Love and Death in the Anthropocene: Sci-Fi for Speculative Design
Shared Futures and The Dreaming Collective—A Futures Research
Composition Course

Culture, Art and Technology 3 Spring 2017, UC San Diego
T/TH 11:00AM-12:20PM
Center Hall 214

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Office Hours: PCYNH 248 (TBD)

Teaching Assistants:
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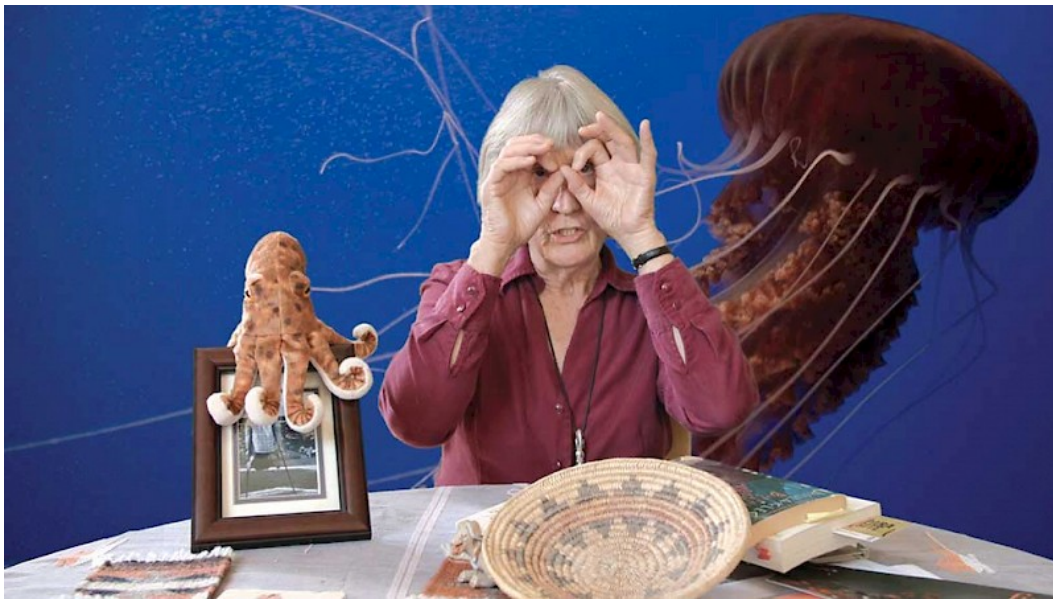
Film Still, Donna Haraway: Storytelling for Earthly Survival by Fabrizio Terranova

'A good science fiction story should be able to predict not the automobile but the traffic jam.' — Frederik Pohl

In this art research course we will draw inspiration from films, stories and current events to design fictional projects that will re-imagine the future of self, place and the dreaming collective.

We will search for hope and possibility in the Anthropocene, the period during which human activity has been the dominant influence on climate and the environment. We will draw from sci-fi to prototype speculative design projects that think critically about the future and simultaneously shape our world to come. The future is now!

Drawing from the world of start-ups, incubators and think tanks we will begin a quarter long experiment in design thinking that will combine the disciplines of science, engineering, art, design and technology in order to focus on UCSD's grand research theme: *Understanding and Protecting the Planet*. We will use Birch Aquarium at Scripps Institute of Oceanography as a research partner and resource.

We will build worlds and generate possible shared near future scenarios, systems, experiences, provocations and extrapolations. We will use techniques of defamiliarization, uncertainty scenarios, ethnography, psychogeography and humor to stimulate conversations around both seductive and repulsive futures-and all that in between. You will be introduced to the composition languages of design fiction, prototyping, and video-making as a way of writing and putting forth research questions. You will participate in the creative process of visual composition through creating speculative design projects, videos, and sketches that will form the basis for your own research questions and writing. Play is an important component in this course as is the flexibility and willingness to try out new platforms and to work inter-disciplinarily in-between science, art and design where creativity and collaborative innovation will be our driving force.

*No prior design, video, engineering, science, coding or art-making experience required; an open mind is encouraged.

Learning outcomes:
1. Introduction to Art Practice as Research, Collaborative Research and Methods
2. Develop skills for analyzing film, media and videos as well as learning other aspects of media production: the pitch, storyboarding, scripting, and editing.
3. Use world building and prototyping to build future scenarios, stories and design fictions to think critically about the present.
4. Create and understand the field of design fiction and critical design.
5. Screen, pitch, and present work in public forum.
6. Use design thinking to empathize, ideate, prototype

(L01: Technical, L02: Critical, L03: Rhetorical, L04: Research Practice)

The instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus during the course of the quarter. Any changes made will be posted to an updated syllabus on the TED website.

Course Readings: All course readings; listening materials and videos will be posted on our class web site **(http://ted.ucsd.edu)** as indicated in the schedule of readings. Complete readings **before** the class for which they are assigned.

Proxy Server: Please note: Some articles and videos linked via TED and reserves websites may only be accessed through UCSD IP addresses. To access the reserves materials **off campus** you must use UCSD's "proxy server." Alternatively, you may login from off-campus using the Virtual Private Network.

Materials Needed:

✓ Tumblr: Read, post, participate in our course tumblr: https://streamingcollective.tumblr.com/
✓ Register with the Media Lab (in Communication Building) to use video and/or sound recording equipment. Register Here: https://sdacs.ucsd.edu/secure-ad/mediaregister.php

Apps & Accounts:
✓ Required: Portfolium Account (Private Mode OK)

- ✓ [Instructables](#) account
- ✓ Google Drive or Dropbox Account
- ✓ Evernote
- ✓ RefMe
- ✓ Vimeo or YouTube Account (you can make private if you desire)
- ✓ Access to Photo Editing software — [Gimp](#) is free
- ✓ Adobe Premiere (Available as Trial Version), Windows Movie Maker, or iMovie
- ✓ Drawing or Sketch Apps, SketchUp, SketchFab or Equivalent
- ✓ Screen Capture app (available for free online)
- ✓ 'Faking' is acceptable, probably even necessary with new-to-you forms of digital media. The goal is to explore the possibilities of various digital mediums without any fear!

Skills/Workshops and Trainings:
- ❖ Spring Workshops at the Media Lab [Schedule](#)
- ❖ Skills Workshops led by Professor in Digital Classroom (TBD)
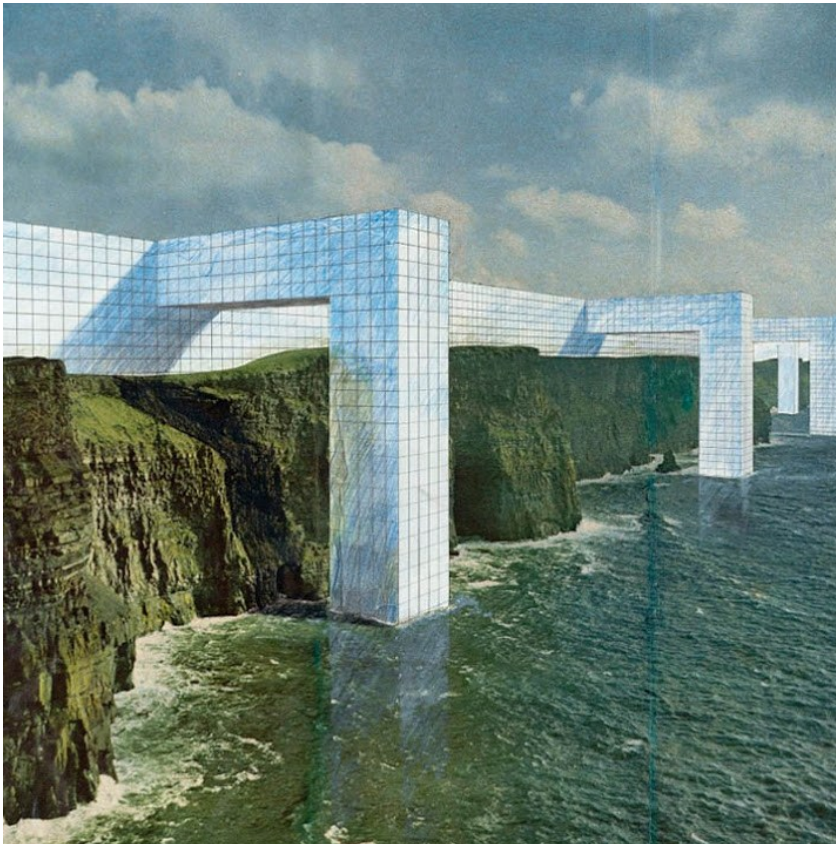
Grade Breakdown:
Lecture + Section Participation and Contribution: 15%
Speculation's Sketchbook: 20%
Midterm: 25%
Speculative Research Project: 40%

Sketchbook Journaling (20%): There will be weekly or bi-weekly prompts that engage with the course material as well as offer an opportunity to practice technical, visual and written composition skills. Embrace this with the spirit of the 'Shitty First Drafts'. Play! Take Chances! You can fail here! It's all part of the research process! 'Faking' is acceptable, probably even necessary. The goal is to explore the speculative possibilities of a medium you are comfortable working within.

You will receive Speculative Sketchbook Journal prompts weekly with details. All sketchbook prompts will be due by the following Mondays at 6PM. You must also read the posts of everyone else in your section and respond to the post of someone else in your discussion section by 9 AM (the next day). *Your sections will serve as a location to discuss these experiences and brainstorm ideas. The journals are a means of fostering group accountability and conversation. (Also it's a great place to figure out collaborators.

Midterm (25%):
Creative Short Story and Speculative Design Draft/Research in Two Parts

Speculative Design Research/Prototypes Project (40%):
Week 1, Th.—Select Collaborators
Week 5, Tu.—Re-Imagine Collaborators (should ya'll desire)
Week 7, Tu.— Pitch in Class with Zero Draft Visuals!
Week 8, Tu.— Storyboards, Bibliography/ Rough Drafts for Critiques
Week 9, Tu.— Rough Drafts for Critiques
Week 10, Tu.— Speculative Project Presentations/Screenings!! Whoo Hoo!
Week 11, Tu.— Speculative Projects Due

Class Participation (**15%):** Note both lecture and section attendance is mandatory. Any absences must be cleared with the instructor or TA in advance, or justified with written documentation (e.g. letter from student health, etc.). Absences may affect your overall course grade. **More than 3 absences may be grounds for failure in the course. Attendance may be taken in lecture or you may be given a brief assignment as part of class participation.** (+See participation grading criteria below)

++Please stay tuned for a myriad of extra-curricular and extra credit opportunities

Co-Curricular Record opportunity:
https://commons.ucsd.edu/slice.html
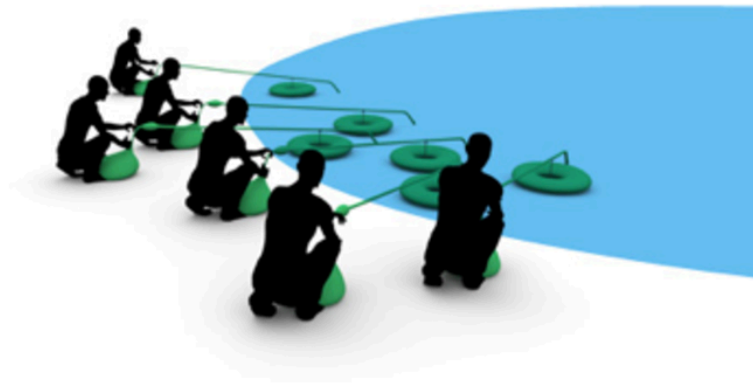
"Designs for an Overpopulated Planet: Foragers", Dunne + Raby, 2009 – design fiction

Intro to the Speculative, Design and the Anthropocene
Futures Research, Worldbuilding,
Science Fiction, Climate Fiction (Cli-Fi)

- [Design Fiction: A Short Essay on design, science, fact, fiction](#) (pgs. 35-41, but take a gander at the whole thing)
- [Speculative Everything: Design, Fiction and Social Dreaming](#) by Dunne, Anthony and Raby, Fiona. Chapters 1,2 MIT Press 2013*
- Alex McDowell, "Scenes That Tell Stories" in *Image, Design, Create* by Tom Wujec (pgs. 241-250)
- Recommeded/Bonus Texts: [Minority Report](#) by Philip K. Dick (it's short!) AND look at more of *Image, Design, Create* . The Seed Cathedral is amazing!

(*also available for [print/e-book purchase](#) OR you may access the various chapters through the [UCSD Library e-book](#))

Week 2
Design Thinking, Psychogeography, Empathy

- [Futuring Practices: Tools, Terms, and Perspectives](#)
- Windup Stories By Paolo Bacigalupi

Water, Water, Water. Plastic. Trash. Oceans and Extremophiles

Week 3
Emergent Ecologies. HOPE!

- Listen: [The New Normal (The NEW Baboon)](#)
- Read: Intro to Emergent Ecologies by Eben Kirksey
- Watch: Pumzi

Post-Anthropocene, Inter-species Possibilities

- Viagra and Caribou
- Consider the Lobster
- Watch: The Host by Bong Joon Ho

Week 4
Speculative Biology, Biohacking, Biomimcry. Geo-Engineering

- Read: Manhole 69 by JG Ballard

- Blood Music by Greg Bear

Environmental Health and Sickness
- The Carbon Diaries Excerpt

Bodies—Wearables, Extensions, Hacks
AI Labor and Love
- Her by Spike Jonze or Ex Machina
- Logan's Run
- Wall-E
- [Why Her Will Dominate UI Design Even More Than Minority Report](#)
- Speculative Everything: design, fiction and social dreaming, Dunne, Anthony and Raby, Fiona. Chapters: 4, 5 MIT Press 2013

Week 5
Human vs. Nature
Re-Wilding, Homesteading, Back to Nature,
FOOD. Calories. Yum/Yuck
- Speech Sounds by Octavia Butler

Week 6
Fashion, Architecture and the Built Environment
- The Future of the Skyscraper
- [Architecture after capitalism, in a world without work](#)

Week 7
Utopias, Think Tanks, Innovation— Successes and Failures
Social Innovation, Feel Good Entrepreneurism
Creative Hybrid Interventions…*EMOTIONS*
- Idiocracy by Mike Judge

Week 8
BioPower and the Anthropocene
- [Monstro](#) by Junot Diaz

- Sleep Dealer by Alex Rivera

What's Next AFTER What's Next??
- Snowpiercer
- Black Mirror

WEEK 10
Speculative Design Project Presentation/Screenings

Week 11
Tu. 6/13: Due: Speculative Research Project1:30p-2:30p

Guest Research at a Glance
Jules Jaffe
Nan Renner
Harry Helling
Yvonne Khoo
Pinar Yoldas
Stephanie Sherman
And more…TBD

1. ATTENDANCE

On-time attendance in lecture and section is required. Please notify your TA if you must be absent for illness or family emergency. Excessive absence (more than **three** class sessions, **either lectures or sections**) may be grounds for failing the course. Excessive tardiness will also impact your grade and may be grounds for failure.

2. CLASS PARTICIPATION

Contributions to class discussions and active participation in small group work are essential to both the momentum of the course and the development of your ideas. This requires that you come to class prepared (having completed assigned reading and writing) and ready to participate in class activities. Because CAT 3 is based on collaborative, project-based learning, you are also expected to contribute as a responsible member of a group. See the participation evaluation rubric below for more information.

3. ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION

A. Due Dates

An assignment may receive an F if a student does not participate in every phase of the development of the project and meet all deadlines for preliminary materials (proposals, drafts, etc.). Failure to submit any of the graded course assignments is grounds for failure in the course. If a final draft, plus required addenda, is not submitted in class on the date due, it will be considered late and will lose one letter grade for each day or part of a day past due (A to B, etc.). Assignments are due in hard copy and or via email/link (online assignment). You must submit your assignments directly to your TA; you will not be able to leave papers for your TA at the Sixth College Offices. Any late submissions must be approved by your TA and/or faculty instructor well in advance of the due date.

4. CAT GRADING CRITERIA – PARTICIPATION

Here is a description of the kind of participation in the course that would earn you an A, B, C, etc. Your TA may use pluses and minuses to reflect your participation more fairly, but this is a general description for each letter grade.

A – Excellent
Excellent participation is marked by near-perfect attendance and rigorous preparation for discussion in lecture and section. You respond to questions and activities with enthusiasm and insight and you listen and respond thoughtfully to your peers. You submit rough drafts on time, and these drafts demonstrate a thorough engagement with the assignment. You respond creatively to the feedback you receive (from both your peers and TA) on drafts, making significant changes to your writing between the first and final drafts that demonstrate ownership of your own writing process. Finally, you are an active contributor to the peer-review and collaborative writing processes.

B – Good
Good participation is marked by near-perfect attendance and thorough preparation for discussion in lecture and section. You respond to questions with specificity and make active contributions to creating a safe space for

the exchange of ideas. You submit rough drafts on time, and these drafts demonstrate thorough engagement with the assignment. You respond effectively to the feedback you receive (from both your peers and TA) on drafts, making changes to your writing between the first and final drafts. You are a regular and reliable contributor to the peer-review and collaborative writing processes.

C – Satisfactory

Satisfactory participation is marked by regular attendance and preparation for discussion in lecture and section. You respond to questions when prompted and participate in classroom activities, though you may sometimes be distracted. You are present in lecture and section, with few absences, and have done some of the reading some of the time. You submit rough drafts on time and make some efforts toward revision between the first and final drafts of an assignment. You are involved in peer-review activities, but you offer minimal feedback and you may not always contribute fully to the collaborative writing process.

D – Unsatisfactory

Unsatisfactory participation is marked by multiple absences from section and a consistent lack of preparation. You may regularly be distracted by materials/technology not directly related to class. You submit late or incomplete drafts and revise minimally or only at a surface level between drafts. You are absent for peer-review activities, offer unproductive feedback, or do not work cooperatively in collaborative environments.

F—Failing

Failing participation is marked by excessive absences, a habitual lack of preparation, and failure to engage in the drafting, revision, and collaborative writing processes.

5. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

UCSD has a university-wide Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, published annually in the

General Catalog, and online at
http://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academicintegrity/policy.html. All
students must read and be familiar with this Policy. All suspected violations
of academic integrity will be reported to UCSD's Academic Integrity
Coordinator. Students found to have violated UCSD's standards for
academic integrity may receive both administrative and academic
sanctions. Administrative sanctions may extend up to and include
suspension or dismissal, and academic sanctions may include failure of the
assignment or failure of the course. Specific examples of prohibited
violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, the following:

Academic stealing refers to the theft of exams or exam answers, of papers
or take-home exams composed by others, and of research notes, computer
files, or data collected by others.

Academic cheating, collusion, and fraud refer to having others do your
schoolwork or allowing them to present your work as their own; using
unauthorized materials during exams; inventing data or bibliography to
support a paper, project, or exam; purchasing tests, answers, or papers
from any source whatsoever; submitting (nearly) identical papers to two
classes.

Misrepresenting personal or family emergencies or health problems in
order to extend deadlines and alter due dates or requirements is another
form of academic fraud.

Claiming you have been ill when you were not, claiming that a family
member has been ill or has died when that is untrue are some examples of
unacceptable ways of trying to gain more time than your fellow students
have been allowed in which to complete assigned work.

Plagiarism refers to the use of another's work without full acknowledgment,
whether by suppressing the reference, neglecting to identify direct
quotations, paraphrasing closely or at length without citing sources,
spuriously identifying quotations or data, or cutting and pasting the work of
several (usually unidentified) authors into a single undifferentiated whole.

**Receipt of this syllabus constitutes an acknowledgment that you are responsible for understanding and acting in accordance with UCSD guidelines on academic integrity.

6. UCSD's PRINCIPLES OF COMMUNITY

The CAT program affirms UCSD's Principles of Community, and expects all students to understand and uphold these principles, both in their daily interactions and in their spoken, written and creative work produced for CAT classes:
The University of California, San Diego is dedicated to learning, teaching, and serving society through education, research, and public service. Our international reputation for excellence is due in large part to the cooperative and entrepreneurial nature of the UCSD community. UCSD faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to be creative and are rewarded for individual as well as collaborative achievements.
 To foster the best possible working and learning environment, UCSD strives to maintain a climate of fairness, cooperation, and professionalism. These principles of community are vital to the success of the University and the well being of its constituents. UCSD faculty, staff, and students are expected to practice these basic principles as individuals and in groups.
   • We value each member of the UCSD community for his or her individual and unique talents, and applaud all efforts to enhance the quality of campus life. We recognize that each individual's effort is vital to achieving the goals of the University.
   • We affirm each individual's right to dignity and strive to maintain a climate of justice marked by mutual respect for each other.
   • We value the cultural diversity of UCSD because it enriches our lives and the University. We celebrate this diversity and support respect for all cultures, by both individuals and the University as a whole.
   • We are a university that adapts responsibly to cultural differences among the faculty, staff, students, and community.
   • We acknowledge that our society carries historical and divisive biases based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and political beliefs. Therefore, we seek to foster understanding and tolerance among individuals and groups, and we promote awareness through education and constructive strategies for resolving conflict.

• We reject acts of discrimination based on race, ethnicity, sex, gender identity, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, and political beliefs, and, we will confront and appropriately respond to such acts.
• We affirm the right to freedom of expression at UCSD. We promote open expression of our individuality and our diversity within the bounds of courtesy, sensitivity, confidentiality, and respect.
• We are committed to the highest standards of civility and decency toward all. We are committed to promoting and supporting a community where all people can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of abusive or demeaning treatment.
• We are committed to the enforcement of policies that promote the fulfillment of these principles.
• We represent diverse races, creeds, cultures, and social affiliations coming together for the good of the University and those communities we serve. By working together as members of the UCSD community, we can enhance the excellence of our institution.

**Receipt of this syllabus constitutes an acknowledgment that you are responsible for understanding and acting in accordance with UCSD guidelines on academic integrity and the Principles of Community.