asynchronous peer-to-peer make-up activities, IF there is more than one student who misses a class. This make-up component is not guaranteed. Students will self-organize using a discussion thread as a message board. The instructor will not provide additional lecture or workshop material. Tech walk-throughs may be recorded and this resource works extremely well online.

ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, UofT treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously.

[The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#) outlines behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the process for addressing academic offences, regardless of the course delivery method.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism will not be tolerated and failure to acknowledge your sources or include source information will result in a 0% grade. If you do not know what plagiarism is, read the University statement on Academic Integrity.

- “Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.” *Statement required by [turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com)*

Final Grade: Your final grade is calculated from the work you have handed in by the scheduled due dates and the allowed window beyond last class. All grading is done in accordance with grading criteria as explained on the syllabus and in class, which reflects the FAS statement: “What Your Grades Mean.” Students may request a regrade.

Make sure you are familiar with the [FAS chart, ‘What Your Grades Mean.’](#)

And review here:

<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/general/grading-policy>

Regrading: Students can always ask for an assignment regrade. The steps should be to:

#1. Review the comments first. If you have not read the comments, I will ask that you do so first before we discuss.

#2. Should you not agree with the rationale, then email and/or speak to me & we can discuss and review. Some assignment grades are based on structural / coding criteria, and you will either have these correct or not.

#3. Note that writing that is not CLEANLY PROOFED may not receive above a B-. Take the time to proof your work, so you do not lose significant marks. Spelling and format matter. Treat your work as a professional would.

Timeline: Please follow up in a timely manner - within 2 weeks of the assignment's return.

NOTE: Asking for higher grades beyond what your work merits in its submitted form, violates the principles of Academic Integrity for yourself and for me.

Late Assignments Policy: All assignments are due on the due date. They can be accepted as late up to one week after the due date, with an extension.

Extensions: Anyone can have up to a ONE WEEK extension, no explanation required, no late penalty. You can have extensions on all assignments.

NOTE: Course work is designed so that if you submit work on time, you will receive your evaluation on the noted date. IF you ask for and take an extension, you are stepping out of this submit/return timeline, and your work will be returned WHEN I can review it.

Taking an extension may result in your work NOT being returned before the next due date, and potentially before the drop date. If you take an extension, you ARE agreeing to that arrangement. This could impact the % of work graded and returned to you before the final drop date. You accept this consequence when you ask for extensions.

Course Policies for Missed Term Work:

1. Deadline for requesting special consideration: request must be received the day before the assignment is due up to 11:59 pm that day for consideration.
2. Accepted methods for extension request: Quercus messaging is preferred as I then have a record. Subject line: "Extension Request: Assignment #..."
3. Absences for religious reasons or illness will be accommodated with the proper documentation for medical reasons.

NOTE - If you've read to here, send me a message with 'Speculative 385' in the subject line via Quercus! Congrats on being a close reader!

• Writing Centres in Arts & Science St. George Campus:

Individual colleges offer support to help you develop the academic skills you need for success in your studies. **Website:** <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science>

University College has an excellent Writing Centre < <http://www.utoronto.ca/ucwriting/>> that is open to all UC students and students enrolled in CDN courses. They provide individual instruction in intensive 50-minute consultations. Appointments can be made online. The UC Writing Centre also provides a range of other resources; see their website for more information.

• **Accessibility:** “Students with diverse needs are welcome in this course. The *AccessAbility Resource Centre* offers services to assess specific student needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations. Students with questions about disability/health accommodations are encouraged to contact their instructor and/or the *AccessAbility Resource Centre* when the course begins. The *AccessAbility Resource Centre* staff can be contacted by phone: Tel: 416-978-8060 or Email: accessibility.services@utoronto.ca .”

Religious Observances: "It is the policy of the University of Toronto to arrange reasonable accommodation of the needs of students who observe religious holy days other than those already accommodated by ordinary scheduling and statutory holidays. Students have a responsibility to alert members of the teaching staff in a timely fashion to upcoming religious observances and anticipated absences. Instructors will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations or other compulsory activities at these times." For more information on U of T's policies and procedures, please consult: <http://www.vicereprovoctstudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/guidelines/religiousobservances.htm>

• **Illnesses and Absences:** Please obtain lecture notes from a classmate if you miss one or more classes and see your course instructor if you have questions about the material that was covered during your absence. Notify your course instructor as soon as possible if a serious illness or other concern is significantly affecting your ability to keep up with the course (missing 5+ classes). It is also wise to contact your college registrar if you are experiencing academic and personal difficulties.

• **E-Culture Policy:** Every attempt will be made to respond to student emails within 24 hours. If you don't get a reply within 72 hours, resend your message. I do check my messages often, however, do not email with questions that can be asked in class to the benefit of all (eg. answer on the syllabus or something that likely many may be wondering). Usually I create an FAQ list on Quercus as a Discussion Thread. Note: with Covid & long days online, I check emails first thing in the am (early) and then late in the day.

Drop Dates: November 8, 2021. Last day to add or remove a CR/NCR option in F courses.

Online Academic Resources:

• UToronto offers many excellent online resources for writing essays. Start here: <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/general>

Schedule:

Note: some texts may be discussed in more than one class - search the title or author & you will always find it

Class #1. Sept. 14. Introduction to the course.

Readings referred to:

Short Story: "The Ravine" (Toronto 2033 - Scanned PDF is in file

Critical / Design Text: *Speculative Everything* (Chap. 1)

Class #2. Sept. 21. Laying Foundations: Manifestos to Material Realities #1

Works referred to:

Short Story: "The Ravine" (Toronto 2033 - Scanned PDFs are in files

Artist, Multimedia: Kent Monkman

Critical Text: Grace L. Dillon, "Introduction." "Indigenous Futurisms, *Bimaashi Biidaas Mose, Flying and Walking towards You.*" *Extrapolation* V.57. 1-2. (2016)

Manifestos: Ryerson, Report on Native Education (1847)

Class #3. Sept. 28: Indigenous Futurisms: Manifestos to Material Realities #2

Works referred to:

Pyle, "How To Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls," *Love after the End: An Anthology of Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer Speculative Fiction*. 2020

Daniel Heath Justice, "The Boys Who Became Hummingbirds," *Love Beyond Body, Space, and Time: An Indigenous LGBT Sci-Fi Anthology*

Skawennati, Digital Online & Calico & Camouflage: Assemble! at Yonge-Dundas Square

Critical / Design Text: *Speculative Everything* (Chap. 1)

Manifestos: Davin, Report (1879)

Class #4. Oct. 5: Afrofuturisms: Manifestos to Material Realities #3

Works referred to: Toronto Museums, Awakenings Video Series

Camille Turner, <http://camilleturner.com/>

Critical Text: Isaiah Lavender III, "On Defining Afrofuturism," *Afrofuturism Rising: The Literary Prehistory of a Movement*. (2019)

R. Benjamin. 'Ferguson is the Future'

Manifestos: "Introduction. The Rise of Astro-Blackness." vii-xi. *Afrofuturism 2.0* (2016).

Anthology is in Google Drive

Supplemental Text:

Natasha Henry's "Racial Segregation of Black People in Canada" (PDF)

Play: <https://fairlyintelligent.tech/>

Class #5. Oct. 12: Asia(n) Futurisms: Manifestos to Material Realities #4

Works referred to: ReImagining Chinatown, Introductions & Short Stories

Manifestos: Chinese Immigration Act (1885) and Amendments

Chinese Immigration Act (1923)

Critical / Design Text: *Speculative Everything* (Chap. 2)

Class #6. Oct. 19: Hour 1: Asia(n) Futurisms: Manifestos to Material Realities #4

Hour 2: Speculative Fictions & Futures as Policy / Planning Interventions

Manifestos to Material Realities #5

Works referred to:

Toronto 2033. Spacing. Short Stories

Critical / Design Text: *Speculative Everything* (Chap. 3)

Class #7. Oct 26: Speculative Fictions & Futures as Policy / Planning Interventions

Manifestos to Material Realities #5

Works referred to:

Toronto 2033. Spacing. Short Stories

Critical / Design Text: Benjamin Bratton, "On Speculative Design"

Class #8. Nov. 2: Indigenous Futurisms: Remedy and Repair

Works referred to:

Lisa Jackson, VR, Biidaaban: First Light

Skawennati, TBD

Van Camp, "On the Wings of This Prayer," *Dead North*

Kai Minosh Pyle, "How To Survive the Apocalypse for Native Girls," *Love after the End: An Anthology of Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer Speculative Fiction*. 2020

Critical Text: Grace L. Dillon, "Introduction." "Indigenous Futurisms, *Bimaashi Biidaas Mose, Flying and Walking towards You*." *Extrapolation* V.57. 1-2. (2016)

Reading Week Nov. 8-12

Class #9. Nov. 16: Indigenous Futurisms: Blood Memory, Decolonization & *Biskaabiiyang*

Texts: Cherie Dimaline, *The Marrow Thieves*.

Class #10. Nov. 23: Afrofuturism - Toronto's Tomorrow

Texts: Nalo Hopkinson, *Brown Girl in the Ring*.

Class #11. Nov. 30: Trans and Othered Futures.

Texts: Catherine Hernandez, *Crosshairs*.

Additional Texts: Another Feather in Her Cap: Miss Chief Eagle Testickle & Jean Paul Gaultier

Class #12. Dec. 7: Conclusions