

MATERIALIZED SCIENCE FICTION: SPECULATIVE NARRATIVES AS INFRASTRUCTURE FOR CORPORATE POWER AND GOVERNANCE

Silicon Valley's most powerful figures do not merely borrow their ideas from science fiction; they build the world with it.

This lecture develops the framework of materialized science fiction to show how speculative narratives - Asimov's Foundation, Tolkien's palantiri, Stephenson's Snow Crash - are converted into working infrastructure: surveillance platforms, rocket programmes, financial instruments and company towns.

Drawing on Palantir's "technological republic", SpaceX's 2026 flotation and Starbase, the corporate settlement in South Texas where a private firm sets the rules of local government, it argues that these fictions do not simply legitimate corporate power after the fact. They organise it, supplying a vocabulary in which private authority appears as destiny and democratic deliberation as obsolete delay. At stake is not only who owns the technologies of the future but who is authorised to imagine it.

The lecture closes by asking how science fiction's imaginative resources might be reclaimed for democratic rather than corporate ends.

GUEST LECTURER
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MORE INFO

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Aarhus University
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1422-125



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He writes on speculative fiction, finance and political power, and is the author of Post-Politics in Context (Routledge) and Fictional Worlds and Financial Realities in Speculative Literature and Film (Palgrave, forthcoming)



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