

An invitation from Michael Godhe and Luke Goode – the critical future studies network

In recent times, we have valued and enjoyed connecting with researchers from multiple countries and disciplines who have expressed interest in the field of critical future studies. We want to maintain and enrich those connections. As such, we would like to invite you to join an international CFS network. At this stage, the network is relatively informal. And joining us does not commit you to anything in terms of time or input — though, of course, we'd be delighted to see collaborations emerging from the network. If you're interested, please read on...

The Critical Future Studies (CFS) network brings together an interdisciplinary group of scholars with a shared interest the future and, in particular, how potential futures are imagined, represented or discussed. CFS draws on perspectives from various disciplines including sociology, political studies, intellectual history, cultural history, media and cultural studies, utopian studies, science fiction studies, science and technology studies, and philosophy. CFS also engages with discourses and ideas from the natural sciences (including popular science), computing and economics.

CFS, as we conceive it, also values and promotes vigorous, imaginative and inclusive debate about the future. We seek to explore both the possibilities of and obstacles to a futural public sphere capable of challenging fatalism and an all-too prevalent cynicism about our capacity to imagine alternative futures in the face of contemporary crisis and precarity. CFS embraces diverse perspectives and, taken as a whole, does not promote any one particular vision of the future. It is best understood as a programme of engaged and open-ended social critique underpinned by rigorous research and debate.

For an introduction to the themes of critical studies, please see the following publications:

- [‘Beyond Capitalist Realism – Why We Need Critical Future Studies’ \(2017\) \[pdf\]](#)
- The [special themed section on critical future studies in the journal *Culture Unbound* \(2018\)](#), beginning with ‘Critical Future Studies – A Thematic Introduction’ that provides an overview of the academic context for CFS.

NB While the above texts serve in one sense as foundational or programmatic texts, we do not see them as definitive or final statements about the scope, methods or themes of CFS. We

hope for and expect the identity of CFS as a field of study to evolve over time through the work of a diverse range of researchers.

To begin with, we are setting up a mailing list for researchers interested in being connected with the CFS network. The purpose of the list will be to share resources and suggestions for collaboration (e.g. conference panels, publications etc.), as well as to discuss themes of common interest. While a mailing list may seem like an old-fashioned approach, it's one that is simple and accessible to all (unlike a Facebook group, for example). To avoid contributing to the problem of email overload, we will ask members to post to the list no more than once per week (multiple items can be bundled). And we will happily take suggestions for moving to a different and better platform as the network develops!

If you are interested in being part of this network, please contact one of us and we will add you to our mailing list:

- Dr Michael Godhe: michael.godhe@liu.se, Linköping University
- Associate Professor Luke Goode: l.goode@auckland.ac.nz, University of Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand

Also, feel free to email us with any questions or suggestions.