# 1AC Octos Sunvite

## Part 1 – The Capitalist Infosphere

#### Capitalism has evolved. In the infosphere, workers are no longer hired, but bought as packets of time, disconnected from any collectivity and without labor relations. No longer people, they are machines to the capitalist system. Only through an existential continuity of the comrade is solvency possible, Berardi 11:

Franco Berardi, “After The Future,” 2011 [philosopher] // LHP AB

In February 2003, the American journalist Bob Herbert published in the New York Times the results of a cognitive survey of hundreds of unemployed youths in Chicago: none of the interviewees expected to find work in the next few years; none expected to be able to rebel, or set off large-scale collective change. The general sense of the interviews was a sentiment of profound impotence. The perception of decline did not seem focused on politics, but on a deeper cause, a scenario o fsocial and psychic involution that seemed to cancel every possibility of build­ ing alternatives. **During the zero zero decade, precariousness has spread throughout the organization of labor, becoming the prevailing feeling of the new generation**. The fragmentation of the present is reversed in the implosion of the future. In lhe Corrosion of Character: The Transformation of Wt.irk in Modern Capitalism, Richard Sennett reacts to this existential condition of precariousness and fragmentation with nostalgia for a past epoch in which life was structured in relatively stable social roles, and time had enough linear consistency to construe paths of identity: "Time's arrow is broken; it has no trajectory in a continually re-engineered, routine­ hating, short-term political economy. People feel the lack of sustained human relations and durable purposes" (Sennett 1 998, 98) . But this nostalgia has no hold on present reality, and attempts to reactivate the community remain artificial and sterile. **Precariousness is itself a precarious notion, because it defines its object in an approximate manner**, but also because from this notion derive paradoxical, self-contradictory, in other words precarious **strate­gies. If we concentrate our critical attention on the precarious character of job performance, what kind of program can we propose, to what target can we aspire? That ofa stable job guaranteed for life? This would be (and actually is) a cultural regression, the definite subordination of labor to the rule of exploitation.** Notwithstanding the idea of "flexicu­ rity," we are still far from any strategy of social recomposition of the labor movement that might extricate us from unlimited exploitation. We need to pick up again the thread of analysis of social composition and decompositon if we want to discern possible outlines of any re­ composition to come. In the 1970s, the energy crisis, the consequent economic reces­ sion, and finally the replacement ofworkers with numerical machines resulted in a large number ofpeople with no guarantees. The question of precariousness soon became central to social analysis, but also to the ambitions of the movement. We began by proposing to struggle for forms of guaranteed income, not linked to work, in order to face the fact that **a large part of the young population had no prospect of guaranteed employment.** The situation has changed since then, because what seemed a marginal and temporary condition has now become the prevalent form of labor relations. **Precariousness is no longer a marginal and provisional characteristic, but it is the general form of the labor relation in a productive, digitalized sphere, reticular and recombinant**. **The word "precariat" generally stands for work that no longer has fixed rules about labor relations, salary; or the length of the work day. However, if we analyze the past, we see that these rules functioned only for a limited period in the history of relations between labor and capital. Only for a short period at the heart of the twentieth century, under the political pressures of unions and workers**, in conditions of (almost) full employment, and thanks to a generally strong regulatory role played by the state in the economy, **some limits to the natural violence of capitalist dynamics could be legally established. The legal obligations that in certain periods have protected society from the vio­lence of capital were always founded on political and material relations of force (workers' violence against the violence of capital) . Thanks to political force, it became possible to affirm rights, establish laws, and protect them as personal rights. With the decline in the political force of the workers' movement, the natural precariousness and brutality of labor relations in capitalism have re-emerged**. The new phenomenon is not the precarious character of the job market, but the technical and cultural conditions in which infolabor is made precarious. **The technical conditions are based on digital recom­bination of infolabor in networks**. The cultural conditions include the education of the masses and the expectations of consumption inherited from late twentieth century society, which are continuously fed by the entire apparatus of marketing and media communication. If we analyze the first aspect, the technical transformations in­ introduced by the digitalization of the productive cycle, we see **that the essential point is not that the labor relation has become precarious (which, after all, it has always been), but the dissolution of the person as active productive agent, as labor power**. The cyberspace of **global production can be described as an immense expanse of depersonalized human time**. Infolabor, the provision of time for the elaboration and recom­ bination of segments of infocommodities, takes to the extreme the tendency, which Marx analyzed, for labor to become abstracted from concrete activity. **This process of abstraction has progressively stripped labor time of every concrete and individual particularity**. The atom oftime ofwhich Marx wrote is the minimal unit of productive labor. But **in industrial production, abstract labor time was impersonated by a physical and juridical bearer, embodied in a worker in flesh and bone**, with a certi­ fied and political identity. Naturally, capital did not purchase a per­sonal disposition, but the time for which the workers were its bearers. **But if capital wanted to dispose of the necessary time for its valoriza­tion, it was obliged to hire a human being**, to buy all of its time, and therefore it had to face up to the material needs and the social and political demands of which the human was a bearer. **When we move onto the sphere of infolabor, there is no longer a need to buy a person for eight hours a day indefinitely**. **Capital no longer recruits people, but buys packets of time, separated from their interchangeable and occasional bearers**. Depersonalized time has become the real agent of valorization, and depersonalized time has neither any right, nor any demand. **It can only be either available or unavailable, but this is purely theoretical be­ cause the physical body, despite not being a legally recognized person, still has to buy food and pay rent**. The informatic procedures of the recombination of semiotic ma­terial have the effect of liquefying the "objective" time necessary to produce the infocommodity**. In all of the time of life, the human ma­ chine is there, pulsating and available, like a brain-sprawl in waiting**. The extension of time is meticulously cellularized: cells of productive time can be mobilized in punctual, casual, and fragmentary forms. The recombination of these fragments is automatically realized in the net­ work. The mobile phone is the tool that makes possible the connection between the needs of semiocapital and the mobilization of the living labor of cyberspace. The ringtone of the mobile phone calls the workers to reconnect their abstract time to the reticular flux. It's a strange word-"liberalism"-with which we identify the ide­ ology prevalent in the posthuman transition to digital slavery. Liberty is its foundational myth, but the liberty of whom? The liberty of capi­ tal, certainly. Capital must be absolutely free to expand in every corner of the world to find the fragment of human time available to be ex­ ploited for the most miserable wage. But liberalism also predicates the liberty of the person. In neoliberal rhetoric, the juridical person is free to express itself, to choose representatives, and be entrepreneurial at the level ofpolitics and the economy. All this is very interesting, except that the person has disappeared; what is left is like an inert object, ir­ relevant and useless. The person is free, sure. But his time is enslaved. His liberty is a juridical fiction to which nothing in concrete daily life corresponds. If we consider the conditions in which the work of the majority of humanity, proletariat and cognitariat, is actually carried out in our time, ifwe examine the conditions ofthe average wage glob­ ally, if we consider the current cancellation of previous labor rights, we can say with no rhetorical exaggeration that we live in a regime of slavery. **Globally, the average wage is hardly sufficient to buy the mere survival of a person whose time is at the service of capital. And people have no right over the time of which they are formally the proprietors, but from which they are effectively expropriated. That time does not really belong to them, because it is separated from the social existence of the people** who make it available to the recombinant cyberproduc­ tive circuit. **The time of work is fractalized, that is, reduced to minimal fragments for reassembly, and the fractalization makes it possible for capital to constantly find the conditions for the minimum wage. Precariousness is the black heart of the capitalist production pro­ cess in the global network, where a continuous flow of fragmented and recomposable infowork circulates**. **Precariousness is the transformative element of the whole cycle of production. Nobody is outside its reach. At unspecified times, workers' wages are reduced or cut, and the life of all is threatened**. Digital infolabor can be fragmented in order to be recomposed someplace other than where that work is done. From the point ofview of the valorization of capital, flow is con­ tinuous, but from the point of view of the existence and time of cog­ nitive workers, productive activity has the character of recombinant fragmentation in cellular form. Pulsating cells of work are lit and ex­ tinguished in the large control room of global production. **Infolabor is innately precarious, not because of the contingent viciousness of em­ployers but for the simple reason that the allocation of work time can be disconnected from the individual and legal person of the worker, an ocean of valorizing cells convened in a cellular way and recombined by the subjectivity of capital. It is appropriate to reconceptualize the relationship between re­ combinant capital and immaterial labor, and it is advisable to obtain a new framework of reference**. Given the impossibility, from now on, of reaching a contractual elaboration of the cost of work by basing it on the legal person-because productive abstract labor is disconnected from the individual person of the worker-the traditional form of the wage is no longer operative, since it can't guarantee anything anymore. Therefore, the recombinant character of cognitive labor seems incom­patible with any possibility of social recomposition or subjectivation. The rules of negotiation, collaboration, and conflict have changed, not because of a political decision, but because of a technical and cultural change in the labor relationship. The rules are not immutable, and there is no rule which forces us to comply with the rules. The legalist Left has never understood this. Fixed on the idea that it is necessary to comply with the rules, it has never known how to carry out confronta­ tion on the new ground inaugurated by digital technologies and the globalized cycle of infolabor. The neoliberals have understood this very well and they have subverted the rules that were laid down in a century of trade union history. In the classical mode of industrial production, the rule was based on a rigid relationship between labor and capital, and on the possibil­ ity of determining the value of goods on the basis of socially necessary working time. But in the recombining stage of capital based on exploi­ tation of fluid infowork, there is no longer any deterministic relation between labor and value. We should not aim to restore the rules that neoliberal power has violated; **we should invent new rules adequate to the fluid form of the labor-capital relation**, where there is no longer any quantitative time­ value determinism and, thus, where there is no longer any necessary constant in economic relations**. How can we oppose the systemic depersonalization** of the work­ ing class and the slavery that is affirmed in the command of precarious and depersonalized work? This is the question that is posed **with insis­ tence by whomever still has a sense of human dignity**. Nevertheless, no answer comes, because the forms of resistance and struggle that were efficacious in the twentieth century appear to no longer have the ca­ pacity to spread and consolidate, nor, consequently, can they stop the absolutism of capital. We have learned from the experience of workers' struggle in re­ cent years that the struggle of precarious workers does not become a cycle, does not leave a social sediment of consciousness, organization, and solidarity. Fractalized work can also intermittently rebel, but this does not set any wave of struggle in motion. The reason is easy to un­ derstand. **In order for struggles to form a cycle there must be** a spatial proximity of laboring bodies and **an existential temporal continuit**y. Without this proximity and this continuity, we lack the conditions for cellularized bodies to become a community.

**swept up,** compelled into thoughts and actions they abhor. Destructive, creative, unpredictable, temporary, and intense: **the crowd expresses the paradoxical power of the people as subject.**

#### Capitalism is a death cult and the apocalypse is currently happening – Earth is doomed to climate change, but we can escape, Allinson 21

Allinson, J. (2021). *The tragedy of the worker: towards the proletarocene*. Verso Books. pg 8-17

Capitalism, like certain bacteria, like the death-drive, is immortal. It has its limits and crises but, perversely, seems to *thrive* on these. Unlike the multi- species life-systems powering it, **the only *terminal* limit to capital’s perpetual augmentation is**, if driven towards from within, external: **either revolution or human extinction**; communism, or the common ruin of the contending classes. Long ago, both Max Weber and Walter Benjamin saw an occulted religious foundation in capitalist civilisation. As Michael Löwy points out, Benjamin, by defining capitalism as a cultic religion, went much farther than Weber in identifying a Puritan/Capitalist guilt-driven imperative to accumulate. ‘The duration of the cult’, for Benjamin, ‘is permanent’. There are ‘no days which are not holidays’, and ‘nothing has meaning that is not immediately related to the cult’. In what sense is capitalism a cult? What are its rituals, its fetishes? Those of investment, speculating, buying and selling. It has no dogma other than those ‘real abstractions’, as Alfred Sohn-Rethel put it, entailed by its rituals. In Sohn-Rethel’s words, the act of commodityexchange is the key exemplar of a social action governed by an abstraction of which the participants have no consciousness. The buyer may be concerned only with the sensuous particularities of the commodity, the needs it fills, but behaves, structurally, in the moment of exchange as though what matters is the quantity of exchange-value embedded in it. Ritual action determines dogma; social being, that is, determines consciousness. Capitalist theology, however, instates not dogma but unyielding imperatives governing action. ‘Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the prophets!’, Marx sarcastically withered in *Capital.* **Accumulation is, for capital, an imperative, not an option**. To exist as a unit of capital in conditions of universal competition is to accumulate or die. As long, therefore, as there is labour-power to exploit and, in Jason W Moore’s term, ‘cheap nature’ to appropriate, capital will augment itself. This very bifurcation of life into the exploitable and the appropriable, which Moore identifies as the foundation of a ‘Cartesian dualism’ unsustainably counterposing ‘Nature’ to ‘Society’, is not dogma but programme. It is related to a distinctive move of capitalist theology, currently given right- Evangelical sanction by Calvin Beisner and the Cornwall Declaration, to disavow in practice the existence of inherent physical limits. It posits, in its action, the earth as limitless cornucopia over which humans have dominion, and from which limitless accumulation must be extracted. This disavowal, this ‘real abstraction’, is the social basis of capitalist *implicatory denial:* the seemingly evidence-proof conviction of capitalist states that capitalogenic climate change can be remedied by means, and according to systems, that guarantee its perpetuation. The capitalocentric purview is commonly, but mistakenly, identified with the anthropocentrism of ancient and medieval monotheisms. Here, however, it is clearly *not* the Anthropos that stands at the centre, as though appointed by God to steward the garden of earth. At the centre is the ritual: that unconditional imperative to accumulate. And insofar as this imperative drives ‘adorers’, as Benjamin put it, to the horizon of human extinction, **capitalism** can – **must** – **be described as a death** **cult**. **Fossil capital** **is** but **one modality of** **the death cult**, albeit a paragon. **The ‘externalities’ of capital – climate chaos, biosphere destruction, resource depletion, topsoil erosion, ocean acidification, mass extinction, the accumulation of chemical, heavy metal, biological and nuclear wastes – extend far beyond the specific catastrophe of a carbonised atmosphere.** Capitalism is a comprehensive system of work-energetics. The food industry, which powers waged labour, and is key to the shifting value of labour-power itself, is as central to the deterioration of the biosphere as is fossil-fuelled transit. Nonetheless, the continuing decision for fossil fuels as a solution to the energy demands of capitalist production, for all the growing denial of climate-change denial among the antivulgarian ruling class, for all their concerned mouth music, is an exemplary case of the capitalist imperative of competitive accumulation at work. As Andreas Malm has fiercely and beautifully argued, **capitalism did not settle for fossil fuels as a solution to energy scarcity. The common assumption that fossil energy is an *intrinsically* valuable energy resource worth competing over**, and fighting wars for **is**, as geographer Matthew Huber argues, **an example of fetishism. At the onset of steam power, water was abundant, and, even with its fixed costs, cheaper to use than coal.** The hydraulic mammoths powered by water wheels required far less human labour to convert to energy, and were more energy-efficient. **Even today, only a third of the energy in coal is actually converted in the industrial processes dedicated thereto: the only thing that is efficiently produced is carbon dioxide. On such basis, the striving for competitive advantage by capitalists seeking maximum market control ‘should’ have favoured renewable energy.** Capital, however, preferred the spatio-temporal profile of stocks due to the internal politics of competitive accumulation. **Water use necessitated communal administration, with its perilously collectivist implications**. Coal, and later oil, could be transported to urban centres, where workers were acculturated to the work-time of capitalist industry, and hoarded by individual enterprises. This allowed individual units of capital to compete more effectively with one another, secured the political authority of capital and incorporated workers into atomised systems of reproduction, from transport to heating.  **Thus, locked in by the short-termist imperatives of competitive accumulation, fossil capital assumed a politically privileged position within an emerging world capitalist ecology**. It monopolised the supply of energy for dead labour, albeit in a highly inefficient way. This is the tragedy of the worker. That, as avatar of a class in itself, she was put to work for the accumulation of capital, from capitalism’s youth, amid means of production not of her choosing, and with a telos of ecological catastrophe. **That thus, even should the proletariat become a class for itself, and even if it does so at a point of history where the full horror of the methods of fossil capitalism is becoming clear, it would – will – inherit productive forces inextricable from mass, trans-species death. This does not preclude systemic, planet-wide transformatio**n. Particularly given the inevitably uneven global growth of class consciousness and resistance, however, and the concomitant embattledness of any reformist, let alone revolutionary, power on the global stage, **it does ensure that it faces extraordinary barriers**. As will become clear**. As of 2015, estimates suggested that humanity produced a total of 15.5 trillion watts of energy each year, of which a considerable 29 per cent was not used**. At an average of 2,000 watts per person (rising to 10,000 watts in the core capitalist economies), the majority was used for industry, commerce and transit, with only 22 per cent for household consumption. Some 90 per cent of this output was powered by fossil fuels: oil, coal, gas. This monopoly, enabling superprofits as monopolies do, ensured that fossil capital would always realise profit margins far higher than the industrial average. It has, in Malm’s term, become worth a ‘planet of value’. Each fossil fuel plant represents decades of investment awaiting realisation.  **To avert planetary disaster is to inflict an earth-sized blow on capitalist industry. It is to choose between burning a planet of value, and burning the planet itself.** But the death cult is so strong, so pervasive, that, against all resistance, the choice has already been made. **Apocalypse has begun. The button has been pushed**. Humanity is already committed to irreversible climate change. In May of 2020, levels of CO2 in the atmosphere hit 417 parts per million, the highest ever recorded – and the first breach of 400 ppm since the Pliocene. Climate activists are, in Richard Wilbur’s phrase, ‘mad-eyed from stating the obvious’. To understand the scale of what faces us, and the way it ramifies into every corner of our lives, is to marvel that we aren’t having emergency meetings in every city, town and village every week. **We are, increasingly, out of time. In** the capitalist *untimelich,* the time of the living and the time of the dead, human history and the history of inorganic sediments, collide. ‘Millions of years of concentrated solar energy’, as Huber calls it, have been released in an historical blink of an eye, only to rebound just as fast: the Deep Time equivalent of an asteroid strike. **The cyclical time of seasons turns freakish, leaving us uneasily sweating in the clammy mid-winter. Spring comes too early, hurricane-force winds and flash floods break the October calm, polar ice melts while temperate zones are plunged into polar winter. The Arctic burns, boreal forests turned to charred sticks. The Greenland ice sheet melts even in winter. Antarctic sea ice has suddenly and drastically contracted in recent** **years**. The polar vortex wanders, perturbed, and the mid-West freezes. In a parody of Revelations, Mediterranean storms rain fish on the island of Malta. **Stochastic weather events accumulate. Birds fall dead from the sky.** The progression of geological deep time, with its periods, eras and epochs speeds up so rapidly that it precipitates a crisis in the temporal order itself: spinning so fast, we may as well be standing still. The progressive time of human civilisation, reduced to the endless accumulation of stuff, collapses into nonsense. The cycle of ice ages, a necessary condition for human evolution, melts away for eternity. With awareness of which comes a wave of eco-anxiety, for which we grope for names – Glenn Albrecht’s ‘solastalgia’, Ashlee Cunsolo and Neville Ellis’s ‘ecological grief’, Renee Lertzmann’s ‘environmental melancholia’. Even at the end of 2018, 70 per cent of Americans describing themselves as ‘worried’ about climate change, and it has been a long two years for that fear to wax. **The sixth mass extinction, signalled by what one study calls ‘biological annihilation’, is underway**. **The oceans, which produce roughly half of the oxygen we breathe, are acidifying, and are swept by heatwaves, says a recent study, ‘like wildfire’. Coral reefs, home to a quarter of marine life, are bleaching. Insect biomass collapses, with 40 per cent of all species undergoing drastic decline**. **The bees, that once we believed were saved, are disappearing eight times faster than are mammals, birds or reptiles. Without their pollination work, 70 per cent of the crops that feed 90 per cent of the planet will fail**. **The question of human survival is inextricable from that of what sort of humans we should be. By 2070, MIT research says, the new norm for ‘many billions’ of people will be impossibly high temperatures that will kill less fit people and make outdoor work impossible. Half a billion will experience temperatures that would ‘kill even healthy people in the shade within six hours’**. **The Arctic, that ‘sluggish and congealed sea’ discovered by Pytheas, a breathing ‘mixture like sea-lung’, will be gone, on conservative estimates by 2040.** In 2019, the usually snow-bowed woodlands circling this uncanny sea-continent burned more fiercely than ever. Precise metrics of the scale of what will unfold are to be determined, not least by class struggle, but there is no longer, if there ever was, a choice between adaptation and mitigation. **So adapt. But to what?** Those species now going extinct were once well adapted. The widely accepted geo-logism, ‘Anthropocene’, is in one sense an obvious political evasion, diluting as it does the necessary focus on capital accumulation itself. Yet, of course, capitalism is something that the human species, and no other, does. And while there are unthinkably vast disparities in power and responsibility in the production of petro-modernity, the latter has had a proven – if, crucially, hardly irrevocable – popular base: the vatic rage of activists notwithstanding, no politician has been crucified for promising fuel tax cuts. This fact can easily be weaponised by the right. Of the recent protests of the gilets jaunes in France against declining wages and rising inequality and sparked by a rise in diesel tax later reversed by Macron faced by the scale of the protests, Trump tweeted that ‘[p]eople do not want to pay large sums of money ... in order to maybe protect the environment’. In fact, however, and allowing that the movement is hardly monolithic, the French uprising was characterised by a remarkable *refusal to refuse* to engage with questions of ecology, particularly compared, say, to the fuel- price protests in the UK in 2000 and 2005. Far from being characterised by ecological indifference, what characterised much of the French protest was disagreement between those for whom talk of ecology comes too soon, and those for whom such talk is inextricable from social – class – justice. One example of the former is visible in the claim of the prominent activist Jerôme Rodriguez that ‘[e]ventually, when we obtain the first things, ecology will have its place’; of the latter, the words of another, François Boulot, that ‘[t]he social and ecological emergencies are inseparable’, that ‘[w]e will not be able to operate the ecological transition without an equitable wealth redistribution’. Rodriguez’s rationale for his position, that ‘nowadays, people aren’t concentrated on this’, is not supported by the superlative gilets jaunes slogans, ‘End of the month, end of the world: same perpetrators, same fight’, and ‘More ice sheets, fewer bankers’. This refusal to compartmentalise is energising evidence of the new politicisation of the moment. Still, that not everyone opposed to the fuel tax rise has been so assiduous in drawing the connections is in part because the dispersed, privatised accommodation and individualised transportation of modern life offer individualised, immediate-term and distinctively capitalist answer to specifically human strivings. The concept of the Anthropocene is a tacit acknowledgment that the alienated labour of humanity has itself become a selective evolutionary pressure. It has already forced rapid adaptation in some species, where it has not resulted in extinction, as Bernard Kettlewell’s experiments with peppered moths show. The besooting of tree bark in industrial areas became a powerful selective force, favouring darker moths, harder for birds to see and pick off**. Now such pressures are coming for us, as powerful as the asteroid strike behind the Cretaceous-Paleogene mass extinction. We are compelled to adapt to ourselves.** From this point of view, there is no difference between adaptation and mitigation. **To close the fossil fuel plants, to destroy a planet of value, or even, dare we hope, the value-form itself:** are these not adaptations**?** Of course, this is not what is generally meant by adaptation. Implicit is a Green Zone-style survivalism of the rich; explicitly touted are permanent adaptations of capitalism to the consequences of capitalism. The ideology of ‘adaptation’ has become the ideology of capitalism’s triumph over all life.

## Part 2 – Capitalist Space

#### Thus, I affirm: Resolved: The appropriation of outer space by private entities is unjust. The affirmative defends the truth of an unjust practice but doesn’t defend a specific practice of what the next move is. Space is the domain needed for capital to extend surplus into while also being a new locus for exploitation – Shammas and Holen 19:

[(Victor L, a sociologist working at the Department of Sociology and Human Geography, University of Oslo; Tomas B., independent scholar in Oslo, Norway) “One giant leap for capitalistkind: private enterprise in outer space,” 1-29-2019, pg. 5-6] TDI

No longer terra nullius, space is now the new terra firma of capitalistkind: its naturalized terroir, its next necessary terrain. The logic of capitalism dictates that capital should seek to expand outwards into the vastness of space, a point recognized by a recent ethnography of NewSpace actors (Valentine, 2016, p. 1050). The operations of capitalistkind serve to resolve a series of (potential) crises of capitalism, revolving around the slow, steady decline of spatial fixes (see e.g., Harvey, 1985, p. 51–66) as they come crashing up against the quickly vanishing blank spaces remaining on earthly maps and declining (terrestrial) opportunities for profitable investment of surplus capital (Dickens and Ormrod, 2007a, p. 49–78). A ‘spatial fix' involves the geographic modulation of capital accumulation, consisting in the outward expansion of capital onto new geographic terrains, or into new spaces, with the aim of filling a gap in the home terrains of capital. Jessop (2006, p. 149) notes that spatial fixes may involve a number of strategies, including the creation of new markets within the capitalist world, engaging in trade with non-capitalist economies, and exporting surplus capital to undeveloped or underdeveloped regions. The first two address the problem of insufficient demand and the latter option creates a productive (or valorizing) outlet for excess capital. Capitalism must regularly discover, develop, and appropriate such new spaces because of its inherent tendency to generate surplus capital, i.e., capital bereft of profitable purpose. In Harvey’s (2006, p. xviii) terms, a spatial fix revolves around ‘geographical expansions and restructuring…as a temporary solution to crises understood…in terms of the overaccumulation of capital'. It is a temporary solution because these newly appropriated spaces will in turn become exhausted of profitable potential and are likely to produce their own stocks of surplus capital; while ‘capital surpluses that otherwise stood to be devalued, could be absorbed through geographical expansions and spatio-temporal displacements' (Harvey, 2006, p. xviii), this outwards drive of capitalism is inherently limitless: there is no end point or final destination for capitalism. Instead, capitalism must continuously propel itself onwards in search of pristine sites of renewed capital accumulation. In this way, Harvey writes, society constantly ‘creates fresh productive powers elsewhere to absorb its overaccumulated capital' (Harvey, 1981, p. 8). Historically, spatial fixes have played an important role in conserving the capitalist system. As Jessop (2006, p. 149) points out, ‘The export of surplus money capital, surplus commodities, and/or surplus labour-power outside the space(s) where they originate enabled capital to avoid, at least for a period, the threat of devaluation'. But these new spaces for capital are not necessarily limited to physical terrains, as with colonial expansion in the nineteenth century; as Greene and Joseph (2015) note, various digital spaces, such as the Internet, can also be considered as spatial fixes: the Web absorbs overaccumulated capital, heightens consumption of virtual and physical goods, and makes inexpensive, flexible sources of labor available to employers. Greene and Joseph offer the example of online high-speed frequency trading as a digital spatial fix that furthers the ‘annihilation of space by time' first noted by Marx in his Grundrisse (see Marx, 1973, p. 524). Outer space serves at least two purposes in this regard. In the short-to medium-term, it allows for the export of surplus capital into emerging industries,

such as satellite imaging and communication. These are significant sites of capital accumulation: global revenues in the worldwide satellite market in 2016 amounted to $260 billion (SIA, 2017, p. 4). Clearly, much of this activity is taking place ‘on the ground'; it is occurring in the ‘terrestrial economy'. But all that capital would have to find some other meaningful or productive outlet were it not for the expansion of capital into space. Second, outer space serves as an arena of technological innovation, which feeds back into the terrestrial economy, helping to avert crisis by pushing capital out of technological stagnation and innovation shortfalls. In short, outer space serves as a spatial fix. It swallows up surplus capital, promising to deliver valuable resources, technological innovations, and communication services to capitalists back on Earth. This places outer space on the same level as traditional colonization, analyzed in Hegel’s Philosophy of Right, which Hegel thought of as a product of the ‘inner dialectic of civil society', which drives the market to ‘push beyond its own limits and seek markets, and so its necessary means of subsistence, in other lands which are either deficient in the goods it has overproduced, or else generally backward in creative industry, etc.' (Hegel, 2008, p. 222). In this regard, SpaceX and related ventures are not so very different from maritime colonialists and the trader-exploiters of the British East India Company. But there is something new at stake. As the Silicon Valley entrepreneur Peter Diamandis has gleefully noted: ‘There are twenty-trillion-dollar checks up there, waiting to be cashed!' (Seaney and Glendenning, 2016). Capitalistkind consists in the naturalization of capitalist consciousness and practice, the (false) universalization of a particular mode of political economy as inherent to the human condition, followed by the projection of this naturalized universality into space—capitalist humanity as a Fukuyamite ‘end of history', the end-point of (earthly) historical unfolding, but the starting point of humanity’s first serious advances in space. What role, then, for the state? The frontiersmen of NewSpace tend to think of themselves as libertarians, pioneers beyond the domain of state bureaucracy (see Nelson and Block, 2018). ‘The government should leave the design work and ownership of the product to the private sector', the author of a 2017 report, Capitalism in Space, advocates. ‘The private companies know best how to build their own products to maximize performance while lowering cost' (Zimmerman, 2017, p. 27). One ethnographer notes that ‘politically, right-libertarianism prevails' amongst NewSpace entrepreneurs (Valentine, 2016, p. 1047–1048). Just as Donald Rumsfeld dismissed the opponents to the Iraq War as ‘Old Europe', so too are state entities’ interests in space exploration shrugged off as symptoms of ‘Old Space'. Elon Musk, we are told in a recent biography, unlike the sluggish Big State actors of yore, ‘would apply some of the start-up techniques he’d learned in Silicon Valley to run SpaceX lean and fast…As a private company, SpaceX would also avoid the waste and cost overruns associated with government contractors' (Vance, 2015, p. 114). This libertarianism-in-space has found a willing chorus of academic supporters. The legal scholar Virgiliu Pop introduces the notion of the frontier paradigm (combining laissez-faire economics, market competition, and an individualist ethic) into the domain of space law, claiming that this paradigm has ‘proven its worth on our planet' and will ‘most likely…do so in the extraterrestrial realms' as well (Pop, 2009, p. vi). This frontier paradigm is not entirely new: a ‘Columbus mythology', centering on the ‘noble explorer', was continuously evoked in the United States during the Cold War space race (Dickens and Ormrod, 2016, pp. 79, 162–164). But the entrepreneurial libertarianism of capitalistkind is undermined by the reliance of the entire NewSpace complex on extensive support from the state, ‘a public-private financing model underpinning long-shot start-ups' that in the case of Musk’s three main companies (SpaceX, SolarCity Corp., and Tesla) has been underpinned by $4.9 billion dollars in government subsidies (Hirsch, 2015). In the nascent field of space tourism, Cohen (2017) argues that what began as an almost entirely private venture quickly ground to a halt in the face of insurmountable technical and financial obstacles, only solved by piggybacking on large state-run projects, such as selling trips to the International Space Station, against the objections of NASA scientists. The business model of NewSpace depends on the taxpayer’s dollar while making pretensions to individual self-reliance. The vast majority of present-day clients of private aerospace corporations are government clients, usually military in origin. Furthermore, the bulk of rocket launches in the United States take place on government property, usually operated by the US Air Force or NASA.13 This inward tension between state dependency and capitalist autonomy is itself a product of neoliberalism’s contradictory demand for a minimal, “slim” state, while simultaneously (and in fact) relying on a state reengineered and retooled for the purposes of capital accumulation (Wacquant, 2012). As Lazzarato writes, ‘To be able to be “laissez-faire”, it is necessary to intervene a great deal' (2017, p. 7). Space libertarianism is libertarian in name only: behind every NewSpace venture looms a thick web of government spending programs, regulatory agencies, public infrastructure, and universities bolstered by research grants from the state. SpaceX would not exist were it not for state-sponsored contracts of satellite launches. Similarly, in 2018, the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA)—the famed origin of the World Wide Web—announced that it would launch a ‘responsive launch competition', meaning essentially the reuse of launch vehicles, representing an attempt by the state to ‘harness growing commercial capabilities' and place them in the service of the state’s interest in ensuring ‘national security' (Foust, 2018b). This libertarianism has been steadily growing in the nexus between Silicon Valley, Stanford University, Wall Street, and the Washington political establishment, which tend to place a high value on Randian ‘objectivism' and participate in a long American intellectual heritage of individualistic ‘bootstrapping' and (allegedly) gritty self-reliance. But as Nelson and Block (2018, p. 189–197) recognize, one of the central symbolic operations of capitalistkind resides in concealing its reliance on the state by mobilizing the charm of its entrepreneurial constituents and the spectacle of space. There is a case to be made for the idea that SpaceX and its ilk resemble semi-private corporations like the British East India Company. The latter, “incorporated by royal charter from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth I in 1600 to trade in silk and spices, and other profitable Indian commodities,” recruited soldiers and built a ‘commercial business [that] quickly became a business of conquest' (Tharoor, 2017). SpaceX, too, is increasingly imbricated with an attempt on the part of a particular state, the United States, to colonize and appropriate resources derived from a particular area, that of outer space; it, too, depends on the infrastructure, contracts, and regulatory environment that thus far only a state seems able to provide. Its private character, like that of the East India Company, is troubled by being deeply embedded in the state. As one commentator has observed of SpaceX, ‘If there’s a consistent charge against Elon Musk and his high-flying companies…it’s that they’re not really examples of independent, innovative market capitalism. Rather, they’re government contractors, dependent on taxpayer money to stay afloat' (cit. Nelson and Block, 2018, p. 189). Perhaps this should not come as a surprise. As Bourdieu (2005, p. 12) observed, ‘The economic field is, more than any other, inhabited by the state, which contributes at every moment to its existence and persistence, and also to the structure of the relations of force that characterize it'. The state lays out the preconditions for market exchanges. Under neoliberalism, the state is the preeminent facilitator of markets. The neoliberal state is not so much a Minimalstaat, night watchman state, or slim state as it is the prima causa of market society (see, e.g., Wacquant, 2012). Similarly, in the political theory of Deleuze and Guattari, any economic development presupposes the political differentiation caused by the state (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004a, p. 237–238). Even in the global environment of contemporary capitalism, the market cannot operate without the state becoming integrated with capitalism itself, as ‘it is the modern state that gives capitalism its models of realization' (Deleuze and Guattari, 2004b, p. 480). For capitalism to survive in outer space, the state must create a regulatory environment, subsidize infrastructure, and hand down contracts – in short, assemble outer space as a domain made accessible in legal, technical, and economic ways.

#### Private space is a façade that’s rooted in capitalism – the so called “leaders” of private space don’t care for conditions of life for the workers just the rich - Marx et al. 20:

Marx, Paris, et al. “Yes to Space Exploration. No to Space Capitalism.” Jacobin, 6 Aug. 2020, [https://jacobinmag.com/2020/06/spacex-elon-musk-jeff-bezos-capitalism. //](https://jacobinmag.com/2020/06/spacex-elon-musk-jeff-bezos-capitalism.%20//) LHP PS

**Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk have a vision of space that serves the narrow interests of capitalists**. **But we don’t want to be indentured servants on a Martian colony — we want solar exploration that benefits humanity as a whole**. **On May 30, SpaceX finally launched astronauts into space more than two years behind schedule**. President Donald Trump was on hand for the launch. **After pushing for the militarization of space with the formation of the US Space Force, Trump fused his own vision with that of SpaceX founder Elon Musk, declaring,** “**We’ll soon be landing on Mars and we’ll soon have the greatest weapons ever imagined in history.”** Early in Trump’s presidency, Musk faced criticism for being part of the administration’s advisory council and [refusing to step down](https://www.vox.com/2017/2/4/14508874/elon-musk-trump-business-council-twitter-tesla-spacex) even as Trump signed his signature Muslim ban. It was believed Musk was hoping to benefit from greater public subsidies, on top of the billions NASA gave to SpaceX, and he’s set to do so as part of [Trump’s plan to get astronauts back on the moon by 2024](https://www.cnbc.com/2020/02/11/nasa-space-budget-billions-to-spacex-blue-origin-maxar-and-more.html). More recently, the two have found themselves of the same mind on the pandemic as they shared misleading health information and Musk echoed Trump’s calls to “open the economy” and give people their “[freedom](https://www.marketwatch.com/story/elon-musk-give-people-their-freedom-back-and-reopen-america-2020-04-29)” back. **The May 30 launch symbolized both Trump’s desire to project an image of revived American greatness and Musk’s need not only to bolster the myth that makes his wealth possible, but to set the foundations for a privatized space industry.** **The space billionaires — Musk and Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos foremost among them — have little stake in the well-being of the majority of the population.** **Their space visions are designed for wealthy people like themselves, with little mention of where the working class would fit in**. **They’ve built their wealth on exploitation, and their visions of the future are little more than an extension of their present actions**. the business practices of Musk and Bezos are increasingly well known and have been on clear display during the pandemic. **Musk tried to claim Tesla’s Fremont, California factory was “essential” until authorities forced him to close it; then he reopened it in defiance of health orders. As Tesla CEO, Musk has a long history of opposing the unionization of workers, presiding over a high rate of worker injuries (which the company tried to cover up), and even having a former worker hacked and harassed after he became a whistleblower.** Meanwhile, **Bezos has a similar history of abusing Amazon workers**. Amazon’s **warehouses are known for having**[**higher injury rates than the industry average**](https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2019/11/amazon-warehouse-reports-show-worker-injuries/602530/)**, the company has**[**fought unionization**](https://gizmodo.com/amazons-aggressive-anti-union-tactics-revealed-in-leake-1829305201)**, and the stories of the terrible**[**conditions**](https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/feb/05/amazon-workers-protest-unsafe-grueling-conditions-warehouse)[**experienced**](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/amazon-protests-workers-urinate-plastic-bottles-no-toilet-breaks-milton-keynes-jeff-bezos-a9012351.html)[**by**](https://www.theverge.com/2019/4/25/18516004/amazon-warehouse-fulfillment-centers-productivity-firing-terminations)[**workers**](https://www.businessinsider.com/amazon-warehouse-workers-share-their-horror-stories-2018-4)**are legendary.** **During the pandemic, that has continued**, with the **company failing to enforce social distancing or provide adequate protective equipment**[**until workers began walking out**](https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/mar/30/amazon-workers-strike-coronavirus), **refusing to be**[**open about infection information**](https://www.latimes.com/business/technology/story/2020-05-28/amazon-whole-foods-workers-track-coronavirus-cases), and **firing workers who dared criticize**[**the**](https://www.theverge.com/2020/4/14/21220353/amazon-covid-19-criticism-protest-fired-employees-cunningham-costa-climate-change)**company**, all **while Bezos’s wealth has increased by**[**more than $30 billion**](https://www.cnbc.com/2020/05/21/american-billionaires-got-434-billion-richer-during-the-pandemic.html). But it goes beyond that, because **the worldviews of these billionaires began to be formed long before they started the empires they currently lord over**. **Musk** did not **have** a regular childhood, but rather a **wealthy upbringing in apartheid South Africa**. His **father was an engineer and** owned part of an emerald mine in Zambia, telling [Business Insider](https://theconversation.com/donald-trumps-space-force-the-dangerous-militarisation-of-outer-space-98588), “We were **very wealthy**. We had **so much money at times we couldn’t even close our safe**.” In Elon Musk: Tesla, SpaceX, and the Quest for a Fantastic Future, Ashlee Vance describes how **Musk got money from his father when he was starting one of his original ventures**. He also had a particular admiration for his grandfather, who moved to apartheid South Africa from Canada after rallying “against government interference in the lives of individuals.” **Bezos** has a not dissimilar story. His **father was a well-off oil engineer** in Cuba while Fulgencio Batista was in power. In Bit Tyrants, Rob Larson explains that Bezos’s father left the island after the Cuban Revolution and passed his libertarian views down to his son. **Bezos’s parents**[**invested nearly $250,000**](https://money.com/amazon-jeff-bezoss-parents-investments/)**in Amazon in 1995** as it was getting started. **These space barons made their billions through the exploitation of their workers and came from well-off backgrounds made possible from resource extraction**. **When digging into their visions for a future in space, it’s clear that they seek to extend these conditions into the cosmos, not challenge them in favor of space exploration for the benefit of all.**

#### Don’t be fooled – capitalism doesn’t end at the edge of the Earth’s atmosphere-the ideal privatization of space is the expansion into cosmic capitalism – Marx et al. 2:

Marx, Paris, et al. “Yes to Space Exploration. No to Space Capitalism.” Jacobin, 6 Aug. 2020, [https://jacobinmag.com/2020/06/spacex-elon-musk-jeff-bezos-capitalism. //](https://jacobinmag.com/2020/06/spacex-elon-musk-jeff-bezos-capitalism.%20//) LHP PS

**Musk and Bezos are the leading drivers of the modern push to privatize and colonize space through their respective companies**, **SpaceX and Blue Origin**. Their visions differ slightly, with **Musk preferring to colonize Mars, while Bezos has more interest in building space colonies in orbit**. In 2016, Musk claimed he would [begin sending rockets to Mars in 2018](https://observer.com/2016/06/elon-musk-charts-path-to-colonizing-mars-within-a-decade/). That never happened, but it hasn’t ended his obsession. **Musk is determined to make humans a multi-planetary species, framing our choice as either space colonization or the risk of extinction. Bezos says that Earth is the best planet in our solar system, but if we don’t colonize space we doom ourselves to “**[**stasis and rationing**](https://jacobinmag.com/2019/07/space-colonies-jeff-bezos-blue-origin)**.**” **These framings serve the interests of these billionaires, and make it seem like colonizing space is an obvious and necessary choice when it isn’t. It ignores their personal culpability and the role of the capitalist system they seek to reproduce in causing the problems they say we need to flee in the first place.** **Billionaires have a much greater carbon footprint than ordinary people, with Musk**[**flying his private jet**](https://arstechnica.com/cars/2019/01/elon-musk-private-jet-flew-150000-miles-in-2018-washington-post-reports/)**all around the world as he claims to be an environmental champion.** **Amazon**, meanwhile, **is**[**courting oil and gas companies**](https://gizmodo.com/amazon-is-aggressively-pursuing-big-oil-as-it-stalls-ou-1833875828)**with cloud services to make their business more efficient, and Tesla is selling**[**a false vision of sustainability**](https://jacobinmag.com/2020/01/elon-musk-climate-apocalypse-tesla-spacex)**that purposely serves people like Musk, all while capitalism continues to drive the climate system toward the cliff edge**. **Colonizing space will not save us from billionaire-fueled climate dystopia.** But **these billionaires do not hide who would be served by their futures.** **Musk has given many figures** **for the cost of a ticket to Mars**, but they’re never cheap. He told Vance the tickets would cost $**500,000 to $1 million**, a price at which he thinks “it’s highly likely that there will be a self-sustaining Martian colony.” However, **the workers for such a colony clearly won’t be able to buy their own way**. Rather, **Musk tweeted a plan for**[**Martian indentured servitude**](https://gizmodo.com/elon-musk-a-new-life-awaits-you-on-the-off-world-colon-1841071257) **where workers would take on loans to pay for their tickets and pay them off later because “There will be a lot of jobs on Mars!”** **Bezos** is even more open about how the workforce will have to expand to serve his vision, but has little to say about what they’ll be doing. His **plan to maintain economic “growth and dynamism” requires the human population to grow to a trillion people. He claims this would create “a thousand Mozarts and a thousand Einsteins” who would live in space colonies that are supposed to house a million people each, with the surface of Earth being mainly for tourism.** Meanwhile, industrial and mining work would move into orbit so as not to pollute the planet, and while he doesn’t explicitly acknowledge it, **it’s likely that’s where you’ll find many of those trillion workers toiling for their space overlord and his descendants.** Space Shouldn’t Serve Capitalists In 1978, Murray Bookchin [skewered a certain brand of futurism](http://unevenearth.org/2019/10/bookchin_doing_the_impossible/) that sought to “extend the present into the future” and desired “multinational corporations to become multi-cosmic corporations.” Much of **this future thinking obsesses about possible changes to technology, but seeks to preserve the existing social and economic relations — “the present as it exists today, projected, one hundred years from now,”** as Bookchin put it. That’s at the core of the space billionaires’ vision for the future. **Space has been used by past US presidents to bolster American power and influence, but it was largely accepted that capitalism ended at the edge of the atmosphere. That’s no longer the case, and just as past capitalist expansions have come at the expense of poor and working people to enrich a small elite, so too will this one.** Bezos and Trump may have a public feud, but that doesn’t mean that their **mutual interest isn’t served by a renewed US push into space that funnels massive public funds into private pockets and seeks to open celestial bodies to capitalist resource extraction**. This is not to say that we need to halt space exploration. The collective interest of humanity is served by learning more about the solar system and the universe beyond, **but the goal of such missions must be driven by gaining scientific knowledge and enhancing global cooperation, not nationalism and profit-making.** **Yet that’s exactly what the space billionaires and American authoritarians have found common cause in**, with Trump declaring that “[a new age of American ambition has now begun](https://twitter.com/TeamTrump/status/1266846741787074560?s=20)” at a NASA press briefing just hours before cities across the country were placed under curfew last week. **Before space can be explored in a way that benefits all of humankind, existing social relations must be transformed, not extended into the stars as part of a new colonial project.**

## Part 3 – Fidelity to Truth

#### The role of the ballot is fidelity to the truth – dedication to a shared horizon is liberatory - Dean 19:

Dean, Jodi. Comrade: An essay on political belonging. Verso, 2019. // LHP BT + LHP PS

The idea that comrades are those who belong to the same side of a political struggle leads to the fourth thesis: **The** relation between comrades is mediated by **fidelity to a** truth**;** practices **of comradeship** materialize **this** fidelity**. The “same side” points to the truth comrades are faithful to—the political truth that unites them**—**and the fidelity with which they work to realize this truth in the world.** “Belonging” invites attention to the expectations, practices, and affects that being on the same side generates. The notions of truth and fidelity at work here come from Alain Badiou. In brief, **Badiou rejects the idea of truth as a proposition or judgment, arguing instead that** truth is a process**. The process begins with the eruption of something new, an event.** **Because an event changes the situation, breaks the confines of the given, it is undecidable in terms of the given; it is something entirely new**. Badiou argues that this undecidability “induces the appearance of a *subject* of the event.”[60](about:blank) **This subject isn’t the cause of the event. It’s an effect of or response to the event,** “the decision to *say* that the event has taken place.” Grammar might seduce us into rendering this subject as “I.” **We should** avoid this temptation and **recognize the subject** **as** designating an inflection point, **a response that extends the event.** **The decision that a truth has appeared, that an event has occurred, incites a process of verification**, the “infinite procedure of verification of the true,” **in** **what Badiou calls an “exercise of fidelity**.”[61](about:blank) **Fidelity is a working out and working through of the truth, an engagement with truth that extends out into and changes the world. We should recognize here the unavoidably collective dimension of fidelity: in the political field, verification is a struggle of the many.** Peter Hallward draws out some implications of Badiou’s conception of truth. First, it is subjective. Those faithful to an evental truth involve themselves in working it out, exploring its consequences.[62](about:blank) Second, fidelity is not blind faith; it is rigorous engagement unconcerned with individual personality and incorporated into the body of truth that it generates. Hallward writes:Fidelity is, by definition, ex-centric, directed outward, beyond the limits of a merely personal integrity. To be faithful to an evental implication always means to abandon oneself, rigorously, to the unfolding of its consequences. **Fidelity implies that, if there is truth, it can be only cruelly indifferent to the private as such.** **Every truth involves a kind of anti-privatization, a subjective collectivization. In truth, “I” matter only insofar as I am subsumed by the impersonal vector of truth—say, the political organization, or the scientific research program.**[**63**](about:blank) **The truth process builds a new body**. This body of truth is a collective formed to “work for the consequences of the new” and this work, this collective, disciplines and subsumes the faithful.[64](about:blank)Third, collectivity does not imply uniformity. The infinite procedure of verification incorporates multiple experiments, enactments, and effects.Badiou writes, “An organization lies at the intersection between an Idea and an event. However, this intersection only exists as process, whose immediate subject is the political militant.”[65](about:blank) We should amend this statement by replacing *militant* with *comrade*. Comrade highlights the “discipline of the event,” the way that political fidelity cannot be exercised by a solitary individual—hence, the Marxist-Leninist emphasis on the unity of theory and practice, the barren incapacity of each alone. Comrade also affirms the self-abandonment accompanying fidelity to a truth: its vector, its unfolding, is indifferent to my personal experiences and inclinations. For communists, the process of truth has a body and that body is the party, in both its historical and formal sense. Already in *Theory of the Subject*, Badiou recognizes the necessity of a political body, the party as the “subject-support of all politics.”[66](about:blank) He writes:The party is the body of politics, in the strict sense. The fact that there is a body by no means guarantees that there is a subject … But for there to be a subject, for a subject to be found, there must be the support of a body.[67](about:blank) **As a figure of political belonging, the comrade is a faithful response to the evental rupture of crowds and movements, to the egalitarian discharge that erupts from the force of the many where they don’t belong, to the movement of the people as the subject of politics.**[**68**](about:blank) **Comrades demonstrate fidelity through political work; through concerted, disciplined engagement. Their practical political work extends the truth of the emancipatory egalitarian struggle of the oppressed into the world.** Amending Badiou (by drawing from his earlier work), we can say that the comrade is not a faithful subject but a political relation faithful to the divided people as the subject of emancipatory egalitarian politics.[69](about:blank) **For us to see the revolutionary people as the subject in the struggles of the oppressed, for their subject to be found, we must be comrades.** In *Ninotchka*, Nina Ivanova Yakushova can’t tell who her comrades are by looking at them. The party has told her who to look for, but she has to ask. After Iranoff identifies himself, Yakushova tells him her name and the name and position of the party comrade who authorized her visit. Iranoff introduces Buljanoff and Kopalski. Yakushova addresses each as comrade. But it’s not the address that makes them all comrades. They are comrades because they are members of the same party. **The party is the organized body of truth that mediates their relationship. This mediation makes clear what is expected of comrades—disciplined, faithful work.** Iranoff, Buljanoff, and Kopalski have not been doing the work expected of comrades, which is why Moscow sent Yakushova to oversee them in Paris. That Kopalski says they would have greeted her with flowers demonstrates their *embourgeoisment*, the degeneration of their sense of comradeship. But they are all there for work. Gendered identity and hierarchy don’t mediate relations between comrades. The practices of fidelity to a political truth, the work done toward building that truth in the world, do. The solidarity of comrades in political struggle arises out of the intertwining of truth, practice, and party. It’s not reducible to any of these alone. **Comrades are not simply those who believe in the same truth—as in, for example, the idea of communism. Their fidelity to a certain truth is manifested in practical work.** Work for the realization of a political truth brings people into comradely relation. **But carrying out similar tasks in fidelity to the same truth isn’t sufficient for comradeship. The work must be in common; no one is a comrade on their own. Practices of comradeship are coordinated, organized. The party is the organization out of which comradeship emerges and that comrade relations produce. It concentrates comradeship even as comradeship exceeds it.**

#### Anti-capitalism must learn to compete with capitalism in the realm of desire, repurposing existing capitalist structures like the state and repurposing them to create Marxist possibility. Thus, the first step is one of transforming our libidinal desires and the direction of thought, not jumping to policy action – Heron:

Heron, Kai. “Journal of the Marxist Literary Group.” Mediations, [https://mediationsjournal.org/articles/still-a-world. //](https://mediationsjournal.org/articles/still-a-world.%20//) LHP PS

Fisher defines **capitalist realism as “the widespread sense that not only is capitalism the only viable political and economic system, but also that it is now almost impossible to even imagine a coherent alternative to it.”**4 The concept incorporates both Francis Fukuyama’s “End of History Thesis” and the often-repeated maxim, attributed to both Frederic Jameson and Slavoj Žižek, that “it is easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism.” In fact, Fisher says that this “slogan captures precisely” what he means by capitalist realism.5 Yet as his argument proceeds, the concept takes on a much more all-encompassing character. No longer narrowly about the imagination**, it begins to have a quasi-ontological sense**. To borrow a phrase from Raymond Williams, **it becomes a shared “structure of feeling.”6 Impersonal, comprehensive, unconscious and insidious, capitalist realism names the naturalization of neoliberalism as an ineradicable fact of life. But** — and this is crucial for Fisher — **capitalist realism is only quasi-ontological. However hard it might be for us to imagine the end of capitalism, the perception that we live at the end of history is nothing more than a highly successful class project in need of constant reinforcement by the bourgeoisie. Their principal weapon in this respect is the manipulation of desire**, or what Fisher would later call “libidinal engineering.”7 **The trick of capitalist realism is not to make people think that capitalism is the perfect system (it clearly isn’t) but that it is the most realistic system. Its function is to suppress post-capitalist imaginaries and working-class power. Its ultimate aim is to make it unthinkable that a post-capitalist world might create a richer and more fulfilling life for the majority of people than capitalism will ever be able to muster.** For Fisher, **the only way to combat a class project at the level of desire is with an opposing class project at the level of desire**. **What the Left needs is a politics that can compete with capitalism at a libidinal level and win.** As Fisher sees it, **the historic failure of the Left in this respect is as much to blame for the spread of capitalist realism as the Right’s successes.** Fisher admonishes the Left for failing to keep up with the desires unleashed among the working classes in the wake of 1968: **“If neoliberalism triumphed by incorporating the desires of the post 68 working class, a new left could begin by building on the desires which neoliberalism has generated but which it has been unable to satisfy.**”8 **This “New Left” is a Left that has nothing to gain from moralistically denouncing the luxuries of consumer capitalism. It is a Left that must give up the nostalgic figure of the disciplined Fordist factory worker and that cannot aim for an “anti-libidinal dampening” but that must instead construct a “counter-libido.”9 In short, it is a Left that must provide its own communal luxuries to combat the highly individualized pleasures of consumer capitalism.** What does this mean? If “bread for all, and roses too” was an essential slogan of the 1900s — a slogan that pointed towards the worker’s demands for the basics of life (bread) and for luxury too (roses), then Fisher teaches us that the slogans of the 21st century must be something like: “Everything for Everybody,” “Communal Luxury Now!,” and “Red Plenty.”10 Simply put, **capitalism cannot be allowed to maintain its self-proclaimed monopoly on desire.** This conviction leads Fisher to pose a question that runs sharply against the grain of large sections of today’s Left:“**Where is the left,”** he asks, “**that can speak confidently in the name of an alien future, that can openly celebrate, rather than mourn, the disintegration of existing socialities and territorialities**?”11 In other words, **where is the Left that resolutely rejects the fantasy of a return to some non-existent holism, to a national neo-Keynesian industrial strategy, to a ready-made revolutionary working class, and that will compete with capitalism at the level of desire? Where is the Left that dares to see in capitalist desires, practices, infrastructures and institutions, a nascent but corrupted desire for post-capitalism?** If this sounds a bit like accelerationism, that’s because it is. For Fisher, “Marxism is nothing if it is not accelerationist.”12 But by this he does not mean that we must vote for Trump, use innumerable plastic straws, and donate to Pegida. Fisher has in mind a more respectable communist current that begins with Marx and runs through Lenin, to Jameson, and finally to Fisher himself. In the Manifesto of the Communist Party, for instance, Marx and Engels reproach early luddite attacks on the forces of production for attempting — understandably but uselessly — to work against the tides of history.13 Similarly, they lambast “reactionary socialists” for trying to maintain a compromise solution between the new industrial era and pre-industrial relations of production and morality: “Nothing is easier than to give a Christian asceticism a socialist tinge.”14 **For Marx, then, a true communist rejects nostalgic moralism and projects their desires into the present to tease out a possible post-capitalist future.** As he explained in the Critique of the Gotha Programme, **communism will have to emerge in and against capitalism.15 It will need to see in the structures of capitalist society an emergent communist society.** Recall Lenin’s claim that the capitalist banking system provides the “skeleton” for a socialist system of book-keeping and distribution that need only be taken “ready-made” and “democratized” by the proletariat.16 Lenin’s proposal isolates what Frederic Jameson calls the “dialectical ambivalence” of capitalism.17 The desire for a smoothly functioning book-keeping system is hardly unique to capitalism and would be fundamental to any successful project of central planning in 1917. **The challenge, then, is to turn form against content, to see how what functions as an exploitative behemoth today could be repurposed for liberatory ends tomorrow. As Jameson says, even “the most noxious phenomena can serve as the repository and hiding place for all kinds of unsuspected wish-fulfilments**”.18 Jameson turns to the noxious phenomena of Walmart. While acknowledging the expected criticisms of the corporation, Jameson underlines Walmart’s properly dialectical and ambivalent character. As he says, “its capacity to reduce inflation and hold down or even lower prices to make life affordable for the poorest Americans is also the very source of their poverty and the prime mover in the dissolution of American industrial productivity”.19 Jameson wrote his essay in 2009. Today, we might want to apply the same logic to Amazon – a company whose monopoly has put an end to free market competition in its sector while undeniably resolving the problem of distribution via a now globalized system of planning, storage, transportation, and delivery. **Jameson’s provocation— very much in the vein of Marx and Lenin before him — is to get us to imagine Amazon as both ruthlessly capitalist and as perhaps the most communist business in existence today. To paraphrase Lenin, once it has been put into the hands of the workers, a nationalized, or internationalized, Amazon may prove to be the skeleton of a twenty-first century socialist society; a socialism that is entirely reconcilable with today’s desire for almost instantaneous satisfaction of our wants and needs.** In “Post-Capitalist Desire,” Fisher situates himself firmly in this tradition of thought. Drawing explicitly from Jameson, he explores the dialectical ambivalence of another capitalist monstrosity: Starbucks. Ingeniously, Fisher turns the accusations that communism is generic and homogenous back onto one of the archetypal capitalist corporations: is not Starbucks itselfgeneric and homogenous? Can we not go to any Starbucks in the world, and order the same dry falafel salad, the same mediocre over-priced coffee, and sit in the same inoffensively decorated interiors? Fisher’s bold claim is that **Starbucks is not successful because it satisfies supposedly capitalist desires but because it is in fact satisfying a “thwarted desire for communism,” for a shared “third space” that is neither the home nor workplace, and that is increasingly under attack, enclosed, and privatized in today’s capitalist societies.21 Once we make this shift in perspective, we can see the masses of people sitting alone in Starbucks with their laptops and coffee as participating in a sad and diminished reflection of a fuller, richer, practice of being and desiring in common. Capitalism becomes a threat to our desires rather than their precondition.** The ambivalence of Walmart, Amazon, and Starbucks is already apparent in their customers. No one actually likesshopping at Walmart or Amazon, no one enjoys Starbucks coffee, without at the same time being critical of their capitalist content: they don’t pay their taxes, they don’t permit unions, it’s too expensive, the supply chain is ethically unacceptable, and so on. While we could take the Žižekian route and say that this is precisely how capitalist ideology works — by maintaining a gap between the subject and the Big Other — Fisher asks whether it might be more politically salient to also try to imagine this as a nascent and corrupted desire for something fundamentally better: the same form but with a different, explicitly post-capitalist, content. We can push this logic further. In the UK there is a chain of pubs called Wetherspoons. Wetherspoons’ chairman, Tim Martin, is a right-wing, pro-Brexit, millionaire. The company’s business model is to take historic buildings that might otherwise be destroyed and to turn them into standardized pubs. The result is an incongruous mixture of frequently beautiful buildings with drab, miserable, replicated interiors. It’s immensely popular. It’s popular among the elderly, among stag and hen parties, students, and young professionals. It’s probably one of the few places in the UK where you see these groups intermingling in the same space. And why is this? It can’t just be the cheap alcohol — although that helps. It can’t just be the food — which is unremarkable at best. It must also be because we put a premium on collectivity and sociality that is everywhere suppressed. Even the British, the possessors of a culture that is infamously emotionally repressed and withdrawn desire this kind of space. Wetherspoons holds open the thwarted promise of a collective experience, of a collective enjoyment, of red plenty. During the Brexit campaign, Wetherspoons issued beermats with right-wing pro-Brexit slogans on them leading to some parts of the left boycotting the chain. But rather than resorting to this strategy — which was clearly doomed to fail since it was premised on coming between people and a cheap pint — why not see this for what it is: a remarkable strategy in an ongoing class struggle? What we need, as the organization Plan C has suggested, is a Wetherspoons of the left.23 **What we need is a dialectical attunement to already existing infrastructures and practices whose form can be read against their content. We should be able to imagine providing a better version of this highly successful generic, homogenous, and standardized space than capitalism has thus far provided for us. Fisher’s call to annex the form of capitalist infrastructures and practices to use them against their content is a fundamentally Marxist gesture that is applicable in more ways than today’s dominant Leftist currents have thus far dared to imagine. Could we not, for instance, follow this logic to its end and say that capitalism’s dialectical ambivalence extends up to and includes the state? This was Lenin’s point in The State and Revolution.24 The capitalist state is systematically used in the interests of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. But what kind of a desire does the state make possible when it is taken into the hands of the proletariat?** The rise of Jeremy Corbyn has perhaps given us a taste of this ambivalence. Corbyn’s presence in national politics holds open a space of desire that the ruling classes know to be a threat. How else are we to make sense of Theresa May’s full-throated defense of capitalism in September 2017 as “the greatest agent of collective human progress ever created”?25 Such a speech would have been simply unimaginable when Capitalist Realismwas first published. Perhaps one of Fisher’s challenges to us today, then, is to find the post-capitalist kernel in Corbyn’s social-democratic project, bearing in mind, as Fisher warns in his conclusion to Capitalist Realism, that capitalist realism might outlast neoliberalism by compromising with precisely such social-democratic projects.26

#### Fighting capitalist realism requires the comrade – Dean 2:

Dean, Jodi. “Capitalism is the End of the World.” [https://mediationsjournal.org/articles/end-of-world //](https://mediationsjournal.org/articles/end-of-world%20//) LHP PS

**Capitalist realism has four basic features. First, it is a response to the inability to imagine an alternative to capitalism, the name for a “reflective impotence**.”2 **Capitalist realism is more than the sense that there is no alternative to capitalism. It’s a response to that sense, a reaction to the loss of a sense of possibility, a resignation or fatalism.** Capitalism is all there is and it’s here to stay. Fisher’s point is that capitalism persists whether or not people think it is legitimate, good, or efficient: “The operations of capital do not depend on any sort of subjectively assumed belief.”3 **Capitalist realism thus designates an unbearable stuckness in an unbearable system that we can’t imagine getting beyond. Second, capitalist realism is a pathology of the left**.4 **It is left acceptance of defeat**, the left giving up and giving in. Fisher explains that “it is the left which has had to tell itself the story that there’s no point struggling for an alternative to capitalism.”5 I would add that this tends to be accompanied by left concession to anti-communism that the lesson of the 20th century is that anything other than capitalism is death. That capitalism is itself death is denied, displaced, ignored. This concession to anti-communism may or may not be fully conscious. It’s present, though, in left practice, which leads to the third feature of capitalist realism. **Third, capitalist realism is a matter of what we do. We lower our expectations. We substitute spectacle for organizing. We may think that capitalism is an awful, exploitative system that damns most of us to selling ourselves to survive in a setting where there are ever fewer buyers – but our actions go along with the game. And this encompasses not just our economic actions, but our political ones. Anti-capitalism functions as a hipster gesture, a cynical nihilism in a knowing, more-radical-than-thou insistence that capitalism is so bad and holds us so tightly that politics can do little more than stage our misery as a spectacle. Fourth, capitalist realism is an effect of the collapse in the belief in collective politics. This aspect of capitalist realism comes through in Fisher’s critique of the privatization of stress. Individuals are made “to resolve their own psychological distress” even though such distress is widespread**.6 That capitalist realism is an effect of the collapse of belief in collective politics is further implied in Mark’s critique of the “chemico-biologization of mental illness.”7 This association of suffering with brain chemistry, he tells us, “reinforces Capital’s drive towards atomistic individualization.”8 Finally, this dimension of loss of a belief in collective politics underpins Fisher’s critique of the “consensual sentimentality of Live Aid” that “replaced the antagonism of the Miners’ Strike.”9 What’s at stake in this replacement is the absence of a collective subject, a subject that demands to be constructed. In sum, **Fisher’s concept of capitalist realism names that reflective impotence which overloads a left unable to imagine an end to capitalism, embedding it in pointless activities that sustain its self-entrapment. Once the left has no horizon beyond capitalism, once it has lost its capacity to imagine another future, it no longer believes that collective politics matters. So it sinks into individualism, aestheticism, privatization, and moralism, gesturing left without hope of getting anywhere at all.** Class, Comrades, Solidarity In “Exiting the Vampire Castle,” **Fisher** **extends the capitalist realism** **argument. He links the moralism, individualism, and privatization characteristic of capitalist realism to the disavowal of class. The loss of collectivity is the result of the abandonment of the working class, the deflection and pre-emption of class as a topic, the eclipse of class consciousness as a matter of left politics**. “Bourgeois modes of subjectivity” come to dominate the movement. The underlying vision is of self-oriented individuals, politics as possession, transformation reduced to attitudinal change, and a fixed, naturalized sphere of privilege and oppression. Anchored in a view of identity as the primary vector of politics, political energy shifts away from strategic organizational and tactical questions and onto prior attitudinal litmus tests, precluding from the start the collectivity necessary for revolutionary left politics. Reasserting class provides a way out. Fisher writes: A left that does not have class at its core can only be a liberal pressure group. Class consciousness is always double: it involves a simultaneous knowledge of the way in which class frames and shapes all experience, and a knowledge of the particular position that we occupy in the class structure. It must be remembered that the aim of our struggle is not recognition by the bourgeoisie, nor even the destruction of the bourgeoisie itself. It is the class structure – a structure that wounds everyone, even those who materially profit from it – that must be destroyed. The interests of the working class are the interests of all; the interests of the bourgeoisie are the interests of capital, which are the interests of no-one. Our struggle must be towards the construction of a new and surprising world, not the preservation of identities shaped and distorted by capital.10 **Acknowledging class is acknowledging the dimension of economic situatedness – placement in the social and economic structure by virtue of one’s function in capitalist production. The goal is abolishing this structure. We aren’t trying to get it to include or recognize us. We are trying to destroy it. Fisher associates the return to class with the reinvigoration of comradeship and solidarity. How do we hold each other to account in ways that let us go forward? How do we address and change practices of disrespect within the movement? Through comradeship and solidarity. Fisher writes, “We need to learn, or re-learn, how to build comradeship and solidarity instead of doing capital’s work for it by condemning and abusing each other.” We have to teach and encourage each other, be patient, encouraging, maybe even forgiving—especially of those who are on our side. If we aren’t comrades, we can’t fight the long fight. And even if we could, without comrades there’s not a world to win.**