

Francis Gene-Rowe:

"Capital's Spectres: Language, Resistance & New Worlds vs. the Eternal Present" June 25, 1 – 2:30pm in HMNSS 2212

Capital's plasticity enables it to absorb and metabolise earlier forms of production and experience, present-day positions of resistance, and visions of alternative futures. The now of global capitalism is haunted by spectres of now-defunct forms of cultural experience, semiotic ghosts of futures that never were, and the endlessly recycled memories of the 1980s. Science Fiction's (SF) capacity to unseat capitalism's grip upon the imagination is undermined by its aesthetic implication in a now that increasingly resembles a dreary cyberpunk dystopia. Via a discussion of Stephen Mooney's SF poem *Ratzinger Solo* (2016) – a text in which the undying voices of Han Solo, Cardinal Ratzinger and Donald Trump compete for dominance – this talk explores the relationship between a haunted present and its deterministic underpinnings, as well as our own complicity in empowering such spectral personages.

