### 1AC v2

#### There is a fifth dimension beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension as vast as space and as timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between light and shadow, between science and superstition, and it lies between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge. This is the dimension of imagination. It is an area which we call the Twilight Zone.

Rod Serling, “The Twilight Zone” Season 1 opening narration. <https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/The_Twilight_Zone_(1959_TV_series)#Opening_narrations> //los altos bf

#### Capitalism has transcended the material boundaries of production to move into the production of an ideological mist used to perpetuate cultural complacency. In the face of the several interlocking crises of capital we are told to stay put and have faith in the system – any attempt to reform or justify the system are inevitably placed on a shelf as a commodity along with the production of the self, ideology, and culture

Fisher ’09 [Mark Fisher is a former member of the ccru and writes about pop culture and capitalism. May he rest in power. *Capitalist realism: Is there no alternative?* https://libcom.org/files/Capitalist%20Realism\_%20Is%20There%20No%20Alternat%20-%20Mark%20Fisher.pdf] //los altos bf

Capitalism is what is left when beliefs have collapsed at the level of ritual or symbolic elaboration, and all that is left is the consumer-spectator, trudging through the ruins and the relics.

Yet this turn from belief to aesthetics, from engagement to spectatorship, is held to be one of the virtues of capitalist realism. In claiming, as Badiou puts it, to have 'delivered us from the "fatal abstractions" inspired by the "ideologies of the past'", capitalist realism presents itself as a shield protecting us from the perils posed by belief itself. The attitude of ironic distance proper to postmodern capitalism is supposed to immunize us against the seductions of fanaticism. Lowering our expectations, we are told, is a small price to pay for being protected from terror and totalitarianism. 'We live in a contradiction,' Badiou has observed:

a brutal state of affairs, profoundly inegalitarian - where all existence is evaluated in terms of money alone - is presented to us as ideal. To justify their conservatism, the partisans of the established order cannot really call it ideal or wonderful. So instead, they have decided to say that all the rest is horrible. Sure, they say, we may not live in a condition of perfect Goodness. But we're lucky that we don't live in a condition of Evil. Our democracy is not perfect. But it's better than the bloody dictatorships. Capitalism is unjust. But it's not criminal like Stalinism. We let millions of Africans die of AIDS, but we don't make racist nationalist declarations like Milosevic. We kill Iraqis with our airplanes, but we don't cut their throats with machetes like they do in Rwanda, etc.

The 'realism' here is analogous to the deflationary perspective of a depressive who believes that any positive state, any hope, is a dangerous illusion.

In their account of capitalism, surely the most impressive since Marx's, Deleuze and Guattari describe capitalism as a kind of dark potentiality which haunted all previous social systems. Capital, they argue, is the 'unnamable Thing', the abomination, which primitive and feudal societies 'warded off in advance'. When it actually arrives, capitalism brings with it a massive desacralization of culture. It is a system which is no longer governed by any transcendent Law; on the contrary, it dismantles all such codes, only to re-install them on an ad hoc basis. The limits of capitalism are not fixed by fiat, but defined (and re- defined) pragmatically and improvisationally. This makes capitalism very much like the Thing in John Carpenter's film of the same name: a monstrous, infinitely plastic entity, capable of metabolizing and absorbing anything with which it comes into contact. Capital, Deleuze and Guattari says, is a 'motley painting of everything that ever was'; a strange hybrid of the ultra-modern and the archaic. In the years since Deleuze and Guattari wrote the two volumes of their Capitalism And Schizophrenia, it has seemed as if the deterritorializing impulses of capitalism have been confined to finance, leaving culture presided over by the forces of reterritorialization.

This malaise, the feeling that there is nothing new, is itself nothing new of course. We find ourselves at the notorious 'end of history' trumpeted by Francis Fukuyama after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Fukuyama's thesis that history has climaxed with liberal capitalism may have been widely derided, but it is accepted, even assumed, at the level of the cultural unconscious. It should be remembered, though, that even when Fukuyama advanced it, the idea that history had reached a 'terminal beach' was not merely triumphalist. Fukuyama warned that his radiant city would be haunted, but he thought its specters would be Nietzschean rather than Marxian. Some of Nietzsche's most prescient pages are those in which he describes the 'oversaturation of an age with history'. 'It leads an age into a dangerous mood of irony in regard to itself', he wrote in Untimely Meditations, 'and subsequently into the even more dangerous mood of cynicism', in which 'cosmopolitan fingering', a detached spectatorialism, replaces engagement and involvement. This is the condition of Nietzsche's Last Man, who has seen everything, but is decadently enfeebled precisely by this excess of (self) awareness.

Fukuyama's position is in some ways a mirror image of Fredric Jameson's. Jameson famously claimed that postmodernism is the 'cultural logic of late capitalism'. He argued that the failure of the future was constitutive of a postmodern cultural scene which, as he correctly prophesied, would become dominated by pastiche and revivalism. Given that Jameson has made a convincing case for the relationship between postmodern culture and certain tendencies in consumer (or post-Fordist) capitalism, it could appear that there is no need for the concept of capitalist realism at all. In some ways, this is true. What I'm calling capitalist realism can be subsumed under the rubric of postmodernism as theorized by Jameson. Yet, despite Jameson's heroic work of clarification, postmodernism remains a hugely contested term, its meanings, appropriately but unhelpfully, unsettled and multiple. More importantly, I would want to argue that some of the processes which Jameson described and analyzed have now become so aggravated and chronic that they have gone through a change in kind.

#### In the vernacular of space, this is T minus one hour. Sixty minutes before a human being named Major Robert Gaines is lifted off from the Mother Earth and rocketed into the sky, farther and longer than any man ahead of him. Call this one of the first faltering steps of man to sever the umbilical cord of gravity and stretch out a fingertip toward an unknown. Shortly, we'll join this astronaut named Gaines and embark on an adventure, because the environs overhead—the stars, the sky, the infinite space—are all part of a vast question mark known as the Twilight Zone.

(Rod Serling; “The Parallel” Opening Narration of the episode *The Parallel*. <https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Parallel>) HB

#### Aesthetic imaginations of outer space are mediated through an interfacial regime of technological determinism – capitalist realism has adopted a fascination with the stars which re-inscribes a neoliberal subjectivity that traps the desires for another world within a militarized frame of infinitely expansive accumulation – replacing the utopian vision of “space as the place” with a capitalism as boundless as the stars.

Crouch and Damjanov ‘18

[David Crouch, The University of Western Australia, and Katarina Damjanov, The University of Western Australia. 2018. "Sensational Interfaces and the Aesthetics of Space Apps” <https://www.degruyter.com/downloadpdf/j/culture.2018.2.issue-1/culture-2018-0040/culture-2018-0040.pdf>] pat

Just a bit over a half century into the space age, and our planetary exterior is steadily incorporated into the circuits of global capitalism. Space exploration involves the massive mobilisation and investment of military-industrial complexes—an unabashed display of political and economic power that unfolds as a spectacular demonstration of the full potential of techno-science and its capacity to radically extend the generation of knowledge and wealth. And not only are our daily lives already dependent upon space technologies—consider for instance, the array of satellites that supports global communication and surveillance networks, sustaining services from GPS and Google Maps, to maintenance of ballistic missile ranges—our technological means of capturing and relating to the world extend well-beyond the Earth, onto myriad other celestial bodies and regions. As we continue to design more powerful rockets, speculate about mining asteroids, aspire to space travel and tourism and consider terraforming and settlement, extraterrestrial riches become increasingly central to the logics of expansion that characterise capitalism and the ongoing technological evolution of its explorative and exploitative processes. Outer space, however, is an odd place. Its vast, inhuman environment is not merely one more region where we seek to be present and establish ourselves; rather, it is an “unearthly” space that calls for particular re-arrangements of our world-making strategies and their technological apparatus. In the perceived and apparent bareness of outer space—where environments are extreme, technologies necessary and life scarce—the exploitative logics of capitalism do continue—but in a form that is stripped back, intensified, and marked by the progression of its own technological character. As our technological advances in space progressively alter the ways in which we conduct its physical occupation, scientific examination and its social absorption, all our extraplanetary activities are enculturated, drawn back down, through and into, the muddle and confusion of global media and popular imaginaries from which they arise. This incorporation has itself undergone its own evolution, beginning with the militarised imaginations of rocket science and the futuristic fashions of life beyond Earth (Benjamin, Rocket Dreams; Rosenberg, “Far Out”; Bell and Parker, Space Travel and Culture; Parker, “Capitalists in Space”; Geppert, Imagining Outer Space), and spreading onto the online and interactive content through which contemporary creative and media industries have further domesticated outer space. Such assimilation of the cosmos has become part of a continuum of earthly activities along which our “material relations and historical processes … extend into, unfold within and structure this extraterritorial domain” (Parks, “Mapping Orbit” 64). And as many have begun to observe (Harris, “The Influence of Culture on Space Developments”; Ormrod and Dickens, The Palgrave Handbook of Society, Culture and Outer Space), these processes also involve reshaping, restructuring and redefining the imagination, visualisation and occupation of space.1 And of course, the enculturation of outer space feeds back, returning to Earth as a series of slow but seemingly fundamental transformations to the practices through which the human species inhabits, interrelates and attends to what is outside. All our interest, interaction and imaging stretch far out into space, drawing its distant reaches back into our own tiny universes and social spheres. While the attention and activity we collectively direct towards outer space might solidify a sense of global citizenry and revisions of shared planetary collectivities, it is also what allows our darker tendencies toward domination, conquest and consumption to be transported outward, onboard our extraplanetary progress. Although expressions of the “cosmic” expansion of capitalism can be found in all manner of products and enterprises on Earth, perhaps the most symptomatic expression of an ongoing convergence of technoscientific, military-industrial and socio-cultural interfaces is the rise of space apps. The data-driven processes of capitalism’s calculative ordering come together in software which offers myriad space environments and events for mass consumption by media literate and techno-savvy audiences. One needs only to look as far as the large collection offered by NASA within its NASA Apps For Smartphones, Tablets and Digital Media Players portal to appreciate their variety, potential and scope.2 Space apps package the data gathered through space exploration and observation into digital “experiences.” Taking up and reflecting advances in the rendering of video game environments (Galloway, Gaming; Lammes, “Spatial Regimes of the Digital Playground”) and perpetuating the mass-production of virtual tourism (Damjanov and Crouch, “ExtraPlanetary Mobilities”), they make these experiences part of everyday life. Marketed largely as a leisure activity, the allure and availability of space apps might suggest yet another opiate for the masses, an antidote—or more precisely, a placebo—for our limited progress and presence in space. Yet they also offer a unique blend of coetaneous tensions: their mix of the raw data generated by multibillion-dollar technologies, procedures of computation and creative visualisation, the commodification of data and the aestheticisation of information, results in ways of making sense of space that are forged from both the politico-economic drive to expand and exploit, and the socio-cultural need to absorb and relate. Indicative of the distinctly techno-social modes that capitalism takes on in order to maintain its expansion into outer space, space apps become part of an appropriation of our collective relational activity, attention and aspirations. The exploitation of outer space thus first becomes a matter of manipulating the activity and interest we take in things outside the planet—a matter of managing how we see, sense, experience and understand an inhuman space wholly mediated by technical devices. Through the work of culture and the interfaces of digital media, large-scale, all-encompassing organisational systems such as capitalism assert their own extraplanetary extension. In lieu of moon mining, Martian settlement or other hard forms of resource extraction, outer space has become a productive domain for harnessing the attention of the mass through affective interfaces which provide a range of simulated spectacles and the sensorial experiences of being “out there.” The extraplanetary in this sense emerges as an arena of conquest dominated by strategies of mediation and techniques of representation. Through various combinations of media saturation and influence, the incorporation of outer space into our cultural fabrics has become what Galloway describes as the “interface” of high-tech-capitalism, serving not only as a screen-based manifestation of its reach but as a set of effects that suggest its operations out of sight. In this way, structures of power and control that are ever-more grounded within registers of media and informatics proliferate within and through the design and dissemination of “cosmic commodities” (Cubitt, Digital Aesthetics)—becoming a matter of market rationalities but also of aesthetic sensations and relationalities. As such, the interfaces of space apps extend the scale and scope not only of how we perceive the cosmos but of the problematics of framing “devices” themselves. Both entrenched in and at the far edge of a still-emerging dynamics of screen spaces, they indicate the extraplanetary operation of what James Ash dubs “the interface envelope”—and thus the techniques of manipulation that cognitive capitalism continues to evolve, even in our absence. Stimulating collective perceptions of what is other and outside, these apps reflect both a greater human immersion in digital interfaces (an extraplanetary form of the media “envelopment” which increasingly conditions and modulates human sensation and experience), and the “envelope power” (Ash, The Interface Envelope) through which political economies assert control and maintain cycles of production and profit through manipulating and shaping perception and reception. Just as attention is captured and contained in “gamic vision” (Galloway, Gaming 62) and in the “foldings of space and time” (Ash, The Interface Envelope 139) of digital games, it is likewise enveloped in the experience of outer space offered through these apps, which are also “designed to modulate user action with the aim, hope and promise of producing desirable outcomes for those that own and operate” them (Ash, et al. “Unit, Vibration, Tone” 168), while directing our interactions and relational systems through the stimulation of affective experience. Behind designs that capture and direct attention toward the cosmos—unfixed foci that offer the illusion of freedom and visual control, immersion and endless movement—capitalism operates at the thresholds and portals, manipulating the affective states of those that access these interfaces in order to promote an outward-looking orientation, a commodification of perception and perspective that stabilises, settles and coheres outer space as a site for further production, extraction and exchange.

#### **That drive towards accumulation leads to the abandoning of the Earth and endless exploitation – as the global ecosystem collapses, Musk and Bezos swap out the dream of cosmic prosperity for a private escape from a collapse of their own making, leaving the rest of us to hope we survive it.**

Dunker and Hui 20 (Anders Dunker and Yuk Hui; 6/9/20; LA Review of Books; *“On Technodiversity: A Conversation with Yuk Hui”*; accessed 12/11/21; <https://lareviewofbooks.org/article/on-technodiversity-a-conversation-with-yuk-hui/>; Anders Dunker is a Norwegian writer and journalist, currently living in Los Angeles; Yuk Hui currently teaches at the City University of Hong Kong. He did his Ph.D. thesis at Goldsmiths College in London, postdoctoral studies in France, and Habilitation thesis in Germany, and since 2012 he has taught at the Leuphana University and Bauhaus University in Germany) RC/HB

What about people who want to develop new technologies in order to establish a new life in outer space? Does this also represent a cosmotechnics? For instance, the rocket billionaires, Bezos and Musk, who dream of colonies in space and a colonization of Mars? There is a great passage in Nietzsche’s The Gay Science (1882), where he talks about “the horizon of the infinite.” It describes the moderns who have abandoned land for the pursuit of the infinite, yet, when they are in the middle of the ocean, there is nothing more fearful than the infinite — there is no more home to return to. The desire of the moderns, described by Nietzsche, continues to produce an effect of disorientation, while the sentiment that there is no longer any home to return to provides a huge market for psychotherapy and spiritual salvation. The longing for the infinite transports us toward the inhuman. For Jean-François Lyotard, there are both positive and negative infinities, which are connected to different forms of rationality. Positive inhumanity captures us in rigid technological systems, like we see in China with the social credit system. The positive inhuman is one that is “more interior in myself than me” — for example, God for St. Augustine. We humans carry something inhuman in us, which is irreducible to the human and which maintains the highest intimacy with us. At the outset of his book L’Inhumain (1998), Lyotard asks if the ultimate goal for science is not that of preparing for the death of the sun, which, granted, lies unimaginably in the future, but which also entails the destruction of all living beings on Earth. Rocket billionaires, who are all transhumanists, want to overcome finitude: the finitude of human life and of life as such. This longing for the infinite also implies no limit to capital accumulation. Overcoming human limitations — the search for eternal life — also implies an infinite market. In a way, the same happens in space exploration: investors want to profit from the Earth losing its meaning, as if leaving the planet were a matter of leaving one spaceship to enter another. I don’t think it is wrong to explore, or to try to understand the universe, but the conquest we see today seems to me to be merely a preparation for tomorrow’s consumerism. Transhumanists impose on us a false choice because they connect the question of the future of human existence with the question of immortality and describe Earth as a mere spacecraft. In your last book, there is a passage about the secularization of space in which you mention that Elon Musk has launched his Tesla roadster into orbit around the sun. You see this as the first step in the commercialization of the cosmos and the next step as mining on other planets, effectively reducing them to mere natural resources, raw material. As far as I’m concerned, Elon Musk can send his car into space or even travel to Mars, but we should not believe that these projects are the necessary next step in a certain technological development. This doesn’t mean that I see travel in outer space as irrelevant or dangerous in itself. Humankind has speculated for a long time about what is out there among the twinkling stars. It is the same curiosity that has brought forth science and technology. The progressives choose science and the reactionaries choose tradition, but we can also choose to follow a third path — the way of thinking. I have meticulously followed this third path by asking if we can begin from a cosmological perspective and find new ways of coexisting that will allow us to transform modern technology. My aim is not to refuse modern technology nor to see it as a cause for uprootedness, but rather to see the irreconcilability of technology and science with tradition as something fruitful, as a gesture I call “tragist.” This is a main subject of my new book Art and Cosmotechnics [published by the University of Minnesota Press in May]. The discrepancy can be fertile soil for new thinking. In The Question Concerning Technology in China, I try to find out how we can deploy Chinese philosophy to enable ourselves to think differently about the contradiction between tradition and modern technology. I hope to derive a Chinese technological thought from an interpretation of Qi and Dao, which should not be understood as mystical concepts but rather as frameworks for thinking about our relationship to the nonhuman — to the 10,000 beings that Lao-Tse talks about — whereby the use of technology must follow Dao, as a philosophy of nature and a philosophy of life.

#### Vote to affirm acid communism as a rejection of the appropriation of space by private entities – **a process which uses radical imaginings of the future and capitalizes on revolutionary images of the past in order to create the possibility for a future free from capitalism.**

Fisher ‘09 [Mark Fisher is a former member of the ccru and writes about pop culture and capitalism. May he rest in power. "Acid Communism (Unfinished Introduction).” https://my-blackout.com/2019/04/25/mark-fisher-acid-communism-unfinished-introduction/] //dyl0

The Great Refusal rejected, not only capitalist realism, but “realism” as such. There is, he wrote, an “inherent conflict between art and political realism”. 5 Art was a positive alienation, a “rational negation” of the existing order of things. His Frankfurt School predecessor, Theodor Adorno, had placed a similar value on the intrinsic alterity of experimental art. In Adorno’s work, however, we are invited to endlessly examine the wounds of a damaged life under capital; the idea of a world beyond capital is despatched into a utopian beyond. Art only marks our distance from this utopia. By contrast, Marcuse vividly evokes, as an immediate prospect, a world totally transformed. It was no doubt this quality of his work that meant Marcuse was taken up so enthusiastically by elements of the Sixties counterculture. He had anticipated the counterculture’s challenge to a world dominated by meaningless labour. The most politically significant figures in literature, he argued in One-Dimensional Man , were “those who don’t earn a living, at least not in an ordinary and normal way”. 6 Such characters, and the forms of life with which they were associated, would come to the fore in the counterculture. Actually, as much as Marcuse’s work was in tune with the counterculture, his analysis also forecast its ultimate failure and incorporation. A major theme of One-Dimensional Man was the neutralisation of the aesthetic challenge. Marcuse worried about the popularisation of the avant-garde, not out of elitist anxieties that the democratisation of culture would corrupt the purity of art, but because the absorption of art into the administered spaces of capitalist commerce would gloss over its incompatibility with capitalist culture. He had already seen capitalist culture convert the gangster, the beatnik and the vamp from “images another way of life” into “freaks or types of the same life”. 7 The same would happen to the counterculture, many of whom, poignantly, preferred to call themselves freaks. In any case, Marcuse allows us to see why the Sixties continue to nag at the current moment. In recent years, the Sixties have come to seem at once like a deep past so exotic and distant that we cannot imagine living in it, and a moment more vivid than now — a time when people really lived, when things really happened. Yet the decade haunts not because of some unrecoverable and unrepeatable confluence of factors, but because the potentials it materialised and began to democratise — the prospect of a life freed from drudgery — has to be continually suppressed. To explain why we have not moved to a world beyond work we have to look at a vast social, political and cultural project whose aim has been the production of scarcity. Capitalism: a system that generates artificial scarcity in order to produce real scarcity; a system that produces real scarcity in order to generate artificial scarcity. Actual scarcity — scarcity of natural resources — now haunts capital, as the Real that its fantasy of infinite expansion must work overtime to repress. The artificial scarcity — which is fundamentally a scarcity of time — is necessary, as Marcuse says, in order to distract us from the immanent possibility of freedom. (Neoliberalism’s victory, of course, depended upon a cooption of the concept of freedom. Neoliberal freedom, evidently, is not a freedom from work, but freedom through work.) Just as Marcuse predicted, the availability of more consumer goods and devices in the global North has obscured the way in which those same goods have increasingly functioned to produce a scarcity of time. But perhaps even Marcuse could not have anticipated twenty-first-century capital’s capacity to generate overwork and to administer the time outside paid work. Maybe only a mordant futurologist like Philip K. Dick could have predicted the banal ubiquity of corporate communication today, its penetration into practically all areas of consciousness and everyday life. “The past is so much safer”, observes one of the narrators of Margaret Atwood’s dystopian satire, The Heart Goes Last , “because whatever’s in it has already happened. It can’t be changed: so, in a way there’s nothing to dread”. 8 Despite what Atwood’s narrator thinks, the past hasn’t “already happened”. The past has to be continually re-narrated, and the political point of reactionary narratives is to suppress the potentials which still await, ready to be re-awakened, in older moments. The Sixties counterculture is now inseparable from its own simulation, and the reduction of the decade to “iconic” images, to “classic” music and to nostalgic reminiscences has neutralised the real promises that exploded then. Those aspects of the counterculture which could be appropriated have been repurposed as precursors of “the new spirit of capitalism”, while those which were incompatible with a world of overwork have been condemned as so many idle doodles, which in the contradictory logic of reaction, are are simultaneously dangerous and impotent. The subduing of the counterculture has seemed to confirm the validity of the scepticism and hostility to the kind of position Marcuse was advancing. If “the counterculture led to neoliberalism”, better that the counterculture had not happened. In fact, the opposite argument is more convincing — that the failure of the left after the Sixties had much to do with its repudiation of, or refusal to engage with, the dreamings that the counterculture unleashed. There was no inevitability about the new right’s seizure and binding of these new currents to its project of mandatory individualisation and overwork. What if the counterculture was only a stumbling beginning, rather than the best that could be hoped for? What if the success of neoliberalism was a not an indication of the inevitability of capitalism, but a testament to the scale of the threat posed by the spectre of a society which could be free? It is in the spirit of these questions that this book shall return to the 1960s and 1970s. The rise of capitalist realism could not happened without the narratives that reactionary forces told about those decades. Returning to those moments will allow us to continue with the process of unpicking the narratives that neoliberalism has woven around them. More importantly, it will enable the construction of new narratives.

#### The aff is a process of detachment – only basing politics in acid communism proliferates new connections between desires by creating a countercultural utopianism – that is key to establish a method of communism that desire can flow through freely to invigorate new ways to engage and resist capital

Colquhoun 18 [Matt Colquhoun writes under the name Xenogothic, about accelerationism, the ccru, hauntology, and fisher. “Acid Communism.” <https://archive.krisis.eu/acid-communism/> ] //dyl0

Jeremy Gilbert, a former collaborator of Fisher’s, has led the way, writing a number of articles that turn Acid Communism into a one-dimensional and purely affirmative project, seeking the rehabilitation of the countercultural utopianism of the 1960s and ‘70s. In the New Statesman, Gilbert writes on ‘acid’ in particular and the way that the word still connotes “the liberation of human consciousness from the norms of capitalist society [as] a desirable, achievable and pleasurable objective.” (Gilbert, 2017). What is absent from Gilbert’s summaries is made clear here. Is such a liberation of human consciousness desirable? Certainly. Achievable? Possibly. But pleasurable? Not always; not essentially. Acid Communism is a project beyond the pleasure principle. It is not only a project for the recuperation of the counterculture’s lost potentials but also the expression of a desire for an experimental (rather than prescriptively utopian) leftist politics. This is a maneuver present within so many expositions of communism. Marx and Engels themselves wrote how “communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things.” (Marx & Engels 2017, 102). Acid Communism is, then, a project for seeking ‘the outside’ of sociopolitical hegemony. As Fisher acknowledged in so many of his writings, this requires an acknowledgement of the fact that to disturb normality is inherently disturbing, but “terrors are not all there is to the outside.” (Fisher 2016, 9). In the unpublished introduction to Acid Communism, Fisher quotes Michel Foucault explaining that the challenge now is “not to recover our ‘lost’ identity, to free our imprisoned nature, our deepest truth; but instead […] to move towards something radically Other.” (Foucault 1991, 120). This Other is the spectre that Marx and Engels first conjured out of European history; for Herbert Marcuse, it was “the spectre of a world that could be free.” (Marcuse 1998, 93). What haunted Fisher was a similar notion: a collective subject that has long been desired but still resists instantiation. As he wrote in his 2009 book Capitalist Realism, the “required subject — a collective subject — does not exist, yet the crisis, like all the other global crises we’re now facing, demands that it be constructed.” (Fisher 2009, 66). Here a spectre is not what is left of something dead and lost. It is atemporal; an “eerie entity”, as Fisher would say, representing both a failure of absence and a failure of presence. It is desire without absolute lack. For Marx, “desire” is so often inseparable from the commodity. It is never without object. On the very first page of Capital, quoting Nicholas Barbon, Marx defines it in a footnote: “Desire implies want; it is the appetite of the mind, and as natural as hunger to the body.” (Barbon 1696, 2-3). In The Communist Manifesto, however, desire becomes insatiable and speculative: “In place of the old wants, satisfied by the production of the country, we find new wants, requiring for their satisfaction the products of distant lands and climes.” (Marx & Engels 2017, 55). The production of politics has had much the same effect, eroticising desire, launching it into unknown and forbidden lands; beyond borders, boundaries and limits. Pleasure becomes, in contrast, fatally associated with the familiar. Acid, in its promiscuity, allows this speculative desire to flow back through communism in both new and forgotten ways. Writing in 1977, Gilles Deleuze offers the most succinct summary of how such a desire functions, explicitly in contrast to Foucauldian “pleasure”: [T]here is no subject of desire, and no object either. The objectivity of desire itself is only its flows. There is never enough desire. Desire is the system of a-signifying signs out of which unconscious flows are produced in a social-historical field. Every unfolding of desire, in whatever place it may occur, such as a family or a school in the neighbourhood, tests the established order and sends shock waves through the social field as a whole. Desire is revolutionary because it is always seeking more connections. (Deleuze 2006, 81). In this way ‘Acid’ is desire, as corrosive and denaturalising multiplicity, flowing through the multiplicities of communism itself to create alinguistic feedback loops; an ideological accelerator through which the new and previously unknown might be found in the politics we mistakenly think we already know, reinstantiating a politics to come.

#### **That takes the form of a new utopianism which reworks space as a key space of imagination and organization away from capitalist realism.**

Shukaitis ‘9

[Steven, University of Essex, Centre for Work and Organization, and a member of the Autonomedia editorial collective. Since 2009 he has coordinated and edited Minor Compositions. 2009. “Space is the (non)place: Martians, Marxists, and the outer space of the radical imagination.” https://www.academia.edu/422874/Space\_is\_the\_Non\_Place\_Martians\_Marxists\_and\_the\_Outer\_Space\_of\_the\_Radical\_Imagination] Pat

Joe Hill, the famous labour activist and songwriter, in a letter he wrote the day before his execution, said that the following day he expected to take a trip to Mars during which, upon his arrival, he would begin to organize Martian canal workers into the Industrial Workers of World. Why did he do this? After all, it might seem a bit odd that Hill, famous in his song writing and reworking for consistently mocking the promises and deceits of religious reformers offering ‘pie in the sky’ (and that’s a lie) to oppressed and exploited migrant workers more concerned about getting some bread in the belly (and maybe some roses, ie dignity, too). Hill continues to say that with the canal worker he’ll sing Wobbly songs ‘so loud the learned star gazers on Earth will for once and all get positive proof that the planet Mars is really inhabited’ (Smith, 1984: 164). So why the reference to some form of other worldly-ness, one in which, rather than promising salvation or escape from the trials and tribulations of this world, Hill rather imagines himself as extending and continuing the very same social antagonism that brought him to the day before his execution in the ﬁrst place? Aside from the personal characteristics of Hill’s immense wit and humor (Rosemont, 2002), this chapter will argue that there is something more than that, something about the particular role outer space and extraterrestrial voyage play within the radical imagination. It will explore the idea of voyages out of the world as an imaginal machine for thinking and organizing to get out of this world that we want to leave behind. In other words, how themes and imagery of space take part in the construction and animation of socially and historically embedded forms of collective imagination and creativity; how they operate as nodal points in ever-ﬂuctuating networks of collective intelligence animated through the shaping of social reality. For if utopia has ‘no place’ in this world, no spatiality on our maps, the dream to leave this earth can hold quite a seductive sway for those who desire to found a new earth upon escape from this one.

Within the imaginal space created through the imagery of space travel one can find an outer space of social movement, a smooth space and exteriority made inhabitable through a labour of collective imagination. The image and idea of space, through its circulation and elaboration within stories, myths, and artistic forms, composes a terrain of possibility that operates as an outside to the world as is. For even it is not possible literally to step outside the world or existing reality, the capacity to imagine other possible worlds creates a terrain where it becomes possible to work towards the creation of another world. Perhaps the best example of this is ‘Visit Port Watson’, an unsigned fake travel pamphlet written by Hakim Bey/Peter Lamborn Wilson and included in the Semiotext(e) SF Collection (Rucker et al., 1991). When Wilson received mail and questions about actually visiting the utopian destination of Port Watson described in the pamphlet, he responded by saying that that Port Watson is that place where one is in the moment where one actually is when you believe that Port Watson could exist: a mobile territory of possibility rather than a fixed location. Port Watson is the location of realizing possible utopias that begins from the space of possibility opened in the imagination. At its best outer space operates in the same way, opening a space of possibility within the present through which other realities become possible.

It is this labour of collective imagination that draws together into collective imaginaries such diverse phenomena as the Misfits’ suburban New Jersey punk anthems (‘Teenagers from Mars’, ‘I Turned into a Martian’, etc) with Sun Ra’s cosmic madness and mythopoetic self-institution, that ties together the Association of Autonomous Astronauts’ call for a worldwide network of community based spaceship construction with Red Pilot/Noordung Cosmokinetic Theater’s usage of retrofuturist Soviet space design as fodder for their collective imaginings (Dubravka and Suvakovic, 2003; Monroe, 2005). In these spaces of collective creativity, outer space operates as an effective meme because it creates a space for engagement with weighty issues (exodus, escape, racial politics, otherness, militarization, global catastrophe, etc) while allowing an enticing playfulness to be employed. Indeed, one could argue that through much of leftist politics runs the notion of an apocalyptic moment, of some magical event (usually revolution), followed by the creation of a new and better world. The event, or the visitation, can both act as a pole of imaginal recomposition, or a projected hope that provides an excuse for acting in the world as it is, even if to find ways to escape from it. It is the process of negotiating these ambivalences in social movements, making contact with the other to come, where it becomes possible to build, in Bifo’s words, ‘spaceships capable of navigating upon the ocean of chaos: rafts for all the refugees that depart from the bellicose and arid lands of late-modern capitalism’ (2008: 174).

#### The 1AC introduces a reading of the twilight zone as a method of disrupting the shaped reality created by capital – that helps recognize and break out of the insulated subject that is created by capitalism defined by excess, comfort, and beauty

Brokaw ’17

(David, "Televising the American Nightmare: The Twilight Zone and Postwar Social Criticism" (2017). Pp. 244-247. LSU Doctoral Dissertations.)//los altos bf – ask me for the pdf !

“These Things Cannot Be Confined to The Twilight Zone” Despite many obstacles, the American Dream was still undoubtedly achieved by millions of Americans across the nation. However, for those who successfully obtained all the middle class trappings, they frequently found out that they had actually exchanged certain things that could not necessarily be purchased on the legendary postwar consumer marketplace. Veterans of the “good war,” such as Serling, found they had given up parts of themselves, including their minds, limbs, relationships, self-confidence, and lives. After experiencing the horror and brutality of combat, they had been welcomed home by a nation overflowing with popular portrayals of war, featuring unscathed actors and writers who continually romanticized war and urged for more to be declared, all while comfortably situated in the backlot of a Hollywood studio. War experience seemed now to be more valuable in a film, rather than in real life, as it has become increasingly clear that real American heroes are not born, but scripted, and also require wardrobe changes and snack breaks. Actual veterans of the Korean and Vietnam Wars similarly learned their experiences were not as valued as they might have figured, mainly because they failed to confirm how popular conceptions of war. It is evident that millions of Americans still preferred to preserve their romanticized perceptions of war than to judge them against reality. In this way, especially when it came to war, Americans maintained their residency within The Twilight Zone well into the 1970s and beyond. And just as an utterly false memory of war penetrated deep into the national psyche, one simply defined as “good,” depictions of technological advancements during the postwar era consisted of similar deficiencies of nuance and consideration for reality. While automation was touted as further proof of American superiority, its introduction often served to actually worsen economic and racial inequalities, leaving cities, workers, and the hard earned relationship between laborers and employers almost completely abandoned. As unemployment dramatically rose throughout the late 1960s in Detroit, a several day riot broke out in the summer of 1967, leaving over forty dead and more than a thousand injured. The conditions of the city continually illustrated how the shots fired by Whipple into the chest of his employee Dickerson in “Brain Center at Whipple’s” perhaps was not melodramatic or fantastical at all. And just as syndicated versions of the episode no longer include that scene, our popular memory regarding automation, technology, and their role in our lives, has been far too sanitized and simplified to even provide the possibility for constructive national debate. For, change and progress always was less about the technology itself, but more about how it was being implemented and utilized. Popular portrayals that focused solely on the technology, rather than how it was being used and what economic changes were occurring, obfuscated corporate interests and deliberate choices, ultimately failing to account for how automation compromised the economic and personal value of working Americans. While the technology and intelligence once involved in the space race served to fuel the flames of American international insecurities, the Apollo missions proved that alleged humanitarian pursuits of peace and knowledge had taken a back seat to militarism, defense spending, and a thirst for international spectacle. And back on planet Earth, the obsessive pursuit of national security meant that political debate and dialogue were easily corrupted and hijacked by demagogues and fear-mongers like McCarthy who, in turn, made the country a more dangerous, divisive, and paranoid place. As American political discussion continually featured ad hominem attacks, rather than serious discussion of policy, Americans found themselves, to be still living in, not separate from, The Twilight Zone. As for the millions of Americans who chose to start families, they discovered that neither they, nor Dr. Spock, had the authority they assumed to possess. Rather, marketers who effectively manufactured insatiable childhood levels of desire for a non-stop flood of consumer goods, demonstrated that the costs of raising a middle class family were even greater than expected. In a nation that continually praised the virtues of the nuclear family, there remained a great deal of work to line up rhetoric and reality. Families were still swept up by false promises that declared complex problems can be resolved with consumer goods. But instead of more expensive products, the nation still desperately needed to consider enacting policies, including health care and family leave, which would have realistically prioritized familial relationships and helped parents and children alike more feasibly attain the family-centered American Dream. As postwar Americans found employment in white collar work to keep up with the demands of their consumption-centered world, they also learned that they had lost some freedom and control in the process. White collar workers not only lacked unionization or any other kind of labor organization, they were no longer even free to be themselves, as their labor was not just required for the job, but their personalities too. Finally, those who sought fulfillment in the vast world of consumer goods found that they, too, had given up some things in the process – their identity was no longer in their possession, but it had somehow been stolen from them while they were sleeping. When they awoke, they found their identity and sense of self were now being sold to them in a commodified, beautified, remodeled, and mass-produced form. And while “The Twilight Zone” has entered into our vernacular, indicating something eerily fantastic or odd, this common usage seems questionable. For, it was less the illusory or fantastical that served as the true foundation of the show, but the perilously real particularities and prejudices that make up our actual world – the hazardous, oppressive, mind-numbing elements that we too often accept without questions or reservations. These features were never exclusive to The Twilight Zone, and never will be. By making “reality” seem stranger and more grotesque to relatively insulated Americans, Serling sought to call attention to the fact that their reality is, in fact, arbitrarily shaped. Whether Americans choose, somewhat subconsciously, to completely cede all responsibility and power in defining what reality is over to marketers, politicians, pundits, and Hollywood actors, without actively contributing themselves, still remains to be seen. Indeed, before Americans simply accepted the “real” aspects of postwar life, they needed to consider how fantastic they actually were. Only then, could Americans possibly be willing to think and be engaged in defining what reality is, and not just passively consume it. Overall, The Twilight Zone illustrated many of the somewhat hidden costs of achieving the American Dream, ultimately begging the question, “What is it worth?” In a postwar world where Americans were repeatedly fed messages about what they should desire, fear, and buy, Serling sought to restore some of that power to the public audience. For instance, perhaps taking a well-paying but alienating and less fulfilling white collar job is not worth exchanging a less lucrative one that is unionized or one that simply grants you a sense of community, self, and productivity. Maybe trying to live up to mass-produced definitions of beauty and happiness are not ultimately worth swapping out one’s idiosyncrasies, intellect, emotional depth, memories, and relationships. And perhaps achieving a sense of security is not worth the irreparable damage wrought from baselessly scapegoating neighbors, minorities, and those who simply hold slightly different political viewpoints. Maybe living a secluded life with an excess of comfort somewhere in a suburban development is not worth perpetually feeling disconnected and alienated from the larger outside world. Does new technology have to mainly serve the interests of CEOs and not the needs of workers too? Is it also possible that there are answers to global conflicts other than racially-fueled wars that should be explored? These considerations and questions, while seemingly answered by sponsors and so many other mainstream messages, needed to be once again restored to public consciousness so they could answer them more for themselves as active citizens, not merely passive consumers. The constantly reassuring messages of technological progress, moral superiority, and consumer comfort on television, however, all but guaranteed that millions of Americans would be less capable of dealing with reality, complexity, and social challenges going forward, largely because the world they thought existed never actually did.

#### The role of the ballot is to cultivate postcapitalist desires. Revolution has become a commodity that has been coopted by capitalism – our desires are reintegrated into the system after it shuts down movements – the only role for academia is to create desires that can bring about the collapse of capital.

Noys ‘19

(Benjamin Noys (2019). The Breakdown of Capitalist Realism. 33 (1-2). pp. 159-166. ISSN 1942-2458. Meditations Journal of Marxist Literary Groups. [Volume 33, No. 1-2: Realism Reevaluated](https://mediationsjournal.org/toc/realism-reevaluated). Benjamin Noys is Professor of Critical Theory and coordinator of the MA English Literature at the University of Chichester. His research focuses on critical and literary theory, with particular interest in the avant-garde, film, and the cultural politics of theory. <https://mediationsjournal.org/articles/breakdown>) //los altos bf

The dual form of this substance is why it is important to consider the breakdown of capitalist realism in a dual sense. It first refers to our experience of crisis and austerity, which capitalist realism is supposed to naturalise and justify. Capitalist realism appears to be stretched to its limit as in our increasingly apocalyptic present alternatives seem more likely to take fascist forms than communist. Capitalism, for Fisher, is consonant if not coterminous with catastrophe: “Capitalism is what is left when beliefs have collapsed at the level of ritual or symbolic elaboration, and all that is left is the consumer-spectator, trudging through the ruins and the relics.” The breakdown of capitalist realism seems to coincide with the breakdown of capitalism. The second sense of the breakdown of capitalist realism is one of turning the breakdown of capitalist realism into a breakthrough, as R. D. Laing would have said. No longer would we simply be trapped in capitalist realism as the naturalisation of capitalist catastrophe, but instead we could go beyond capitalist realism. I wish to pursue this task by re-reading Capitalist Realism together with Fisher’s writing on cultural politics, his posthumous book The Weird and the Eerie, and the collection of his writings that include a fragment of the uncompleted project Acid Communism.

Despite Fisher’s mordant brilliance at capturing the worst of the present moment, he did not cease in thinking the better. Fisher’s writing could often oscillate between despair and elation and despair, something in the style of Franco “Bifo” Berardi. This oscillation reflects Fisher’s own tendency to split the which reflected of interiority of capitalist culture from the “outside” that refuses integration. The interiority of capitalist culture merits Fisher’s acidic skills of diagnosis, and a sense of despair, while the “outside” offers weird possibilities and a sense of elation. Fisher’s “substance”, this peculiar Spinozism, tries to move beyond the “sad passions” of the attachment to this interiority for towards thisis “outside.”. This is a divided substance, a substance in tension, which is what accounts for the oscillation present in Fisher’s work.

Central to Fisher’s analysis of capitalist realism are the issues of mental health and education. This is one reason why the book Capitalist Realism resonates with students, but also why the central insight of the book pertains to how we experience crisis as it runs through self-reproduction. In terms of mental health, the breakdown of capitalist realism is not only a social breakdown, but also a psychic breakdown that condenses the forms and processes of the continual series of breakdowns and crises that compose capitalism. While “Capitalist realism insists on treating mental health as if it were a natural fact, like weather (but, then again, weather is no longer a natural fact so much as a political-economic effect)”, the effect of crisis is to further estrange and de-naturalise capitalism, mental health, and, of course, the weather. Overlapping forms of breakdown strike at the very heart of the usual ideological mechanism, central to the analysis of Roland Barthes in Mythologies, of treating what is cultural as natural. Now, with the widespread recognition and reality of climate catastrophe, even nature is no longer natural.

The response to this situation, Fisher argues, is to politicize mental health. Mental health is not ‘natural’ fact, a ‘genetic’ disorder, requiring treatment by pharmacology and mechanisms of adjustment. This is not to say no such factors could be in play, something Fisher’s interest in the neurological attests to, but such forms of explanation deny any social causation. As Fisher states: “[i]t goes without saying that all mental illnesses are neurologically instantiated, but this says nothing about their causation”. If this politicization refuses capitalist naturalism it also refuses the script of Deleuze and Guattari’s anti-psychiatric path of celebrating the figure of the “schiz” as revolutionary. Rather than tracing some signature disorder as a sign of immersion in or exit from capitalism, Fisher preferred to focus on the ambient suffering of stress, tiredness (TATT – Tired All the Time), and anxiety. Fisher’s move is deflationary, away from “high” anti-psychiatry, but at the same time attentive to everyday suffering and its intimate connection to capitalist forms. The psychic landscape of high capitalism is chaotic, and, for Fisher, “as production and distribution are restructured, so are nervous systems.”. Precarity is a lived psychic experience that fragments the possibilities of the future.

This is, however, not only a negative phenomenology. Staying true to Deleuze and Guattari, Fisher considers capitalism as a “desire machine.”. Adapting their question about fascism, Fisher asks why do we desire capitalism? Why do we displace our desires to capitalism and “launder our libidos”? The phenomenology of high capitalism is a phenomenology of our libidinal investment in high capitalism. Here is where the problem of education turns into one of the education of desire. I am reminded of Fredric Jameson’s contention that our problem “lies in trying to figure out what we really want in the first place.”. Utopias are negative lessons, finally, that teach us the limits of our imagination in the face of the addictive culture of capitalism. It is only, Jameson insists, once the utopia has impoverished us, undertaken an act of “world reduction,” that we can undertake a “desiring to desire, a learning to desire, the invention of the desire called Utopia in the first place.”.