



CAT 3: Subversive Speculation: BIPOC Genre Fiction

Spring 2023

CENTR 101, T/Th 12:30pm-1:50pm

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Marchisotto

Office: CT0159

Office Hours: T/Th 9:30am-11:30am and by appointment

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Course Description

CAT 3 is a 6-unit course and the final course in Sixth's writing intensive sequence. While the topics of CAT 3 range, all invite students to imagine the intersection of culture, art, and technology in the future. The overarching purpose of CAT 3 is to build on those skills developed in CAT 2 (argumentative writing and critical analysis) and teach students how to create new knowledge through research and art/world making.

Course Topic

Speculative fiction creatively reimagines the world we live in, using fantastic elements to play with alternative versions of history, the present, and the future. This CAT 3 course will examine the ways BIPOC authors have used genre fiction to challenge traditional white patriarchal narratives. From science fiction, to fantasy, to horror, we will think about the ways authors of color employ the fantastic to imagine new futures not bound by the marginalizing and alienating assumptions that underpin contemporary American and Eurocentric societies. We will read and watch texts from a range of perspectives illustrating the ways speculative fiction has been used to confront issues like immigration, cultural appropriation, state violence, and more. We will also read contemporary scholarship on this topic to understand the ways in which speculative fiction is discussed in academic contexts.

Course Objectives

Building off what you learned in CAT 1 & 2, by the end of CAT 3 you should be able to:

- Understand and practice effective research, including developing research questions.
- Use research to make an effective multimodal argument towards a specific audience.
- Engage with cultural products, including art/popular culture, as the result of research but also as legitimate objects of research.

- Develop an independent research project, finding and evaluating appropriate sources, and composing research genres, like annotated bibliographies and literature reviews, etc.) proposal process, and revision.
- Effectively collaborate with peers in the process of research and development of a multimodal project.

Core Concepts:

By the end of CAT 3, you should be able to understand and define the following terms/ideas:

- Resistance/Revolution
- Interdisciplinarity
- Art as argument
- Research as a process
- Interpersonal Communication

Required Texts/Technology

- *They Say, I Say* CAT Edition
- *The Deep* by Rivers Solomon (available through the bookstore and course reserves)
- Access to Canvas

Course and Program Policies

Communication

In CAT, it is our hope that in this course we will develop a supportive learning community that fosters discussion, engagement, and excitement. Often, we will engage in the course material through the sharing of ideas, questions, and personal experiences. “Honesty, listening for understanding, a willingness to share your ideas, and respect for self and others” are basic guidelines that can help create a positive learning environment. Your participation and feedback are important to the success of the course and I welcome your thoughts throughout the term on how we might improve class processes that will encourage effective communication and dialogue.

On Inclusion and Creating an Equitable Classroom:

Please note that in this class, we will discuss the politics of race, and gender, among other intersections of identity, such as class, ability, and sexuality. These conversations can be difficult, thus, I expect you to practice respect, listening, patience, and kindness with and towards each other. This includes how you speak to both me (your professor), your TA, and your fellow classmates. In this course, your ideas may be challenged and I ask that you are open to that challenge, meeting it with intellectual curiosity, respect for others’ ideas and experiences, and empathy. I believe that ethical argumentation is imperative to a civil and just society and that is a value that I hope we form, instill, and engage with in this course. This is all to say, disagree with each other, with me, with your TA, but do so in a way that respectfully engages the other person’s ideas.

Etiquette and Conduct

CAT students are expected to comply with the [UCSD Principles of Community](#). In light of the on-going impact COVID-19 is having on all of our lives, please find below additional information on respectful engagement as part of both in-person and remote classroom spaces.

- Be respectful and kind to classmates and the instructor at all times. Our class will often deal with sensitive issues. While I neither expect nor wish students to always agree on ideas, differences of opinion need to be discussed considerately. Any individual who, as a result of their words or behavior, silences their classmates will be held accountable.
- *Respect Diversity*. Be sensitive to the rich and diverse, multi-cultural community in which we are participating, and show respect to authors and fellow attendees at all times. Please avoid any language that is—or that could be construed as—offensive toward others. Racist, sexist, and heterosexist comments are unacceptable, as are derogatory and/or sarcastic comments and jokes directed at religious beliefs, disabilities, weight, and age.
- Remember that it may sometimes be difficult to understand tone in written responses and consider how your audience might interpret your response in a remote context.
- If any student posts content to the course website that violates UCSD's Principles of Community, the post will be removed and your instructor will reach out to the author via email to discuss the issue.

My Responsibility to the Course:

- I will be prepared for lecture and invested in the material
- I will make lectures participatory and encourage active engagement as a part of daily work.
- I will respond to emails within 48 hours (excluding weekends and holidays)
- I will treat your work with honesty and compassion
- I will be willing to allow for extensions if you demonstrate engagement in the course and come speak with me early about needing one
- I will be a safe sounding board for ideas, whether related to your assignments or not
- I will take feedback about the course seriously

Your Responsibility to the Course:

- You will attend lectures on time, ready to participate
- You will attend section on time, ready to participate
- You will take responsibility for your actions and feelings, especially as they manifest within the course
- You will do the work assigned, both readings and writings, to the best of your ability (even if what qualifies “best” changes)
- You will do your own work with your best effort (even if what qualifies “best” changes) (See [UCSD Policies on Academic Integrity](#))
- You will offer your fellow writers honest and engaged critique.
- You will speak respectfully to me or your TA if you have any problems with the assignments or teaching methods; you will give us the chance to correct mistakes or address any miscommunication

- You will own your part of class culture (you will recognize that your experience with the class is in part your responsibility)

Access and Accommodations:

Everyone should have the opportunity to succeed and learn during our time together. My goal is to make full participation and success in this class accessible to all students. If there is any feature of this course, from the readings to the assignments to the way we work together in class, that could be made more accessible to you, please discuss it with me as soon as possible. I am willing to consider any modification that will enable you to experience the class more effectively. You do *not* have to disclose or document any disability or illness, physical or mental, to me or to anyone else in order to discuss accommodations with me.

In addition, there are many resources available to you through UCSD. The peer tutors at the Writing Center can help you with any writing assignment at any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to final revisions. The Office of Academic Support & Instructional Services (OASIS) offers tutoring and support in both academic subjects and study skills. Both of these resources exist to help you get the most out of your education, and are highly recommended for *all* students. If you have a documented disability, the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) can support you in identifying and requesting relevant accommodations. Contact the OSD for further information: <http://disabilities.ucsd.edu>

According to the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), “Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the OSD. Students are required to present their AFA letters to the MCWP Program Representative/OSD liaison in advance so that accommodations can be arranged.” Contact OSD at (858) 534-4382, osd@ucsd.edu. Per university policy, OSD accommodations are not retroactive. The CAT OSD liaison is Lynette Brossard: lbrossard@ucsd.edu.

Assignment Submission and Late Work

- All written assignments must be submitted to Canvas, with the exception of in-class work.
- All assignments must be formatted according to [MLA guidelines](#) including a header clearly identifying your name, your TA’s name, and other required information.
- In order to receive a letter grade, all assignments must be submitted through Turnitin on Canvas.
- Assignments are due on or before the due date and time listed. Failure to submit on time will result in the loss of 1/3 of a letter grade for each day late including weekends. If the assignment is more than a week late, you will receive an F.
- For drafts of Major Assignments:
 - While drafts are assessed for completion and not given a letter grade, late submission of formal assignment drafts will affect the overall assessment grade as stated above.
 - Failure to submit a draft will result in an F for the assignment.
 - Late drafts will not receive comments from the instructor.

- Make-up or late engagement work, for lecture or section, must be approved first. In other words, engagement work not turned in on time will receive no credit, unless the instructor or TA has granted an exception.

Peer Review, Self-Evaluation, and Reflection

Self-assessment, reflection, and collaboration are core components of the first year writing program at UCSD. In this class (and CAT broadly), you will do a fair amount of peer review, revision, working in groups, and reflection on your work. That is, be prepared both to receive and offer constructive criticism and re-work your writing, presentations, etc.

- Peer Review will happen regularly, so be prepared to work with your peers and offer constructive critique and receive feedback.
- Revision will be a crucial component of each major assignment.
- Self-Evaluations and Reflections are also a crucial part of this course. I will ask you do reflections on your work throughout the term and a final reflective portfolio.

Participation

Participation and attendance in lecture and discussions are very important. Lecture attendance ensures that you understand and can ask questions about the specificities of your topic. Discussion sections build community and provide a space to work through your ideas and engage with your peers. Work done during these times contributes to your overall participation grade as well as to your assignment grades.

If you must miss lecture or discussion, please contact your peers and teaching assistant about what you miss.

Attendance:

- You are allowed 3 absences from lecture and 3 absences from discussion section (i.e. 1 ½ weeks of CAT 3). For every absence after 3, you will lose 1/3 a letter grade of your overall grade.

Engagement

CAT courses are designed to support and strengthen your communication and thinking skills. Your participation in the course is required for the development of these skills and will be assessed according to the following rubric:

Excellent (10)- You are well prepared for lecture and section, demonstrated by: having all your materials; consistently contributing to discussion; asking productive questions; listening actively and taking notes; engaging in group work; supporting and respecting other students; respecting TAs, the instructor and course material; attending office hours; coming to lecture and section on time and staying for the entire class time; taking responsibility for any work or material missed if absent; overall proactive.

Good (9) - You are usually prepared for lecture and section, demonstrated by: contributing to discussion; listening actively; engaging in group work; respecting other students; respecting TAs, the instructor, and course material; mostly coming to lecture and section on time and staying for the entire class time; overall responsible.

Adequate (8) - You are inconsistently prepared for lecture and section, demonstrated by: rarely contributing to discussion; missing materials; managing time poorly; working well with others, but unable to contribute fairly; respecting TAs, instructor, and course materials; mostly coming to lecture and section on time and staying for the entire class time; overall, inconsistent.

Developing (7) - You are physically present but mentally disengaged from the course, demonstrated by: never contributing to discussion in lecture or section; consistently coming to class late or leaving early; working well with others, but unable to contribute fairly; failing to develop any relationships with TAs and/or instructor; overall, disengaged.

Unacceptable (5) - You demonstrate through behavior and/or language that you are uninterested in learning; or, alternatively, you are regularly disrespectful of other students, TAs, the instructor, or course material.

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to do their own work as outlined in UCSD's Policy on Academic Integrity, including the translation of work written in a language other than English. Also, it is against the policy to "recycle" a paper written for one course and turn it in for credit in another course. Plagiarism, including failure to correctly cite quotations, summaries, or paraphrases, ideas from print or online sources is strictly prohibited.

UCSD has a university-wide Policy on Integrity of Scholarship, published annually in the General Catalog, and online <https://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/>. 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 include suspension or dismissal, and academic sanctions may include failure of the assignment or failure of the course.

CalFresh & Basic Needs Information

If you are facing food insecurity, we encourage you to contact calfresh@ucsd.edu, call (858) 246-5581, or visit the [CalFresh Website](#). For more information on food and housing resources, please visit the [Basic Needs Center](#) or **The HUB Basic Needs Center** located at the Original Student Center, Building A, Room E-100, to the left of the Triton Food Pantry.

Assignments and Grade Breakdown

For our class, the assignments should build on one another. Your individual assignments are a chance for you to reflect on and synthesize your individual research. The group assignments are a space for you

to collaborate with your peers, using your individual experiences to inform a collective, interactive, research project.

Individual Assignments - 50% (total)

- [Literature Review](#) (20%)
- [Research Activities](#) (4 total, 5% each, graded for completion) (20% total)
- [Portfolio Reflection](#) (10%)

Group Assignments - 40% (total)

- [Major Research Project \(Choose Your Own Adventure\)](#) (20%)
- [Project Proposal](#) (10%)
- [Project Showcase](#) (10%)

Engagement - 10%

Grading Policies

- [CAT Writing Rubric](#)
- Failure to turn in all writing assignments will result in the loss of a full letter grade for the course.
- Research activities will be graded complete/incomplete.
- For purposes of **final course grades** as calculated by Canvas's gradebook, the following ranges will determine letter grades submitted to eGrades:
 - A+ (96.6-100)
 - A (93.6-96.5)
 - A- (89.6-93.5)
 - B+ (86.6-89.5)
 - B (83.6-86.5)
 - B- (79.6-83.5)
 - C+ (76.6-79.5)
 - C (73.6-76.5)
 - C- (69.6-73.5)
 - D (60-69.5)
 - F (0-59.9)
- If you feel as though you earned a grade different than what you received on an assignment you may request a regrade. All disputes over grades must be conducted according to the following guidelines:
 - **Wait 48 hours after receiving a grade before disputing it.**
 - Contact your TA for an appointment to discuss the grade.
 - Attend your appointment having read the TA's comments and the CAT rubric thoroughly.
 - Only after you have discussed your essay with your TA may you request a regrade from the course instructor. To request a regrade you must write a letter to the instructor stating your case and providing specific evidence as to why you believe your grade should be changed. Such evidence must discuss elements of your writing, including thesis, use of analysis, organization, and argumentation.

- I will review your letter and the assignment(s) in question and make a decision based on that evidence. However, please note that I reserve the right to lower your grade should I feel your TA has graded too generously.

TA Information

TA Name	Section #	Day/Time	Location	Email
Tatum Howey	A01	T/Th 8-8:50am	HSS 2333A	thowey@ucsd.edu
Rebecca Lane	A02	T/Th 9-9:50am	HSS 2333A	rmlane@ucsd.edu
Rebecca Lane	A03	T/Th 10-10:50am	HSS 2333A	rmlane@ucsd.edu
Lucia Herrmann	A04	T/Th 10-10:50am	CTL B108	lherrmann@ucsd.edu
Lucia Herrmann	A05	T/Th 11-11:50am	CENTR 224A	lherrmann@ucsd.edu
Maya Beck	A06	T/Th 2-2:50pm	MANDE B-152	sbeck@ucsd.edu
Vyxx Vasquez	A07	T/Th 3-3:50pm	CENTR 224B	lmvasquez@ucsd.edu
Vyxx Vasquez	A08	T/Th 4-4:50pm	CENTR 224B	lmvasquez@ucsd.edu
Neon Mashurov	A09	T/Th 5-5:50pm	YORK 4060A	nmashuro@ucsd.edu
Calvin Jordan	A10	T/Th 8-8:50am	CENTR 206	cdjordan@ucsd.edu
Tatum Howey	A11	T/Th 9-9:50am	CENTR 206	thowey@ucsd.edu
Alice Koga	A12	T/Th 10-10:50am	CENTR 206	akoga@ucsd.edu
Alice Koga	A13	T/Th 11-11:50am	CENTR 206	akoga@ucsd.edu
Maya Beck	A14	T/Th 11-11:50am	YORK 4060A	sbeck@ucsd.edu
Neon Mashurov	A15	T/Th 2-2:50pm	HSS 2333A	nmashuro@ucsd.edu
Ana Andrade	A16	T/Th 3-3:50pm	CENTR 224A	aca010@ucsd.edu
Ana Andrade	A17	T/Th 4-4:50pm	CENTR 224A	aca010@ucsd.edu
Calvin Jordan	A18	T/Th 5-5:50pm	CENTR 224A	cdjordan@ucsd.edu

Course Schedule (Subject to Change)

****PLEASE NOTE:** Many of the readings in this class deal with content that may be triggering. The texts discuss topics such as violence, racism, sexism, and ableism among others. I will do my best to provide content warnings for specific readings; however, I cannot anticipate all potential triggers. If you have specific concerns about content please speak with me. I will not require you to disclose any specific information, but am happy to help you develop a strategy for engaging with the course materials in a safe way.**

Homework listed should be completed by the following class. For example, homework listed under Thursday should be completed before the following Tuesday's class.

Week 1- Introduction to the Course and Core readings

~~4/3-4/7~~

Tuesday: Introduction to the course

- Homework:
 - Read Octavia Butler, "[A Few Rules for Predicting the Future](#)"
 - Read Walter Benjamin, "[Thesis on History](#)"

Thursday: Thinking about the past to learn about the future

- Homework:
 - Read Marek Oziewicz "[Speculative Fiction](#)" from the Oxford Research Encyclopedia
 - Read "[Braiding Past into Future](#)" by David Bowles
 - Read "[Being Indian is Not a Superpower](#)" and "[Rising Star](#)" by Stephen Graham Jones
 - *Optional:* read "[Interview: Stephen Graham Jones](#)" by Julia Rios

Week 2- Defining Speculative Fiction and its Sub-Genres

~~4/10-4/14~~

TSIS Chapters for this week: Ch. 20 "Getting Started on Research"

Tuesday: Defining *speculative fiction*

- Homework:
 - Read "[Introduction](#)" by Sami Schalk
 - Listen to "[People of Color in Fantasy and Horror](#)" (1 hour)
 - *Optional:* Read "[Black to the Future](#)" by Mark Dery
 - *Optional:* Read "[Deus ex Machina: Tradition, Technology, and the Chicanafuturist Art of Marion C. Martinez](#)" by Catherine S. Ramírez

Thursday: Expanding *speculative fiction*

- Homework:

- Watch “[Sci-fi Stories that Imagine a Future Africa](#)” Nnedi Okorafor *TED Talk*
- Read “[Africanfuturism Defined](#)” and “[Sunrise](#)” by Nnedi Okorafor

Research Activity #1 due 4/14 by 11:59pm

Week 3- Defining Speculative Fiction and its Sub-Genres contd.

4/17-4/21

Tuesday: Africanfuturism

- Homework:
 - Read “[A Dead Djinn in Cairo](#)” by P. Djèlí Clark
 - *Optional*: Listen to “[Interview of author Phenderson Djèlí Clark at the Zora Neale Hurston Festival in Eatonville, Florida](#)” (30 min.)

Thursday: Speculating about the past

- Homework:
 - Read “[Metaphor and Materiality: Disability and Neo-Slave Narratives](#)” by Sami Schalk
 - *Optional*: Read “[The Past, Conditionally: Alternative History in Speculative Fiction](#)” by Carl Abbott and “[Historical Fiction v. Speculative Fiction](#)” by Cheryl Wollner

Draft 1 of Literature Review due 4/21 by 11:59pm

Week 4- Speculating about the past

4/24-4/28

Tuesday: Afrofuturism

- Homework:
 - Read *The Deep* (ch. 1-4)

Thursday: *The Deep*

- Homework:
 - Read *The Deep* (ch. 5-7)

Research Activity #2 due FRIDAY 4/28 by 11:59pm

Group Project Proposal due SUNDAY 4/30 at 11:59pm

Week 5- Speculating about the past

5/1-5/5

Tuesday: *The Deep* contd.

- Homework:
 - Read *The Deep* (ch. 8-end)

Thursday: *The Deep* contd.

- Homework:
 - Read "[The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas](#)" by Ursula K. LeGuin
 - Read "[The Ones Who Stay and Fight](#)" by N.K. Jemisin

Final Draft of Literature Review Due 5/5 by 11:59pm

Week 6- Speculating about the present

5/8-5/12

Tuesday: Talking back

- Homework:
 - Read "[The Green Ribbon](#)" by Alvin Schwartz
 - Read "[The Husband Stitch](#)" by Carmen Maria Machado
 - Read "[No Me Dejas](#)" by Mark Oshiro

Thursday: Adaptation and memory

- Homework:
 - Read "[Loneliness is in your Blood](#)" by Cadwell Turnbull
 - Read TBD story by Sylvia Moreno Garcia
 - *Optional:* read "[Help Me Follow My Sister to the Land of the Dead](#)" by Carmen Maria Machado

Research Activity #3 due 5/12 by 11:59pm

Week 7- Speculating about the future

5/15-5/19

Tuesday: Creating monsters

- Homework:
 - Optional: read "[The Future of Bodyminds, Bodyminds of the Future](#)" by Sami Schalk

Draft 1 of Major Group Project due WEDNESDAY 5/17 by 11:59pm

Thursday: Making the future

- Homework:
 - Watch *Black Panther* (available through course reserves or on Disney+)

Week 8- *Black Panther*

5/22-5/26

Tuesday: *Black Panther*

- Homework:

- Watch *Black Panther: Wakanda Forever* (available through course reserves or on Disney+)
- *Optional*: read “[The Token Superhero](#)” by David F. Walker

Thursday: *Black Panther* contd.

- Homework:
 - Read “[Speech Sounds](#)” by Octavia Butler
 - Read “[A Room of One’s Own](#)” by Tochi Onyebuchi
 - *Optional*: listen to the [Us in Flux interview with Tochi Onyebuchi](#) (1 hour)

Research Activity #4 due 5/26 by 11:59pm

Week 9- What’s next?

5/29-6/2

Draft 2 of Major Group Project due MONDAY 5/29 by 11:59pm

Tuesday: Echos of the pandemic

- Homework:
 - Read “[Welcome to Your Authentic Indian Experience](#)” by Rebecca Roanhorse

Thursday: Authenticity in speculative fiction

- Homework:
 - Read Read “[The Book of Martha](#)” by Octavia Butler
 - Read “[What’s Expected of Us](#)” by Ted Chiang

Week 10- Project showcases and moving forward

Project showcases will happen in discussion section during week 10

6/5-6/9

Tuesday: What is Free will?

- Homework:
 - Keep revising!

Thursday: Last Day Review

- Homework:
 - Finish your Final Portfolio and have a great Summer!

Final Portfolio due Monday, June 12th by 2:30pm

Happy Summer!