

Sample Social Justice Science-Fiction/Fantasy Texts

[Children of Blood and Bone](#) (Adeyemi, 2018)

“Zélie Adebola remembers when the soil of Orisha hummed with magic. Burners ignited flames, Tiders beckoned waves, and Zélie’s Reaper mother summoned forth souls. But everything changed the night magic disappeared. Under the orders of a ruthless king, maji were killed, leaving Zélie without a mother and her people without hope. Now Zélie has one chance to bring back magic and strike against the monarchy. With the help of a rogue princess, Zélie must outwit and outrun the crown prince, who is hell-bent on eradicating magic for good. Danger lurks in Orisha, where snow leoponaires prowl and vengeful spirits wait in the waters. Yet the greatest danger may be Zélie herself as she struggles to control her powers and her growing feelings for an enemy.”

[Internment](#) (Ahmed, 2019)

“A story of hope and resistance aimed at young audiences, *Internment* gets at the heart of the terrifying state of our politics. Set in a horrifying “15 minutes in the future” United States, the book follows 17-year-old Layla Amin as she is forced into an internment camp for Muslim Americans along with her parents. With the help of newly made friends also trapped in the camp, her boyfriend on the outside, and an unexpected alliance, Layla begins a journey to fight for freedom, leading a revolution against the internment camp’s director and his guards. *Internment* questions the imaginary boundaries that separate us, and challenges readers to fight the complicit silence that exists in our society today.”

[Midnight Robber](#) (Hopkinson, 2001)

“It’s Carnival time and the Caribbean-colonized planet of Toussaint is celebrating with music, dance, and pageantry. Masked “Midnight Robbers” waylay revelers with brandished weapons and spellbinding words. To young Tan-Tan, the Robber Queen is simply a favorite costume to wear at the festival—until her power-corrupted father commits an unforgiveable crime. Suddenly, both father and daughter are thrust into the brutal world of New Half-Way Tree. Here monstrous creatures from folklore are real, and the humans are violent outcasts in the wilds. Tan-Tan must reach into the heart of myth and become the Robber Queen herself. For only the Robber Queen’s legendary powers can save her life . . . and set her free.”

[Octavia’s Brood](#) (Imarisha & brown, 2015)

“Whenever we envision a world without war, without prisons, without capitalism, we are producing speculative fiction. Organizers and activists envision, and try to create, such worlds all the time. Walidah Imarisha and adrienne maree brown have brought twenty of them together in the first anthology of short stories to explore the connections between radical speculative fiction and movements for social change. The visionary tales of *Octavia’s Brood* span genres—sci-fi, fantasy, horror, magical realism—but all are united by an attempt to inject a healthy dose of imagination and innovation into our political practice and to try on new ways of understanding ourselves, the world around us, and all the selves and worlds that could be. The collection is rounded off with essays by Tananarive Due and Mumia Abu-Jamal, and a preface by Sheree Renée Thomas.”

Sorcerer to the Crown (Cho, 2016)

“The Royal Society of Unnatural Philosophers maintains the magic within His Majesty’s lands. But lately, the once proper institute has fallen into disgrace, naming an altogether unsuitable gentleman as their Sorcerer Royal and allowing England’s stores of magic to bleed dry. At least they haven’t stooped so low as to allow women to practice what is obviously a man’s profession...At his wit’s end, Zacharias Wythe, Sorcerer Royal of the Unnatural Philosophers, ventures to the border of Fairyland to discover why England’s magical stocks are drying up, an adventure that brings him in contact with Prunella Gentlewoman, a woman with immense power and an unfathomable gift, and sets him on a path which will alter the nature of sorcery in all of Britain—and the world at large.”

The Binti Trilogy (Okorafor, 2015)

“Her name is Binti, and she is the first of the Himba people ever to be offered a place at Oomza University, the finest institution of higher learning in the galaxy. But to accept the offer will mean giving up her place in her family to travel between the stars among strangers who do not share her ways or respect her customs. Knowledge comes at a cost, one that Binti is willing to pay, but her journey will not be easy. The world she seeks to enter has long warred with the Meduse, an alien race that has become the stuff of nightmares. Oomza University has wronged the Meduse, and Binti’s stellar travel will bring her within their deadly reach. If Binti hopes to survive the legacy of a war not of her making, she will need both the gifts of her people and the wisdom enshrined within the University, itself - but first she has to make it there, alive.”

An Unkindness of Ghosts (Solomon, 2017)

“Odd-mannered, obsessive, withdrawn--botanist and healer Aster Gray has little to offer folks in rebuttal when they call her *ogre* and *freak*. She's used to the names; she only wishes there was more truth to them. If she were truly the monster they accused of her being, she'd be powerful enough to tear down the walls of *HSS Matilda*, the generation ship ferrying the last of humanity to a mythical Promised Land. When a series of blackouts threatens *Matilda's* voyage as well as the lonely life Aster has carved out for herself in the slum decks of the ship, she becomes embroiled in a grudge with a brutal overseer bent on bringing her to heel. Aster may have found a way to improve her lot--if she's willing to take him on and sow the seeds of civil war.”

Professional Readings

- [“Afrocarnival: Celebrating Black bodies and critiquing oppressive bodies in Afrofuturist literature”](#) (Toliver, 2020)
- [Breaking binaries: #BlackGirlMagic and the Black ratchet imagination](#) (Toliver, 2019)
- [Justice in Young Adult Speculative Fiction: A Cognitive Reading](#) (Oziewicz, 2015)
- [“\(Re\)Writing reality: Using science fiction to analyze the world”](#) (Toliver & Miller, 2019)
- [The Dark Fantastic: Race and the Imagination from Harry Potter to the Hunger Games](#) (Thomas, 2019)

