'A lost, hazy disquiet'
Scarfolk, Hookland, and the 'Haunted Generation'

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The phrase 'Haunted Generation' comes from an article of that title by British broadcaster and writer Bob Fischer for the June 2017 issue of *Fortean Times* magazine, the purview of which is 'the world of strange phenomena'. Fischer, who was born in 1973, discusses his childhood exposure to a popular culture thematically preoccupied with mysticism and the supernatural; not surprisingly, the cover of the magazine subtitles the article as 'the television nightmares of a 1970s childhood'. At the time, the prohibitive cost of media technology meant that most people did not make or own recordings of television programmes. Fischer's generation is 'haunted', then, not only because of the supernatural themes of the TV they consumed in childhood but also because of their subsequent imperfect but persistent memories of this consumption. Fischer's article includes an interview with Richard Littler, creator of 'Scarfolk', a fictional 'town in North West England which did not progress beyond 1979'; the issue also contains a feature on a similar project, David Southwell's Hookland, a 'Lost County of England' that is also mired in post-World War II/pre-eighties British popular culture. Children of the seventies, Southwell and Littler are part of Fischer's 'Haunted Generation' and, like him, they remain fascinated with the popular and material culture of their youth.

In this essay, I discuss the relationship between media, memory, and technology, drawing on the work of various media and literary theorists and using both Scarfolk and Hookland as examples. I also approach Fischer's idea of the 'Haunted Generation', and the work of Southwell and Littler, in the context of the recent and on-going Folk Horror Revival, addressing a shared use of archived media from the 1970s to provide a critical engagement with the social and political climate of Britain in the present day, including the anxieties leading up to, and in the aftermath of, 'Brexit'. In doing so, I identify in in 'Hookland',

'Scarfolk' and the project of the Folk Horror Revival a strain of what Svetlana Boym calls 'reflective nostalgia', in which 'longing and critical thinking are not opposed to each other' (2001: 49).

The cover illustration of the June 2017 issue of the *Fortean Times*, created by Etienne Gilfillan, is of a spectral hand reaching out of the static on the screen of an analogue TV set. The hand in Gilfillan's image brings to mind two horror films to which media technology is central. The first of these is Tobe Hooper's *Poltergeist* (1982), specifically the famous 'They're here' scene in which a ghostly hand reaches from the screen of a TV set for a young girl, Carol Anne, entranced by the static and white noise. Carol Anne later becomes trapped inside the television set which is a conduit to a dimension inhabited by spirits. The second film evoked by Gilfillan's image is *Ringu* (1998) by Hideo Nakata in which the vengeful ghost of an abused child, Sadako, enters the material plane by climbing through the screen of a television on which a VHS recording of her abuse at the hand of scientists researching ESP is being played. The hand in Gilfillan's image seems to reach for the implied viewer of the TV set, suggesting it will pull the viewer in just as Carol Anne is pulled into the spirit dimension. The hand can also be interpreted, however, as reaching for purchase in the actual world, so that the entity it belongs to can cross over from the mediated realm into the actual world, as is the case with Sadako when she first emerges from the television. The image also recalls the literary theorist Wolfgang Iser's dictum that 'the art of fictionalising is a crossing of boundaries [which] amounts to nothing short of an act of transgression' (1993: 3); similarly, the spirits in *Poltergeist* and Sadako in *Ringu* breach the ontological boundary between the mediated and the actual, delineated by the TV screen, and achieve a strong, influential presence in the material world. Fischer argues that this was also the case (although not, of course, to the same degree as in Hooper and Nakata's films) with the supernatural-themed British pop culture of the 1970s that was consumed by the 'haunted generation' in their

youth, shaping both their memories of that period, and their subsequent lives, in a way that goes beyond the usual consumption of fiction. In large part this seems to be because of the technological context for this consumption.

As a literary theorist, Iser's focus is on printed texts which are, of course, highly controllable forms of media and which facilitate the return to, and lingering in, a fictional world through re-reading. In the pre-home-video era, however, televisual and filmic texts existed outside of viewers' control. What might this mean in terms of the relationship between not only the fictional and the imaginary but also memory and media? In his editorial for *Sight & Sound*, Nick James argues that 'information technology makes it easy for us to be lazy about remembering: that urgent fact or factoid is always just a few clicks away' and wonders '[w]ill we – have we already – become lazy about how we structure our visual memories?' He admits to being uncertain as 'to what extent the films I've seen inflect and alter how I recall real events, or even how I experience them in the first place' (2018: 5). Video and, subsequently, digital recording technology, along with the re-issue programmes of institutions such as the British Film Institute (BFI) and distributors like Arrow Films in the UK or Unearthed Films in the US, have created an archive culture in which films and TV shows from the seventies (and before and after) are now easily accessible. This was not the case for many members of the Haunted Generation, however, whose childhoods took place in a pre-digital era when video technology was prohibitively expensive and the range of pre-recorded cassettes available to those who did have access to the technology, limited. Furthermore, broadcasters did not routinely archive their productions: the BBC, for example, wiped the tapes of ninety-seven episodes of its series *Dr Who* broadcast between 1967 and 1978, much to the continuing chagrin of fans; ITV, the BBC's commercial counterpart, similarly deleted all but three episodes of the first season of its popular 1960s' series, *The Avengers*. For Fischer, the Haunted Generation is also the 'last "analogue" generation

reaching adulthood before the era when our everyday lives – and the popular culture we consume – were able to be constantly, digitally recorded and archived'. Fischer speculates that it is perhaps only those generations prior to 'the technological watershed' of the eighties, in which video recorders became commonplace in British homes, who recall their childhoods in a 'fractured, dreamlike fashion' (2017: 36). This applies not only to their consumption of popular culture but also to the documentation of their lives: Fischer estimates that, by the age of sixteen, less than one hundred 'clear photographs' had been taken of him and that no moving image footage of him was made before 1990 (2017: 36).

Referring specifically to popular culture, Fischer goes on to claim that 'many of the most profoundly affecting television experiences of my childhood were viewed once […] in an era when I had no means of recording them, and no expectation that I would ever see them again'. The result of this is a memory suffused with 'yearning' (2017: 36). In discussing his relationship to the past, Fischer draws on the concept of 'hauntology' as advanced by Simon Reynolds and developed by Mark Fisher in 2005.[1] As Reynolds and Fisher use it, 'hauntology' refers to a popular culture characterised by its 'addiction to its own past', in the words of the subtitle to Reynolds' book, *Retromania* (2011). As Reynolds acknowledges, in his 1995 book *Archive Fever*, Derrida himself described such an addiction as being '*en mal d'archive*', that is, 'in need of archives', a phrase which could also be used to describe the yearning of the Haunted Generation both during their childhoods and in adult life (2011: 28). This feverishness is not without its pleasures, however: Fischer refers to his, and his contemporaries', incomplete recollection of their youth as a 'delicious, jumbled mishmash of fleeting memories, inaccessible and unverifiable', which he contrasts with the 'much more clinical' nostalgia of those born into an archive culture who are, as a result, 'bereft of that feeling of longing for *lost things*' (2017: 36).

Reynolds and Fisher elaborate on the term 'hauntological' in relation to the music

released by the British record label Ghost Box, established in 2004. The label's recordings and packaging frequently include references to and pastiches of the UK's post-war/pre-digital popular culture. Interviewed by Fischer for 'The Haunted Generation', the label's owner Jim Jupp identifies a 'kind of haunted feel' intrinsic to VHS video tapes, created by the properties of the medium—specifically, the 'distortion and degradation' resulting from the deterioration of the tapes each time they are used. This 'haunted feel' was also a product of the mode of circulation Jupp remembers from his eighties youth in which 'tapes would change hands and you weren't sure where they came from'. The content, too, was a product, in Jupp's words, of 'that era of mystery and strangeness on TV' with some recordings even being allegedly 'illegal' (Fischer 2017: 37). As always, the medium is the message.

It seems, then, that with the rise of affordable video technology, the analogue generation could experience a kind of *double-haunting* by recovering lost TV shows from their childhoods either via video re-issues or home recordings of repeat broadcasts which had a spectral quality because of the preserving medium's fragility. With Jupp's description of VHS in mind, it is worth noting here that software currently exists which allows digital recordings to imitate the look and feel of VHS in a digital medium: Universe VHS produced by film-making technology company Red Giant, for example, uses '[r]eal analog source material [...] to create the unique textures in VHS, which means that you can create the true color, distortion and damage seen in old video', while the media production magazine *Video and Filmmaker* offers a 'VHS Glitches' software package on its website. One conceivable use of such software might be to artificially degrade a pristine digital transfer of an analogue-era production in order to emulate, for a certain type of nostalgic viewer, the kind of double-haunting mentioned above. Similar graphic design software exists which allows images to be artificially aged and/or 'distressed' as can be seen in the case of the 'material culture' of both Scarfolk and Hookland.

Scarfolk

In his interview with Fischer, Littler remarks '[w]hat makes nostalgia work is information that is missing' and describes the source material he uses for Scarfolk as elements of seventies British popular culture which 'people might have a *vague* memory of … but there are gaps' which he fills with 'absurd fiction' (Fischer 2017: 36). Of course, as an artist working in the twenty-first century, Littler has access to the archive culture described above, but nevertheless he is wary of it, arguing 'if [information is] available to you online, in High Definition, then you lose that sense of dreaminess and that feeling of "Did I imagine it?"' (Fischer 2017: 36). The 'strange mood' Littler strives for with Scarfolk recalls the diffuse nature of the undefined imaginary identified by Iser, which Littler 'lures into form' through his own fictionalising acts. On the Scarfolk blog (scarfolk.blogspot.com), drawing on both the popular and material culture of post-war/pre-eighties Britain, Littler *detournes* his sources to provide a satirical commentary on the authoritarian, jingoistic and xenophobic tendencies of British culture, then and now. For example, a poster by the town's municipal authority, 'Scarfolk Council', has the announcement that 'From 12nd [sic] January 1973 it will no longer be legal', with no explanation as to what 'it' is, as well as the warning, 'Whatever you do, Don't' (2013).[2] The poster features a forlorn-looking stuffed bird, which supplementary material on Littler's blog informs us is Kak, the mascot for the 'Don't' campaign. Furthermore, '[p]arents were also encouraged to dress as Kak then rush in on their young, sleeping children at 3am, and screech as loudly as they could: "Don't, don't, don't"' (2013).[3] Scarfolk has taken on a particular currency in the aftermath of the 2016 UK referendum over the country's membership in the European Union (EU) which saw the majority of voters supporting a withdrawal, commonly referred to as Brexit. The result of the referendum raised fears amongst the British Left that Brexit would not only pander to the regressive tendencies of UK

culture mentioned above but would also further fuel the rise of the country's white-supremacist Far Right. Responding to these concerns, Littler's post-Brexit blog entries include a magazine advertisement for 'Real English Wine' (popular in Scarfolk 'simply by virtue of being British'[4]); a poster designed to familiarise schoolchildren with capital punishment, meted out for even minor infractions in the town;[5] and another calling for an end to the victimisation of Nazis who are 'bullied because of the colour of other people's skin'.[6] On January 31st 2020, the day the UK officially left the EU, Littler blogged an image of the 'Welcome to Scarfolk' sign, with the words 'welcome to' crossed out, above the legend 'No dogs. No foreigners';[7] he also tweeted (as @Scarfolk) the image with the hashtag BrexitEve.[8] This tweet was followed by another, with the hashtag 'BrexitDay', of a *detourned* postcard identifying Britain as the 'Gateway to Europe' overlaid with barbed wire and the text 'Patrolled 24 hours a day, 7 days a week'.[9]

Hauntology

In Scarfolk, 'hauntology is a compulsory subject at school', which may seem at odds with the authoritarian policies of its council given the generally left-leaning politics of those who have theorized hauntology: Mark Fisher's best-known book, for instance, is *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (2009), and Derrida, who coined the term hauntology in *Specters of Marx*, wrote his book in part as a response to, and rebuttal of, Francis Fukuyama's work of neoliberal triumphalism, *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992). The Reynolds/Fisher usage of hauntology recalls Boym's concept of 'reflective nostalgia', which she contrasts with 'restorative nostalgia'. Both 'homesick and sick of home', reflective nostalgia takes an approach to history which is 'ironic and humorous', revealing 'that longing and critical thinking are not opposed to one another' (2001: 49-50). Restorative nostalgia, on the other hand, which Boym associates with nationalism, is concerned with and desirous of *stasis*. It

views the past as 'not a duration but a perfect snapshot' to which it seeks to return (2001: 49). Scarfolk council members seem to be *literally* restorative nostalgics who, through a process in which 'pagan rituals blend seamlessly with science', have placed the town in a situation where 'the entire decade of the 1970s loops ad infinitum'. If this is the case, why teach hauntology at all?

Looking at conservative blogger Christopher Pankhurst's self-described 'Right-wing [sic] hauntology', as applied to television play *Penda's Fen* (1974), may provide an answer to this question. Written by David Rudkin and directed by Alan Clarke as part of the BBC's *Play for Today* drama series, *Penda's Fen* is identified by Fischer as a 'touchstone' for the Haunted Generation. In a 2015 article for the website of the 'New Right' publisher Counter-Currents Publishing (self-described purveyor of 'books against time', a phrase which recalls Scarfolk Council's own anti-temporal tendencies), Pankhurst identifies the 'weakness' of *Penda's Fen* as lying in its 'prescient anticipation of 1980s Left-wing [sic] identity politics'. In the film, Stephen, a teenage boy living in rural England, whom Pankhurst calls a 'snobbish right-wing moralist' with a 'rigid view of Christian morality', undergoes a political, religious, and personal transformation when he encounters a manifestation of Penda, England's last pagan king. This encounter causes Stephen to question his belief in racial purity – he had previously described England as an 'Aryan' nation – and also his own sexuality: having previously denounced homosexuality as 'unnatural', he realises he has been repressing his own homosexual desires. 'Child, be strange', Penda urges Stephen, which Pankhurst interprets as Rudkin's attempt to promote a form of identity politics which breaks from traditional gender roles and national identity, but which for Pankhurst is ultimately built on 'individualism not individuation'. Indeed, Pankhurst sees Stephen's transformation as 'an ideological construct', not an 'authentic' mystical experience (2015).

The strength of *Penda's Fen*, in Pankhurst's view, lies in its representation of the

'latent energies of Albion'. These are found in the depiction of landscape and the spectral entities which inhabit it, apart from King Penda and Edward Elgar, both of whom challenge Stephen's purist world-view, that is to say, promote Rudkin's hidden agenda. The other, silent spectres, which are unidentified, are more important to Pankhurst because they 'best exemplify the nature of the numinous' which he defines, after Rudolf Otto, as 'the intrusion of the "wholly other"' (2015). It is 'in those mute ghosts', Pankhurst continues, 'that the enduring power of the landscape resides'. As is quite obvious in his earlier use of the term 'Albion', however, Pankhurst is not really interested in nature but in *nationalism* – just as Stephen was before his transformation. Pankhurst's conflation of the two is itself clearly an ideological act, informed by his own right-wing politics. To return to Richard Littler, Scarfolk council may well enforce the teaching of 'hauntology' for similar reasons—that is, to condition its children to believe that its own repressive ideology is not just a traditional aspect of British identity but an *elemental* component of it. While *Penda's Fen* was not aimed at children despite having a teenaged protagonist, it suffered a similar fate to many of the children's TV programmes consumed by the Haunted Generation. Unrepeated until a single broadcast on Channel 4 in 1990—VHS recordings of which eventually found their way onto YouTube—it was only released on DVD in 2016 by the BFI, who also co-organised a prestigious one-day conference around the film the following year. It has since become one of the key texts for the Folk Horror Revival, which I discuss further below, and Pankhurst's interpretation of it has not gained currency.

The Material Culture of Scarfolk

Returning to Scarfolk, as mentioned above Littler *detournes* the material culture of the British 1970s; this includes the production of 'in-world' texts such as 2015's *The Unrepentant Savagery of Working-Class People*; *Social Welfare: A Final Solution*; and *Household*

Budgeting: Non-Essential Family Members—all of which are presented as publications by

Pelican Books, the real-world non-fiction imprint of Penguin Books (1937-1984).[10] In

keeping with the rather shabby milieu of Scarfolk, the covers of these and other titles

included on the Scarfolk blog are battered and worn. Other titles are produced by the town's

own press, including a line of Scarfolk Science Books. One of these, Dr J. Swift's *Eating*

Children: Population Control and the Food Crisis, posted in 2013,[11] made an incursion into

the real world when its cover was accidentally included in an article by Charles Saatchi for

the *London Evening Standard* rather than an edition of Jonathan Swift's 1729 essay 'A

Modest Proposal' (perhaps ironically Scarfolk merchandise is now available via the Saatchi

Gallery store). Another incursion occurred in 2018 with the inclusion of Scarfolk Council's

1972 public information poster about rabies—the text of which reads 'If you suspect your

child has rabies don't hesitate SHOOT. It could save a life'[12]—in an article entitled 'A

Century of Government Communications' in *Civil Service Quarterly*, a British government

publication (Holder 2018). There is also the Twitter search term #NotScarfolk which

encompasses images of texts which exist in the actual world but which seem to have come

from Littler's realm such as a 'motivational' sign reading, 'No matter how good you are, you

can always be replaced', and the stylishly menacing cover of the book, *To Ensure Security in*

the Mediterranean by Eduard Kovalev (1985).

Hookland

The same issue of *Fortean Times* that contains Fischer's article also includes a feature by

novelist Fiona Maher on Hookland, the 'Lost County of England'. Maher's piece begins with a

reference to the publication, in 1980, of a guidebook to the county by Phoenix Garages as

part of their series, 'Strange England' (2017: 38). A slightly worn copy of the guide is used as

an illustration in the feature, recalling the Pelican texts of Scarfolk. Maher goes on to inform

the reader that in 1986, after 'Margaret Thatcher's redefinition of Britain's county boundaries, Hookland vanished'—before going on to admit '[n]one of the above is true' (2017: 38). Like Scarfolk, Hookland is a work of fiction, created by British writer David Southwell who has also written non-fiction texts dealing with conspiracy theory and true crime. It is to this background that Maher attributes the 'thoroughly tricksterish' nature of Southwell's project. A child of the seventies Southwell is another member of the Haunted Generation and acknowledges, in Maher's feature, the influence of the news media of the time, particularly radio, on his developing imagination: it 'treated the weird as normal and horror as everyday', elements which have subsequently been 'edited out of the cultural dialogue' (2017: 38). The intent behind Hookland is to return these lost elements. As the pinned tweet for Southwell's Twitter account (@HooklandGuide) has it, Hookland is 'where all the weirdness you've edited out of your life comes flooding back'. As such, Southwell's project is one of 're-enchantment' which he sees as an act of 'resistance' against the way the British 'national narrative was going' in the twenty-first century, even before Brexit. Southwell uses the term 'ghost soil' to encompass 'all the folklore, all the high strangeness that grew and bloomed in the gloriously strange TV, film and books I grew up with as a child in the 1970s' (Maher 2017: 38). Although he wants the return of these elements to British popular culture, and despite his use of nature imagery in tandem with the concept of 'ghost soil', Southwell is not a restorative nostalgic like Pankhurst with his belief in an elemental Albion. Rather he is, like Littler, reflective in his nostalgia: both, as Boym puts it, 'homesick and sick of home' (2001: 50).

Southwell also recalls Walter Benjamin's belief in the revolutionary power of nostalgia when used to enact the return of a lost cultural wealth. For Benjamin, nostalgia was, as Michael Löwy has observed, 'a revolutionary method for the critique of the present' (2005: 2)—and Hookland serves a similar purpose. Southwell's 'ghost soil' is similar to 'pulp

modernism', Mark Fisher's term for a popular culture which includes elements of the avant-garde (2018: 75). In the UK, much of this type of popular culture was produced in the seventies and eighties by the BBC and Channel 4 when they were still, in Fisher's terms, 'public-service oriented' rather than focused on consumers (2009: 76). For Fisher this 'so-called paternalist era of media could be a breeding ground for the Weird', and he identifies a similar response to it in the 'conflation of secondary school textbooks with Weird Fiction' by Ghost Box (2018: 215). One of the texts Fisher uses as an exemplar of the pulp modernist output of this period is *Artemis 81*, a three-hour television drama broadcast by BBC 1 at 9.00pm on the 29th December, 1981, and written by David Rudkin, author of *Penda's Fen*. One of the remarkable aspects of *Artemis 81*, for Fisher, is its lack of 'all those strategies of audience identification to which we are now so accustomed' (2018: 215). Instead, Rudkin's tactic is to deliberately *alienate* the audience, particularly through the use of non-realistic performance and dialogue. These elements contrast sharply, Fisher argues, with the use of 'found locations' (2018: 215), that is to say recognisable actual world sites such as a ferry terminal in Harwich and Liverpool's Anglican cathedral. The combination of dramaturgy and location-choice defamiliarises these sites in the act of, to use another of the terms Southwell often applies to the Hookland project, 're-weirding'. Specifically, it is a re-weirding act which took place in the very heart of mainstream British popular culture—the 'main event', at three hours, of that evening's post-watershed programming by the BBC. (As a further indication of the media culture of the time, it is worth noting that it was shown on the broadcaster's prime channel rather than the more highbrow and niche BBC 2.) Such an event is unthinkable today, Fisher argues, because an 'opposition that sets elitism against populism' has been established by the forces of neoliberalism (2018: 217).

Fisher's call for the restoration of the kind of BBC which would produce *Artemis 81* is, then, also a call for the re-weirding, or re-enchantment, of popular culture. Fisher is

careful, in his discussion of *Artemis 81*, to avoid nostalgia while also asserting that even

though '[t]here are unique opportunities' available in the media environment of the twenty-

first century, 'they can only be accessed if there is some negation of the present rather than a

vacuous affirmation of it' (2018: 217). This call for the use of the technologies of the present

against the prevailing mood of the times recalls Southwell's use of 'New Media' platforms

such as WordPress and Twitter to develop the re-weirding nostalgia of the Hookland project

as a revolutionary critique of current circumstances, including Brexit. Southwell's response to

'Brexit Day' via the Hookland Guide Twitter account was to ignore it explicitly, but also to

provide subtle criticism in a tweet of a picture of the tomb of a medieval knight accompanied

with the text: 'All those sleeping knights of wood and stone, promised to wake in England's

direst days, dream less deep tonight'.[13]

The participatory aspect of Hookland, which is a kind of creative commons open to

expansion by others, makes it feel more (a)live than Scarfolk, Hookland's 'lost' status

notwithstanding. I use 'expansion' here specifically in the sense of the term deployed by the

narratologist Lubomir Dolezel to describe a method which 'extends the scope of the

protoworld, by filling its gaps' (1998: 206-7). Gaps are a key aspect of the engaging nature of

Hookland, as Maher recognises: the 'enigmatic posts' produced by Southwell on Twitter are

subject to the platform's 140-character limit, which means he 'hasn't the word count' to

explain them. The result is a 'lightness of touch that makes Hookland especially compelling:

because everything is suggested, it is up to the reader to fill in the gaps' (Maher 2017: 38).

Once again, the medium is the message. Readers, including Maher herself, contribute to the

Hookland expansion in a variety of ways including their own Tweets: Maher claims to have

got lost attempting to visit Hookland after finding a copy of the Phoenix guide in a junk shop.

Southwell responded with the Tweet 'I have a terrible feeling this will not end well' (Maher

2017: 39). For Southwell, a sense of place is 'something I demand from my fictions', an

element of 'localism' he sees as absent from much online faux-folklore such as 'creepypasta' in which specific tales are copied and pasted as part of their circulation on the Internet. Hookland, by contrast, is the product of a 'pre-cut-and-paste sense of the weird and uncanny' culture (Otto: 2015). Nevertheless, it is largely an online phenomenon (print collections are planned but have, at the time of writing, yet to be realised) which benefits from the interactive nature of social media. Hookland can be understood, then, as a *convergence*, in Henry Jenkins' use of the word, of an Old Media sensibility with New Media opportunities (2006).

The Folk Horror Revival

In his essay 'Folk Horror: From the Forests, Fields and Furrows: An Introduction', in the influential 2015 collection, *Folk Horror Revival: Field Studies*, Andy Paciorek is careful to distance the subgenre from any purely British context, making sure to point to American and European contributions; the anthology also includes his piece on 'Weird Americana' as well as interviews with American writers Gary Lachman and Thomas Ligotti. Like Fisher's attempt to deflect any accusations of nostalgia in his call for a re-institution of the 'paternalist' BBC, Paciorek's anti-parochialism indicates a wariness of a British tendency towards restorative nostalgia. However, both Fisher and the Folk Horror Revival, like Scarfolk and Hookland, *are* nostalgic in a way Walter Benjamin would have recognised. Their fascination with (aspects of) Britain's pop-cultural past serves as a means to measure its present, which is found to be wanting. Nostalgia for being haunted can only ever be reflective as it is a longing for anything other than stasis, comforting or otherwise. Francis Fukuyama proclaimed neoliberalism's triumph over communism the 'end of history' (1992) by which he meant that there was no longer any need for social evolution as capitalism had proven itself to be the economic system most compatible with human 'nature', at least as defined by the model of

humans as essentially self-interested—a view central to the neoclassical economics

Fukuyama extols. Fisher has identified a sense of cultural stasis in the West as a result of such

a neoliberal world view, leading to, in a phrase he borrows from Franco Berardi, 'the slow

cancellation of the future' (2014: 6) and a sense that change is impossible. Brexit and

associated myths of the restoration of a 'lost' Britain can be understood as a symptom of this

condition: an attempt to forge a future through restorative nostalgia. Under such

circumstances, to look back to a time when haunting was part of everyday life, memory was

imperfect, and a Weird popular culture captured the imagination of children, urging them to

'be strange,' can be understood as both an act of reflective nostalgia and an attempt at re-

enchantment which is, as *Hookland* reminds us, an act of resistance.

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[1] Reynolds and Fisher use the concept of 'hauntology' rather differently than Jacques Derrida's use of the term, as outlined in *Specters of Marx* (1993), although Reynolds was influenced by Derrida.

[2] 'The "Don't" Campaign and Kak, 1973', 10 May 2013 <https://scarfolk.blogspot.com/2013/05/the-dont-campaign-and-kak-1973.html>.

[3] Ibid.

[4] 'Real English Wine (Magazine Ad)', 1 November, 2018 <https://scarfolk.blogspot.com/2018/01/real-english-wine-magazine-ad.html>.

[5] 'Corporal (& Capital) Punishment', 14 December 2018 <https://scarfolk.blogspot.com/2017/12/corporal-capital-punishment.html>.

[6] 'Nazi Anti-Bullying Campaign', 17 August 2017 <https://scarfolk.blogspot.com/2017/08/nazi-anti-bullying-campaign.html>.

[7] 'Welcome to Scarfolk…', 31 January 2020 <https://scarfolk.blogspot.com/2020/01/welcome-to-scarfolk.html>.

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[9] Scarfolk Council, @Scarfolk, Twitter, 31 January 2020 <https://twitter.com/Scarfolk/status/1223205803584303104?s=20>.

[10] 'Poverty & 1970s Pelican Books', 15 July 2015 <https://scarfolk.blogspot.com/2015/07/poverty-1970s-pelican-books.html.>

[11] 'Eating Children', 4 February 2013 <https://scarfolk.blogspot.com/2013/02/eating-children.html>.

[12] 'Rabies public information poster from 1972', 11 February 2013 <https://scarfolk.blogspot.com/2013/02/rabies-public-information-poster-from.html>.

[13] Hookland, @HooklandGuide, Twitter, 31 January 2020 <https://twitter.com/HooklandGuide/status/1223366855487893505?s=20.>

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