



Anglia Ruskin
University

Global Sustainability
Institute

Using interdisciplinarity to imagine future alternatives

Victoria Tait and Sarah Porter



Overview

- **Introduction to module and rationale for developing it** – *Victoria Tait*
- **Vision of the future** – *Sarah Porter*
- **Pre-prepared questions** – *Victoria Tait and Sarah Porter*

What if imagination could save the world?

About the module:

- *ARU Ruskin module – developed in 2021/22*
- *Climate Justice and Social Inequality module – students are confronted with images of climate and environmental breakdown*
- *Recognition that many students are concerned about the future and feel unable to imagine preferable alternatives*

'It becomes easier to imagine the end of the world than alternatives to it' (Yusoff & Gabrys, 2011)

What if imagination could save the world?

About the module:

- *Module was underpinned by the belief that the only way to create a different way of being is to work collectively on imagining one*
- ***Pre-figuration** – my values for a preferable future were embedded in the module design*
- *Each week focused on a different topic, from attempts at creating social utopias in the past, to climate futures and the role of AI*
- *As part of their assignments, students had to use speculative fiction methods to create a vision of a preferable future set in 2045*

What if imagination could save the world?

Role of interdisciplinarity:

- *Students had to conduct research into their own discipline and the way in which it might change and evolve in future*
- *Students were separated into groups of 4, composed of students from a range of disciplines and were asked to present their findings*
- *In the assessment, students had to reference the discussions they had with peers from a different discipline, e.g. on the future of health, future of literature, future of art etc and how this had in some way challenged or altered their vision*

Some examples....

POLICING AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGES IN THE FUTURE

- By 2040, police training packages could be delivered more cost-effective, realistic, and more efficient with the introduction of VR (College of Policing, 2020).
- The use of AI in criminal investigations is a possibility, which will help speed up the identification of criminals and what their motives are, this helps the police manage resources more effectively and could help prevent crime from occurring (College of Policing, 2020).
- Crime prevention duties such as surveillance, patrolling, and the collection of criminal intelligence are more than likely to become digitalised with distributed sensing and remote surveillance capabilities, however, there may be concerns by the public in relation to privacy (Interpol, 2022).



Disciplines of the future: AI

With the use of AI software to create artwork becoming more advanced, it could be used to help or hinder artists. While it could become an incredible resource for generating ideas or creating works, traditional artists may start being put out of work for the quicker, cheaper alternatives AI could generate. I've already seen AI artists use prompts to animate using software such as DALL·E2 (e.g.: [\(60\) DIE ANTWOORD - AGE OF ILLUSION \(Ai VIDEO\) - YouTube](#))



Image source: [DALL-E is now available to all. So let your imagination soar : NPR](#)

Vision of the future

By Sarah Porter

Questions

- *What was your view on the future before you joined this module?*
- *Has your view of the future changed as a result?*

Final question – if time!

- *What impact did listening to people from other disciplinary perspectives have on you?*

Thank you!

