

# Dark Matter Guidelines

**Dark Matter** will publish poetry, flash-fiction, short fiction, essays, and musings. We are interested in all things speculative in literature. We are not interested in anything dogmatic or mystical. Use natural metaphor to explore meaning and challenge traditional wisdom. We especially want to encourage new writers, particularly those who may not have training in writing but want to express creative explorations. We are particularly interested in the perspectives of science students and scientists who would like to share their creative writing. Please follow the guidelines below before submitting your work or thoughts. When you are ready, send your post to [hogeb@uhd.edu](mailto:hogeb@uhd.edu).

## General Considerations

We encourage submission of new and previously published work, from emerging and established authors. We simply want to highlight the best speculative literature on the web. You may also submit your work simultaneously to other blogs, journals or anthologies, just keep in mind the guidelines of those publications when allowing us to post your work. We don't want to interfere with the dissemination of good speculative literature, and we would be glad to re-consider work after publication elsewhere once rights to the work revert to the author.

We will generally respond towards the end of the academic semester preceding publication. If you submit soon after an issue is published, therefore, it may take longer than 3 months to receive a response, but we try to respond within one month to anything we receive during a semester. If you have not received a response after a couple of months, you may query us about the status of your submission.

We will not publish egregious vulgarity, profanity, or sexual content. We will not publish anything that displays a lack of proper respect for any culture, creed, race, or religion. You can question dogmatic beliefs, but don't attack. Stay positive and sell your point of view without resorting to aspersion and logical fallacy.

Here are a few things we are looking for:

- Nature writing that looks under the surface for new metaphor,
- Writing about the human condition that uses metaphor from nature or science,
- Science writing that looks towards the unknown without being mystical or suggesting that there are some things we can't know or understand,
- Sublime humor that uncovers possibilities of the unknown in nature or the human condition,
- Essays or musings about science topics that expose the human condition in our relationship to nature and knowledge.

This is not an exhaustive list, so please keep trying to surprise us. But, as managing editor I am also seeing trends in submissions that are missing the mark in some subtle ways. Here are a few things we are not generally responsive to:

- Horror and/or crime (without metaphor as the premise),
- Science fiction without speculation,
- Dark humor,
- Dark romance, and especially not crimes of passion or subversion,
- Speculation on love that does not include natural/science metaphor.

Our title, Dark Matter, is meant to suggest the unknown. It is not intended to automatically imply amoral, macabre, sadness, or evil. A lot of what we reject would fit nicely in other journals. It is rarely the quality of the writing that leads to rejection.

## **Poetry**

We welcome any style of poetry, but the poem must be speculative in nature and/or use natural metaphor. We have no restrictions on length, though the longer the poem the more it will have to wow us. Please send no more than three poems at a time.

## **Fiction**

We will consider flash-fiction and short fiction of no more than 1500 words. We are not interested in science fiction, though we recognize the distinction between speculative fiction and science fiction is difficult to define. Please send one story at a time.

## **Essays**

We will consider essays on any science or nature topic. We will also consider essays on the role of science in literature and society. We have no restrictions on length, though concise well-crafted essays will have a better chance of impressing us.

## **Musings**

What do you think speculative literature is? What is natural metaphor? How can allusion to modern science contribute to the richness of the literary landscape? Let us know what you think.

## **In Addition**

Criteria for what constitutes literary speculative writing are, of course, subjective and vary with each editor at Dark Matter. As with any journal, the best way to judge whether a piece is right for us is to read what we've already published. I have final say, so any tendencies we display are probably due to my own lens.

Thank you for considering Dark Matter Journal for your work!

Sincerely,

Brad Hoge  
Managing Editor