

**A Junior Researchers in Anglo-American Studies Newsletter
May 2026**



[*V for Vendetta*](#) foresaw an authoritarian dictatorship and commented on the role that cultural memory takes in dismantling it, as Professor Joana Caetano explained in her introduction. PhD candidate Raquel Souza gave a brief talk on [*Soylent Green*](#), which anticipated a similar dystopia. In *Soylent Green*, the powers-that-be depend on socio-economic inequality and food scarcity to uphold their system, while *V for Vendetta*'s government relies more on the direct oppression and censorship of the masses (and vulnerable minorities in particular) instead of monopolising their food source. On the other hand, [*2001: A Space Odyssey*](#) was a giant leap for sci-fi films, as Professor Teresa Pereira explained in her introduction. Kubrick envisioned work stations on the moon and deep space exploration before Neil Armstrong had taken his small step on lunar ground. The film also issues a pertinent, if eerie warning about artificial intelligence.

Although perhaps not as uncannily clairvoyant as Robertson's divination of the Titanic wreckage, some literary speculative fictions also envisioned their own alternative futures, some of which are brighter than others.

Books such as *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep* (1968)—initially set in 1992 but “delayed” to 2021 in later editions—appear to suggest that, sometime in the 80 years that followed Bellamy’s conception of utopia, expectations grew less favourable:

As the century closed, some concerns appear to have overshadowed others: in her 1993 novel, *Parable of the Sower*, Octavia E. Butler foresaw a dark 2024 in which the American government, and indeed society, have all but collapsed, with fenced communities surrounded by crime, violence, and death. Almost prophetically, the 1998 sequel, *Parable of the Talents*, mentions the emergence of an authoritarian politician with the campaign slogan “Make America Great Again”. Although a similar version had been used during Reagan’s 1980 presidential campaign, this precedent does not make the echoes of Butler’s envisioned dystopia any less prophetic considering the current sociopolitical climate in the US.

Sarrica in Porto—12 and 13 January

Horizon at school—10 and 11 February

Ciao, Mirella, ciao

Visit from Yiorgos—13 and 14 April

The Centre was happy to welcome [Yiorgos Podaropoulos](#), a PhD candidate at the University of Oslo. Yiorgos played a game of *Horizon* and discussed his research on utopian elements in James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) with the JRAAS team.

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JRAAS Time Capsule <<<<<<<<<<<<<<<< || >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>

The team worked together to list some objects that we would like to place in our time capsule. In addition to a photograph of the JRAAS group—a type of memorabilia more classically included in these types of projects—we chose to include some works of media of which we are all fond. We also consider that these works and/or the landmarks they achieved are important representations of the 21st century so far.

Although unconventional, this time capsule is hypothetical only in so far as it is not a physical container buried or locked to be recovered and opened at a future time. It does however, like everything on the internet, hold the potential to be rediscovered in the future in circumstances we cannot predict.



American Idiot (2004): Green Day's seventh studio album is a fearless criticism of the American government harmonised with a message of hope and perseverance that has lost none of its relevance more than 20 years after its debut.

Sinners (2025): Ryan Coogler's film is a favourite with the JRAAS team. It is a work that shows a masterful command of music and of depictions of the supernatural to portray the parallels between the struggles of the Black community during the Jim Crow era and the oppression and imperialism suffered by the Irish people.

Interview With The Vampire (1976): Celebrating 50 years since its publication, the first instalment of Anne Rice's *The Vampire Chronicles* is another favourite of the JRAAS group. Its efforts to popularize a "modern" vampire struggling with immortality, humanity, and sexuality have had enormous influence on subsequent vampire-related media.

***Red Dead Redemption 2* (2018):** Videogames are as welcome as books, films, and music here at CETAPS. RDR2 maximised the critical acclaim received by the 2010 debut of the series. The narrative revives the American Wild West in an interactive digital setting, attesting to the longevity of the Frontier myth.

***The Picture of Dorian Gray—Uncensored* (2011):** 120 years after its initial publication in 1890, this landmark of Gothic fiction has finally been published in its full version with this edition restoring passages censored by its first publisher. In any of its versions, Oscar Wilde's novel has garnered an enormous readership, a fraction of which can be found among the JRAAS team.

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The JRAAS group is planning a cinema cycle on Irish identity, culture, and language entitled “Green in the Screen”. It will take place during the month of June. We selected three films for this cycle: Ken Loach’s [*The Wind That Shakes the Barley*](#) (2006), Jim Sheridan’s [*In the Name of the Father*](#) (1993), and Rich Peppiatt’s [*Kneecap*](#) (2024). Dates and speakers to be announced soon!