



# Failed Again: The Fault-Lines in Utopia

## Schedule

10<sup>th</sup> September 2024

Location: Henry Daysh Building, Newcastle University

**9:15-9:25: Welcome by Davina Cooper, Ruth Houghton and Mathias Thaler**

HDB 1.02

**9:25-10:55: Plenary session, chaired by Ruth Houghton**

HDB 1.02

Maša Mrovlje	Responding to Failure: Rosa Luxemburg in Dialogue with Prefigurative Politics
Robert Ziegelmann	Does Utopia Succeed through Its Failure to Imagine Radical Alternatives?
Heather McKnight and Kirsty Lumm	Weaving Failure into the Utopian Fabric – Artistic Engagements within Creative Care Café Structures

**10:55-11:15: Coffee break and ‘Academic Care Café’**

Room HDB 1.04

**11:15-12:45: Parallel sessions**

*Session 1: Room HDB 1.09, chaired by Lars Waldorf*

Flora Renz	Creating utopian communities of safety in the wake of a global pandemic
Tamara Caraus	The Inbuilt Failure, or the Idea of Perestroika



*Session 2: Room HDB 1.10, chaired by Richard Clay*

Peter Watt and Kostas Amiridis	Utopia, Business and Corporations
Marlena Rycombel	Non-pragmatic money as a tool for social change? Exchange through local cryptocurrencies as a symbolic gesture and imagination performance
Jessy Kate Schingler	The Institutional Precarity of Utopia

**12:45-13:45: Catered lunch break**

Room HDB 1.04

**13:45-15:35: Parallel sessions**

*Session 1: Room HDB 1.09, chaired by Emily Jones*

Annette Hohenberger	The dynamics of anticipated utopian failure in the climate crisis
Matthew Benjamin Cole	A Grassroots Utopia: Power, Movement, and The Transformative Politics of the Green New Deal
Miranda Iossifidis, Mack Sproates, and Bethan Sproat	Reflections on co-producing speculative climate futures zines

*Session 2: Room HDB 1.10, chaired by Lisa Garforth*

Robin Bunce	'Some kinds of failure are better than other kinds': Nineteen Eighty Four and utopia
Markus Ketola	The utter failure of the modern Finnish society: the dystopian storytelling of Pentti Linkola and the possibility of "storying otherwise"
Owen Holland	William Morris and the Utopian Tradition
Jon Quayle	'From visions of despair I rose': Failure and Hope in Shelley's Poetry

**15:35-16:00: Refreshment break and 'Academic Care Café'**

Room HDB 1.04



**16:00-17:00: Special Session with the Abolition Feminism for Ending Sexual Violence Network**

Room HDB 1.02

Keynote: Phil Crockett Thomas, 'Fiction, failure, and the anti-carceral imagination'

Information about the Abolition Feminism for Ending Sexual Violence network:

<https://blogs.ncl.ac.uk/genderresearchgroup/2022/08/17/research-showcase-abolition-feminism/>

**18:30: Workshop dinner at *The Magic Hat Café***

Information about *The Magic Hat Café*:

<https://www.themagichatcafe.co.uk/>



## Schedule

11<sup>th</sup> September 2024

### 9:00-10:30: Plenary session, chaired by Davina Cooper

Room HDB 1.02

Mathijs van de Sande	The Paris Commune as Failure and Utopia: Henri Lefebvre on the Method of Transduction
Lee Stickels	Building Cracks in Reality
Nathaniel Coleman	Anything Living is Unfinished: Utopia & Fallibility

### 10:30-10:50: Coffee break and 'Academic Care Café'

Room HDB 1.13

### 10:50-12:20: Parallel sessions

*Session 1: Room HDB 1.09, chaired by Peter Hill*

Peter Cox	A radical politics of failure: insights from a failed religious community
G Andrea Teti	Failure's Power: The Role of Failure in Confessional forms of Power
Judy Thorne	What can be learned in permanent and gathering crisis by insisting on treating the future ethnographically as a place to make up desires? Some utopian methodological observations from Greece, after hope failed

*Session 2: Room HDB 1.10, chaired by Matthew Nicholson*

Brian Carey	Shooting for the Moon: The Rationality of Utopian Ambition
Adam Potts	At the limit of the possible
Brian McGrail	When does utopia fail, and how would we know?

### 12:20-13:20: Catered lunch break and 'Academic Care Café'

Room HDB 1.13



**13:20-14:50: Parallel sessions**

*Session 1: Room HDB 1.09, chaired by Max Rozenburg*

Núria Salvador	Beyond Thoreau's Cabin: surviving in a rural utopia
Richard Mullender	Utopia, Dystopia, Heterotopia
Ming Kit Wong	Judith Shklar and the Failure of Utopia

*Session 2: Room HDB 1.10, chaired by Krzysztof Rowinski*

Thomas Telios	Whither Utopias?
Arianna Preite	'Utopia could not be separated from this rottenness': the Atlantic Ocean as elusive dream in Saidiya Hartman, Nerine Dorman and Pauline Melville

**14:50-15:10: Coffee break and 'Academic Care Café'**

Room: HDB 1.13

**15:10-16:10: Plenary session, chaired by Mathias Thaler**

Room HDB 1.02

Roberto Mordacci	Utopia as a Fragment
Sabrina Muchová	Political Failure, Aesthetic Merit: On the Social Impact of Utopia as Narrative Fiction

**16:10-16:30: 'Academic Care Café' outcomes**

Room HDB 1.13

**16:30-17:30: Reflections on the workshop as well as closing remarks by Davina Cooper, Ruth Houghton and Mathias Thaler**

Room HDB 1.02



## Academic Care Café: Rebuilding the University by Playing in the Rubbish

Heather McKnight (Magnetic Ideals), Kirsty Lumm (Arts for Life), and Jimmy Turner (Binks Hub)

In this care café, we will explore the failure of the potential utopian space that is the university today. Mired in managerialism, neoliberalism and capitalism, boxed, siloed, and divided, the academic spaces we live in are those of epistemic structural harm that are geared more towards market values and monetary value than caring for staff, students and the production of knowledge that can support and change the world for the better.

In this workshop space, we encourage you to dismantle what does not work, create hope from the rubble, engage in collage and sculpture and work in the spirit of collaboration to reimagine and reconstruct the form of the university. What we create on day one in room 1:04 will face the disruption of moving to 1:13 space, allowing for further reimagining and exploration of the fluidity and malleability often experienced within times of systemic chaos. There is no right or wrong in this place of play, speaking, sharing, and, if you like, reflecting while doing. Working with upcycled university marketing materials or 'rubbish' we encourage you to rip, cut and crawl through these new landscapes, bringing new to life and hope to the spaces that fail us through discriminatory practices, racist agendas, gendered hierarchies, sexual identity discrimination and ableist practices.

We plan to create an online representation of the final work that can be engaged with online as an interactive virtual gallery for the final event in London. Come join us in finding hope and joy through creative practice and shared stories!

### **Alien Alarms - Utopia or Dystopia?**

We will also have access to a listening post/soundtrack by artist Alien Alarms (Jim Purbrick) new as yet unreleased album *Utopia or Dystopia*. There will be a chance to respond to this piece, which aims to be part of the process of dissolving the walls between the academic and non-academic spaces.

Alien Alarms combine poetry, prose, philosophy and found sounds with live, improvised generative rhythms, beat chopping and custom software to make music about love, loss, technology and society for the head, the feet and the heart- you can read more about Alien Alarms here: <https://alienalarms.bandcamp.com/>