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SF! Haraway's Situated Feminisms and Speculative Fabulations in English Class

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Abstract
This article draws on Donna Haraway's call for feminist speculative fabulation as an approach to qualitative research methodologies and writing praxis in schools. The first section of the article outlines how I conceptualize speculative thought, through different philosophers and theorists, and provides a brief literature review of speculative fiction used in secondary English curricula. The article then focuses on an in school creative writing project with grade 9 English students. In the student examples that I attend to, speculative fabulations and situated feminisms (race, gender, sexuality) are entangled, rendered complex, and in tension. In the final section, I discuss the Whiteness of mainstream speculative fiction and argue that speculative fabulation must be accountable to situated feminisms in how we read, write, and conduct research.

Keywords Speculative fiction · Situated feminisms · Speculative philosophy · English education

SF! Situated Feminisms and Speculative Fabulations in English Class

In *Staying with the Trouble* (2016a) Haraway describes what she's come to call *speculative fabulation* as a "mode of attention, a theory of history, and a practice of worlding" (p. 230).[1] For Haraway, speculative fabulation, and the proliferating SFs (speculative fiction, situated feminisms, string figures—and perhaps speculative philosophy) are important practices in both scholarly writing and everyday life. While rooted in everyday storytelling practices, speculative fabulation defamiliarizes, queers perception, and disrupts habitual ways of knowing. Although speculative fabulations *are* fabulations, that does not mean

[1] Haraway draws from her former student Joshua LeBare (2010) who calls the SFs 'modes' rather than genres.

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they are incompatible with science facts. As Subramaniam (2014) argues, we need speculative thought to help us build theory using "not only science fiction, but fictional sciences—imagining other configurations of knowledge making" (72).

This article is about future worldings (the making of a different future), and feminist, situated ethics (a response-ability for the world-making we participate in). The differential link between speculative fabulation and situated feminisms is significant: while speculative fabulations can be crucial tools for imagining future-presents that are radically different than the world we inhabit now, situated feminisms ask us to attend to the dynamic specificities of myriad *situated knowledges* (Haraway 1988). Situated knowledges are immanent to an event, account for intersectional markers such as race, gender, sexuality, class, ability etc., and relational. Following Haraway, I argue that through recognizing *situated feminisms* in conjunction with *speculative fabulation* speculative thinkers and writers might conjure more just futures.

Throughout the article I consider the *materiality* of language and speculative fabulation as vehicles for probing what could be (Truman 2016a). The first section of the article outlines how I conceptualize speculative thought, through different philosophers and theorists, followed by some examples of how it appears in recent educational research. From there, I provide a brief literature review of SF as it occurs in speculative fiction, and the kinds of speculative narratives found in secondary English curricula. This introductory section maps and locates my use of SF, and situates the next section of the paper which takes up speculative fiction writing with a group of grade 9 English literature students. In this section, I describe youth speculative fiction that was produced as part of a larger research-creation project that investigated the relationships between walking, writing, and creative practice.[2] In the student examples that I attend to, speculative fabulations and situated feminisms (race, gender, sexuality) are entangled, rendered complex, and in tension. As racialized, gendered, and sexual bodies, the students' SF *worldings* narrated the difficulties of navigating not only a future world-to-come, but a past-present-future now that is structurally violent, racist, and heteronormative. The SF writing that emerged in the research-creation project, inspired my current research into speculative writing by queer, trans, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (QTBIPOC) authors in English education.

In the final section, I discuss the Whiteness of mainstream speculative fiction, and return to Haraway's SF as I consider two recent events: Lola Olufemi's open letter calling for the need to 'de-colonize' the mostly-white English curriculum at Cambridge University; and the Australian teenagers who abused Aboriginal speculative fiction author and poet Ellen van Neerven online with racist and vulgar comments because they struggled reading her poem 'Mangos' on the New South Wales year 12 English Exam. Reading these events 'knotted' (Haraway 2016a, b)—or as Springgay (this issue) calls 'felted'—with Haraway's SFs, I argue that speculative fabulation must be accountable to situated feminisms in how we read, write, and conduct research.

Speculative Thought

The term 'speculative' has been gaining cache in educational research, but often uncritically. Too often the speculative is seen as inherently positive, or linked to increased productivity and technological innovation. Speculative fabulation, as outlined throughout

[2] Research-creation is the intersection of art, theory, and research (Truman 2016b). See also Springgay in this issue.

this paper is a material force that probes, critiques, and lures future-pasts across academic disciplines and in everyday life. Speculative fabulation is not neutral. Through speculative alter-worlding, materialist feminisms "envision a different difference from within" our inherited context (Åsberg et al. 2015, p. 160). Speculative fabulations matter, and engender response(ability) for the futures we co-create through thinking, writing, and researching. Instone and Taylor (2015) outline how Haraway's notion of inheritance always poses a question of accountability as "we are deeply implicated in the conditions of our common inheritance in personal, political and intellectual ways" (Instone and Taylor 2015, p. 140). Similarly, Barad (2003) asserts, "We" are not outside observers of the world. Nor are we simply located at particular places *in* the world; rather, we are part *of* the world in its ongoing intra-activity" (p. 828, italics in original).

In order to create a theoretical understanding of speculation that takes into account Haraway's notion of responsibility, I turn to philosophers who theorize differential links between *actual* and *virtual.* The differential link between the actual and virtual proposes, propels, and potentializes what could be. Deleuze (1994) discusses differential becomings of the world through two terms (pronounced the same but with different spellings): *differentiation* and *differenciation* (1994). For Deleuze (1994), the actualized expression of virtual intensities is *differenciation* (with a 'c') (1994). Differen*c*iation is the process of materialization through which an event occurs. However, the world's becoming does not stop with actualization. For Deleuze, whatever emerges as an event, in turn, has the ability to modify *virtual* potentials: a process which he calls *differentiation.* So *differenciation* and *differentiation* operate simultaneously (differentially) in all events, but only one is actual (although according to Deleuze, both are 'real'). For Deleuze, the virtual "possesses a full reality by itself" (p. 211) it is "*real without being actual, differentiated without being differenciated, and complete without being entire*" (p. 214). Manning, extending Deleuze's concept of the virtual (2016) states, "[t]he virtual is never opposite to the actual—it is how the actual resonates beyond the limits of its actualization" (p. 29). What actualizes *stirs* the virtual, and vice versa.

Whitehead's (1978) articulation of 'propositions' also helps contextualize how I understand the process of speculative world-making. According to Whitehead (1978), a proposition is a "…new kind of entity. Such entities are the tales that perhaps might be told about particular actualities" (p. 256). For Whitehead, propositions act as hybrids between potentiality and actuality—they are "lures for feeling" (p. 25). By being lured (someplace new) feelings "acquire a dimension that was previously unknown to them" (Debaise 2017, p. 83). For Whitehead, the universe (not just humans) is *feeling*, and these actualized "…physical, aesthetic, and imaginative feelings form the milieu of new propositions" and form new hybrids between actual and virtual (Debaise 2017, p. 85). Whitehead (1978) further argues that even an 'untrue' proposition's "primary role" is to "pave the way along which the world advances into novelty" because it's more important for a propstion to be interesting than true (p. 187). Propositions are not merely linguistic statements, and *feeling* is not only attributed to humans, but for Whitehead, are the foundation of nature—forever feeling propositionally toward a new event.

Similarly, theoretical physicist, Barad (2015) exemplifies the dynamism between the virtual and actual as a movement not only reserved for human actors when she states, "virtuality is the materiality wandering/wonderings of nothingness; virtuality is the ongoing thought experiment that the world preforms with itself…" (p. 396). In each of these cases, it's not only human actors propositioning, or feeling, or differentiating, because the human, too, actualizes within the event. Although inspired by these philosophers, for the purposes of this paper I am specifically focusing on how situated humans feel the futurities that

'haunt' the present (both actually and virtually) (Shaviro 2015). Below, I place these varied philosophical conceptualizations of alter-worlding, or what Deleuze and Guattari (1986) call a 'politics-to-come,' in conversation with a number of theorists of the speculative literary genre and qualitative research practices.

Speculative writing has championed and critiqued advances in science and technology, contemplated gender fluidity and animal rights, marked the 'more-than-human turn' across the disciplines, and heralded the 'posthuman' in its varied manifestations—cultural, biological, and technological. Haraway's influential *Cyborg Manifesto* is an example of a work that crosses the boundaries of political, scientific, and speculative writing. She presents the image of a cyborg as our (human) ontological condition: a "condensed image of both imagination and material reality, the two joined centres structuring any possibility of historical transformation" (1991, p. 150). For Haraway, rather than a false binary between the actual and fabulation, the cyborg demonstrates how "social reality" is a "world-changing fiction" (p. 149). Philosopher and fiction writer Negarestani's *Cyclonopedia* (2008) is perhaps the most well-known exemplification of the speculative practice of 'theory-fiction,' while arguably much speculative fiction could also be considered theory-fiction if the terms were more frequently hyphenated. Cultural theorist Goodeve (2000) notes that theorizing is a form of speculative writing where a writer does not merely conduct analysis or critique of existing relationships but becomes "involved in *building* alternative ontologies, especially via the use of the imaginative" hence "fiction is political theory" (p. 120). While philosophers Grebowicz and Merrick (2013) state that theory-making that results from imaginative re-thinking of the world positions speculative fabulation "as both methodological tool and a source of creative inspiration" across the disciplines (p. 112).

Recent uses of speculative thought in educational research include de Freitas (2017) who creates a speculative fiction narrative to extrapolate about an actual laboratory space in Manchester, UK. Her 'distorted' version of the real laboratory helps her imagine a new empiricism that might operate in the laboratory and allows her to "*not* pre-emptively curtail the weirdness" of the posthuman, affect, and social-technical advances (p. 120). de Freitas uses speculative worlding to imagine how she "might *do* social science differently," in that the process of thinking speculatively helps her "interrogate the very concepts of 'social' and 'science' and offers an alternative model for how they can be reassembled" (p. 120). Qualitative researchers Truman and Springgay use 'propositions' (2016) and 'speculative middles' (Springgay and Truman 2017) in their research-creation projects as different orientations to methods. The propositions propel them into research and the speculative middle which they argue "is not a place, but an event [where] (in)tensions, concerns, and gnawings continually emerge" (p. 5). (In)tensions form the ethico-political orientation of the research in-process, and speculative middles engender a practice that puts "'relations at risk with other relations" or 'in the presence of those who will bear their consequences'" (Haraway 2016a, p. 12, as cited in Springgay and Truman 2017). The recognition that there are others who 'will bear the consequences' of the material practices of thinking, writing, and conducting research, is an important 'knot' in Haraway's feminist speculative fabulation.

As a literary genre, speculative fiction probes readers and writers to consider "provocative divergences from the norms of human biology, the conventions of human society, and the limitations of human thought" (Milburn 2012, p. 525). Delany (2009) discusses how in speculative fiction language which would only be metaphorical in 'mundane fiction' can be literal. For example, a winged dog would be a metaphor in regular fiction, but in speculative fiction there could *be* a dog with wings. While Chu (2008) argues that speculative fiction is the "narrative realm where *literal* and *figurative* share ontological status," such writings "can accommodate referents that are themselves neither purely literal nor purely figurative" (100).

Technologically, speculative fiction can extend to world-building genres which include the creation of hypothetical worlds with different physical laws, to the invention of new technologies which are then built into virtual worlds such as video games (themselves another form of speculative media). Along with technological innovations, sub-genres in science fiction often focus on social revolutions wherein the government is depicted as flawed, or non-effective, and through considering alternative futures affectively inspire readers to speculate on what needs to be done in the present to arrive at an alternative future.

Socio-political thought, technological forecasting, and speculative fiction have long histories of mutual engagement in literature, and speculative fiction has been taught in secondary school and university English classes for decades. Well-known works of speculative fiction commonly taught in English literature classes in schools include Ray Bradbury's *The Veldt,* which could be seen as predictive of virtual reality, Margaret Atwood's *The Handmaid's Tale,* which can be read as a dystopic warning of an already-occurring gender imbalance; and John Wyndham's *The Chrysalids*, which tells of a post-apocalyptic world where children have mutations including telepathy. Speculative fictions describe many dystopic worlds brought on by the integration of new technologies including human-alien interspecies mating, bio-warfare, and human–machine (cyborg) integration. These dystopias are often depicted as manifesting concomitant with the global market expansion of late capitalism, hyper-media, environmental degradation, genetic engineering, and neo-Imperialism.

SF Worlding with Youth

I recently conducted a four month in-school research-creation project with grade 9 English students in Wales, UK (Truman 2017). The in-school project explored the relationship between walking, writing, the intersectionality of race-gender-power, and youth cultural productions. The project critically examined the English curriculum that focuses on a Euro-Western canon of literature. In particular, the students analyzed the relationship between walking and writing as a method for generating content, as a narrative device, or a literary theme and challenged recent research by social scientists and educators who extol walking as an inherently creative practice or form of social engagement or public pedagogy (Springgay and Truman 2018). One of the writing pieces that emerged in the larger research event was a speculative narrative. It is this work that I examine in this section.

The secondary school is situated in a leafy middleclass neighbourhood, but draws from a large catchment area in the urban centre. Many of the students at the school are first generation immigrants, and are ethnically and racially diverse. One day as we strolled on the school grounds the students and I discussed John Keats' notion of *negative capability*, an idea that came to Keats during a walk and that he wrote about only once in a letter to his brother. Negative capability for Keats meant the ability to remain in "uncertainties, Mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact & reason" (Keats cited in Hebron 2014, np). Negative capability does not refer to 'negative' as a pejorative term, but rather to an inclination to passivity, not-quite-knowing and "speculative invention, and ontological risks" as skills or potentials of poets and philosophers (Haraway 2008, p. 83).[3]

[3] These are 'negative' skills or potentials in the sense of not being present—therefore perhaps similar to the virtual in the Deleuze's sense, or a negative prehension in Whitehead's sense.

I asked the students whether ideas ever came to them whilst walking—seemingly out of nowhere. Their staccato "yes, yes, yes–yes, yes, yes" punctured our movement. Several students articulated how strange thoughts and funny ideas come to them while walking, or how they dream up devices to build as engineers. Several students also commented that, although they enjoy walking and thinking, the act of walking in some places in the city and at certain times of the day feels dangerous, particularly for racialized and gendered bodies. This was emphasized both in interviews with the students and in their writings. For example, several girls discussed how they feel uncomfortable walking alone in the park near the school and carry keys in their hands when they walk down the lanes behind their houses, while a student in hijab recounted how she had been targeted with racial abuse while walking to and from school.

Our discussions provoked questions about the mechanics of thought in movement, the relationship between the intersectional (Crenshaw 1991) experience of walking in a city, and how situated knowledges of race, gender, sexuality affect speculative writing about cities. The city is a common leitmotif in speculative fiction. Much speculative fiction extrapolates already existent tendencies of our culture to extremes using cityscapes as a backdrop.

As a proposition for our next lesson, I brought a copy of Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* for the students to read. The students and I took turns reading aloud some of the Calvino's inspired descriptions of speculative and beguiling cities in the collection as we walked in the field behind the school. The book consists of descriptions of 55 cities in the Tartar Emperor Kublai Khan's empire. As soon as the descriptions begin it is clear that the cities are not *actual*, but cities of the imagination. And perhaps they describe one particular city through various angles. Inspired by Calvino's fervent speculative fabulation in the book, our next task was to walk through Cardiff, and speculate a version of the Welsh capital inspired by our *situated* movements.

Each of the students' writings focused on something fantastical about a speculative Cardiff, including a student named Dewy's description of a city of paradoxes, where "Cardiff is growing smaller and shrinking larger…Every person has a pointless job that is of great importance…The society is mostly built on individualism but with a sense of community…" Dewy's account reads almost like a critique of globalized late capitalism and emphasizes Haraway's situated feminisms of class and labour. Another student, Angharad, proposed a city made up of floors: "There are hundreds of floors and each floor is the size of a large city. The higher you go the more spectacular the floors. Only one man got to the highest floor because his grandmother and then his mother rode the elevators their entire lives." Angharad's version of the city reads both like a speculative allegory of neoliberal ideals and a testament to a mother's and grandmother's devotion to making things 'better' for their children.

Although the speculative pieces were only a few hundred words long, many of the students proposed versions of Cardiff that could be seen as improvements on its current social and political tendings. For example, Rachel describes observing Cardiff from above while walking on tightropes that connect the city from end to end and where people appear genderless, as "petals in a rose garden" that wind and weave on their way through the day. Rachel posits that viewing Cardiff from above makes judgement difficult, and hopes that "maybe ground level will be like this one day." The student Abida's rendition of Cardiff had a socialist bent where "you work purely out of goodness, all injustice in the world can finally be faced hand in hand…and poverty will be eliminated." Georgia pushes egalitarian aspirations beyond the human realm and proclaims that in Cardiff "every single animal and person has equal rights." While not all of the students' writings inspired toward a 'better' world, many posited accelerationist

or dystopic musings of a stroll through the city as a post-apocalyptic site. For example, Jagdev describes the traces of a nuclear powerplant explosion where "shadows can be seen where something or someone got in the way of the immense heat that vaporized half the city." Other students offered descriptions of wandering through the remains of human-made climate, industrial, or war disasters, and Owain describes the city as "crypt" where yellow-eyed humanoids "generally crawl on their hands and feet," as if in some kind of reverse evolution.

I view the students' writings as speculative-ontologies. The 'bodies' or events activated in speculative writing are 'real' as linguistic marks on the page, and the worlds they discuss are also 'real' (lived SF situated knowledges) although speculative. The students' writings exemplify Haraway's SF and probe questions such as: if our present city is unbearable, how might we craft an alternative world? Once the students presented their speculative cities to each other, and discussed their own writing practices, they posted their writings on telephone poles for other people to read. This was a way of 'publishing' their writings and answering back to the 'real' city and its inhabitants as probes for further thought.

The speculative writing project demonstrated how the movement of walking and speculative writing can evoke a variety of transcorporeal assemblages, futures, and meanings. As Haraway (1991) states, "social reality is lived social relations, our most important political construction, a world-changing fiction" (p. 149). The students were attuned to how their own situated knowledges, race, gender, class, and sexuality affected the trajectory of their worlding practices, and attuned to the potential of probing what *could be* as a practice that can reorient the direction of experience: the significance of the students' writing was demonstrated in the ways that their own intersectional and situated knowledges were intricately connected to their future worldings.

The students' voices resonated with recent critical work on speculative writing that critique the Whiteness of the genre. As Black speculative fiction author Delany (1984) made clear more than 30 years ago:

> We need images of tomorrow; and our people need them more than most… only by having clear and vital images of the many alternatives, good and bad, of where one can go, will we have any control over the way we may actually get there in a reality tomorrow will bring all too quickly. (p. 35)

SF is not about a romanticized view of the future. SF is always grounded, situated, and entangled with our past-present inheritances. Haraway (2008) argues that "curiosity should nourish situated knowledges and their ramifying obligations" (p. 289). I'm curious what's beyond the white space of mainstream speculative worlding.

Beyond the Whitespace of SF

In the next section of this paper, I briefly work through some caveats of speculative thought, and demonstrate how queer, trans, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (QTBIPOC) speculative fiction diverges from the white space of mainstream speculative worlding. I then draw on two examples—one from higher education, the other from a secondary English exam—that highlight why SF is an important if not crucial mode of activating a different future (that is accountable to and response-able for its situated present)

and reinforce the necessity of injecting queer, trans, Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (QTBIPOC) authors/texts into mainstream English curricula.

Historically, mainstream speculative fiction (and science fiction in particular) tends toward whiteness and ethnically homogenous narratives that uncritically reinforce Imperialism and lone white male saviours. When the genres do represent race—often in the form of alien Others—they frequently fail to confront racism's lived reality. Hopkinson (2004) notes one of the familiar themes of science fiction is travelling to "foreign countries and colonizing the natives" (p. 7). Yet, she argues, often for people of colour, such a story is not a "thrilling adventure story; it's *nonfiction* and [they] are on the wrong side of the strange looking ship that appears out of nowhere" (Hopkinson 2004, p. 7, italics mine). Similarly, Fisher (2013) draws from Eshun who equates transatlantic slavery with alien abduction and puts forth the assertion that African Americans have "been living in an alien-nation since the 18th century" (Eshun, cited in Fisher, p. 46). Further, Rieder (2008) argues how speculative fiction that attempts to critique colonization through reversal of roles between colonizer and colonized often falls short by staying "entirely within the framework of the colonial gaze and the anachronism of anthropological difference" (10). Mainstream speculative thought frequently functions within a Western progress model that perpetuates linear versions of time and universalized futures that continue to abstract the material and situated conditions of race (Nyawalo 2016). The eugenics movement was built on speculation: a worlding practice toward a 'whiter future;' so, it's important to recognize that speculative thought is not necessarily inherently social justice oriented.

Speculative thought is risky, and there are thought experiments within it, like accelerationism, that push risk to an extreme. Shaviro (2015) outlines accelerationism as "a speculative movement that seeks to extrapolate the entire globalized neoliberal capitalist order" (p. 3). Accelerationists posit that if capitalism (neoliberalism) were fully expressed it would exhaust itself, and society could begin anew. Whether their speculations would prove prescient is unclear. But what seems certain in their scenario is that the ramped-up neoliberalism that accelerationism draws from (on a systemic level until it implodes) would likely enable "things to continue exactly the way they currently operate to the advantage of powerful entrenched regimes of profitability and privilege" (Higgins 2016, p. 69).

Another example is financial speculation. Financial speculation seeks to 'capture' or shut down, rather than explore different futures (Shaviro 2015, p. 11). Speculation in the market works preemptively: the idea is to close down variables and uncertainties and shrink the future in advance so risk is manageable.[4] Eshun (2003) argues that while in the twentieth century, 'avant-gardists' like Frantz Fanon used futurism to revolt against power structures that controlled representation in the historical archive, nowadays the situation has reversed itself and the "powerful employ futurists and draw power from the futures they endorse," foreclosing the future (p. 289). Within our globalized world, those in power have leverage to speculatively *world* or *lure* the kind of future that they want. A future, like the past, where Blackness, Indigeneity, disability, and queerness—subjectivities marginalized under neoliberalism—remain so. This is why Sehgal (2014) states, "[w]orlding in a feminist sense asks what kind of material-semiotic world-making practices are at stake and for whom would such a symbiosis of bodies and meanings matter" (p. 165). Such a question insists we take responsibility for the worlding practices we are part of.

[4] Managing 'risk' might sound reasonable, but we need to remember that those in power make sure their own risk is manageable, which does not mean, and has never meant, everyone will be taken care of.

QT/BIPOC Futures in SF

Luciano and Chen (2015) argue, speculative fiction has "long served as a rich source of queer posthumanist provocation, a site for imagining other, possibly queerer, worlds" (p. 188). But it's not only the content of speculative fiction that's strange, it's temporality itself. Queer temporality asks us to resist heteronormative (progress oriented, reproductive futurist, biologically ordered) time. Queer time is not linear: It gestures in various directions—orientations—that might move fast–slow or with a different tempo. Queer time unsettles dominant narratives of progress, newness, and Imperialism. As such, queer and crip scholars recognize there are necessarily different approaches to futurism and argue for an approach to futurity that doesn't seek "continuity, security, or assured meaning" (Obourn 2013, p. 109). Rather than a reproduction of the same, a crip futurity for McRuer (2006) includes the promise to "always comprehend disability otherwise" and in collective access "to other worlds and futures" (208).

Temporality is also taken up through Afrofuturism, which utilizes diverse counter-cultural practices in speculative gestures to unsettle the ongoing neoliberalism and whiteness of mainstream speculative worlding. As Kilgore (2014) states, "Afrofuturism was a way around the racial exclusion encoded in the various media of mainstream Futurism" (p. 561). The metaphysics of Afrofuturism includes vision, positive thinking, gesture, and imagination. Afrofuturism is not restricted to literature. It features in music as diverse as Jazz and Hip Hop, and has been attributed to musicians as diverse as Sun Ra and Janelle Monáe. Afrofuturism is also activated in the visual arts and dance, and more recently Marvel's blockbuster film *Black Panther*. Afrofuturism's aesthetics of hope operates in response to Afropessimism and the over-representation and reproduction of whiteness politically, socially, and culturally. Womack (2013) proposes that Afrofuturism is both "an artistic aesthetic and a framework for critical theory…a total reenvisioning of the past and speculation about the future rife with cultural critiques" (p. 9). According to Fisher (2013) Afrofuturism "unravels any linear model of the future, disrupting the idea that the future will be a simple supersession of the past. Time in Afrofuturism is plastic, stretchable and prophetic" (p. 47). Time is queered. The queer temporality in speculative thought has the potential to attend to futurities that 'haunt' the present. Blackman (2017) uses Derrida's *hauntology* to refer to cultural productions that anticipate radically different futures. This hints at the potential of speculative fabulation as a material practice of thinking and writing alternative futures from the prevailing Euro-Western norm. This has direct relevance to the English curriculum that still prioritizes writings that are very much rooted in a colonial past (future). The *whiteness* of the English curriculum consistently erases or ignores QT/BIPOC subjectivities, and continues to foreclose QT/BIPOC futurites through regularly failing to recognize marginalised authors and their writings as 'literature'.

This erasure is more than merely a curricular issue. As Medak-Saltzman (2017) states, the practice of foreclosing "Indigenous futures has been (and remains) part and parcel of core settler logics" (p. 144). However, there's been a resurgence in Indigenous futurism in both stories and films in recent years. Much Indigenous speculative fiction takes up facts of historical trauma in an effort to enact decolonizing methodologies, self-determination, and rupture settler futurities. Dillon (2012) discusses how in contemporary life and Indigenous fiction it may appear as if the 'Native Apocalypse' has already occurred. However, the whole idea of an apocalypse, Dillon argues, is a Euro-Western one. She posits instead that Indigenous culture is in a state of 'imbalance' and suggests that writing and telling stories may offer a path back to balance or *biskaabiiyang* (resurgence of sovereignty) (p. 10). This is not about framing Indigenous peoples as victims, rather acknowledging they were *never*

defeated, and continue to resist the occupation of their lands. As Vizenor (2012) writes in his excellent short story *Custer on the Slipstream*, around the globe "the white government sends food and medicine to people who are hungry and sick but not to the Indians. We get nothing, nothing, because the white man never defeated us…" (p. 21). These storying practices, like traditional storying practices, counter ongoing settler narratives and intervene into how the future and past are narrated. Indigenous author and theorist Simpson (2011) states,

> Storytelling becomes a space where we can escape the gaze of the cage of Empire… [and] is an important process for visioning, imagining, and critiquing the social space around us, and ultimately challenging the colonial norms fraught in our daily lives (34)

Decolonization of the imagination, Imarisha (2015) argues, "is the most subversive and dangerous form there is: for it is where all other forms of decolonization are born" (p. 4). In this regard, speculative thought and storytelling are crucial ethico-political practices for undoing regimes of power. However, Imarisha points out that mainstream speculative fiction too often continues to reinforce and re-affirm dominant narratives. Following her critique, it is important to recognize how the field of English (and speculative) literature continues to function in the service of white supremacy. This is brought home in two recent news events in English education globally: Lola Olufemi's 2017 open letter calling for the need to 'de-colonize' the mostly-white English curriculum at Cambridge University, which was picked up and circulated in the media as an attempt to remove white authors from the curriculum altogether; and the Australian teenagers who abused Aboriginal speculative fiction author and poet Ellen van Neerven online with racist and vulgar comments because they struggled reading her poem 'Mangos' on the New South Wales year 12 English Exam. Both of these examples, demonstrate not only a need to significantly change what (and how) texts are taught in schools, but also speaks to the situatedness of SF worldings. SFs offer us generative practices for imagining a different future, but they must be grounded in response-ability for the worlds we inherit and create.

Feminist thought is necessarily situated and from that situatedness speculates "upon the (im)possible in ways that challenge historical knowledge" (Egaña Rojas 2018, np). As such, Åsberg, Thiele and van der Tuin (2015) discuss how 'speculative alter-worlding' describes both the practice of conceiving of a different world order, and challenging "taken-for-granted knowledges by way of situating them in specific historical, sociocultural, material and bodily contexts" (p. 153). This is the ethico-political crux of speculative thought. Such an ethics demands a balance between acknowledging the differential of situatedness *and* speculation, while following Stengers' call to "cultivate risky attachments as a mode of attending" (Instone and Taylor 2015, p. 146) to differences that *matter*. Ethics is not about the correct or right response "to a radically exterior/ized other, but about responsibility and accountability for the lively relationalities of becoming of which we are part" (Barad 2007, p. 393). Haraway (2008) asks us to become responsible through creating and 'sticky-knots' that bind "intra-acting critters, including people, together in the kinds of response and regard that change the subject—and the object" (p. 287). Such encounters she asserts will engender a change in us because once we *know* we will no longer be able to *not know*. For Haraway, this is how "responsibility grows" (p. 287). This is a responsibility for the worlding practices we participate in, including the materiality of thoughts, relations, and the politics of how we distribute our speculative attention in what we choose to read, write, cite, circulate, and produce, while also paying attention to who and what is *inevitably* excluded within these 'affirmative' practices. Haraway (2016a, b) states, "it matters what matters we use to think other matters with; it matters what stories we tell to tell other

stores with …" (p. 12). By this she refers to the politics of worlding practices. There's a *politics* to how we distribute our actual, and speculative attention, the words we use, the stories we tell, and the stories we listen to (Ahmed 2008).

I will end this paper with an SF proposition: *Read, write, and cite the writings and worlding practices of QTBIPOC and disabled authors, and thinkers.*

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