

Megan Clifford's abstract

Although I have significant experience writing speculative fiction, especially fantasy, working on *Eventualities* has been my first foray into sci-fi. With the exception of a few extensive projects in my teens, as well as the beginning of a novel written in my Advanced Fiction class, most of my writing to date has been short-form fiction. I considered crafting a single, longer piece for my thesis, but ultimately decided that a short story collection would be the best medium to express the themes I was interested in—capitalism, mass surveillance, and mental and bodily autonomy. These are some of the many thematic concerns that commonly appear in the genre of science fiction, which I learned after a great deal of research.

Much of the research I did took place during my Honors College Summer Research Fellowship, a four-week period of study dedicated to examining the state of the field of sci-fi. I spent this time reading novels, short stories, news stories, and pieces of literary criticism while crafting an extensive annotated bibliography, which can be found at the end of this collection. It includes works of science fiction, works about writing, works about the themes my stories are focused on, and works about the state of America and the world. I would not have been able to write *Eventualities* without the knowledge I gained from this experience. Perhaps the most important thing my research showed me is that social critiques are endemic to sci-fi. When formulating the concepts and plots for my stories, I had to think about issues that mattered to me and consider how they could become more out of control than they already are, especially through technological advancement. I spent a lot of time pondering these issues, as well as scenarios in which they might manifest, before I finally came up with the ideas for my four stories.