

CALL FOR PAPERS

The Ninth Annual Queens College English Graduate Conference

IN OTHER WORLDS

Conference Dates: March 27, 2024
Submission Deadline: February 28, 2024

The *Washington Post* declared 2022 the “[year of the multiverse](#).” Popularized in films like the Academy Award-nominated *Everything, Everywhere, All at Once* and *Dr. Strange in the Multiverse of Madness*, the concept of the multiverse invites us to think about how lives, societies, and species may have unfolded differently. The term extends far beyond these recent films and has a variety of applications and usages in literature, graphic narratives, film, gaming, cosmology, and philosophy. The 2023 English Graduate Conference at Queens College is taking the multiverse as inspiration for a theme inviting papers on the creation of new worlds. If the pandemic taught us anything, it is that we can do things differently. For many, the post-pandemic return to “normal” in our universities, neighborhoods, places of work, and seats of government, has led us to question the definition of normal, to ask whether it is in fact something we want to return to, and to consider how we might rewrite a better present.

While we may think of literature as removed from social change, it equips us for the work of making a more beautiful, just world. In “[World-Making](#),” Min Hyo Young Song writes, “Literature is an unmooring from time” with the “capacity to make worlds.” This Call for Papers invites submissions that consider literature’s capacity to do just that: reject the normal, speculate on other possibilities, defamiliarize, remake. This could include consideration of recent works that do this, but also could include work on texts from earlier periods that were attempting to rethink the prevailing concepts that governed their time.

What models of reading and writing with reparative motives inspire us to imagine what may yet be possible? “The desire of a reparative impulse...is additive and accretive,” writes Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick (*Paranoid Reading, Reparative Reading*, 149). We aim to create a space for dialogue that is addictive and accretive. How do we create worlds that build on past attempts to do the same? How do we create spaces that are more welcoming and accommodating? How can we recover pasts that help reshape who we are in the present? We invite proposals (collaborative or individual) that creatively investigate texts that fundamentally undo some aspect of our world in order to remake it anew.

The conference will end with a reading and discussion with Hugo Award-winning science fiction writer and MacArthur Grant recipient **NK Jemisin**, who will be visiting as part of Queens College’s “Off the Page” series.

We welcome submissions on a wide range of topics and in a variety of forms. This includes (but is not limited to) essays, reflections, and scholarly discussions that explore:

--re-inventing” the university	--decolonizing knowledge
--creative “remakes”	--relationship repair/hierarchies of character
--mediating grief/mourning	relationships
--the pleasures and joys of creation	--remaking labor practices
--the pluriverse	--literature & ethical interventions
--superheroes and comics	--critical fabulation

--poetry and imagination

--utopian writing

--doppelgangers and parallel realities

Please submit proposals (250 words max.) to MAEnglish@qc.cuny.edu by Wednesday February 28, 2024. Proposals should indicate both the title and content as well as the format of your project. While we welcome academic essays, we are open to a variety of presentation formats, as we invite you to test the boundaries of form. Possibilities include the reading of an academic paper, a pedagogical reflection, a podcast, a video essay, an asynchronous presentation, a virtual exhibit, a listening party, or a book review. Submissions may also be co-authored/co-created; this could include a joint presentation or roundtable. All Queens College MA, MFA, MSEd, and MAT students are welcome to submit, as well as master's students from other schools.