As civil liberties are shredded and powerful corporate and political force engage in a range of legal illegalities, the state itself becomes a model for corruption and violence. Violence has become not only the foundation of corporate sovereignty, it has also become the ideological scaffolding of common sense. Under casino capitalism, the state has become the enemy of justice and offers a prototype for types of misguided rebellion that mimic the lawlessness enshrined by corporate sovereignty and the repressive state apparatuses. Under such circumstances, the force of action does not reside in deliberation, compassion, justice, equality and freedom.

The state of exception has become the rule serving to legitimate illegality and normalizing violence and force as the only mediating dynamic worth utilizing to solve problems. In addition, subjectivity itself has become both hyper-masculinized, transformed, and subordinated to the celebration of an aggressive, violent and hyper-competitive war machine. Evidence of the hardening of the culture and the ongoing visibility of a pathological form of hyper-masculinity abounds in polices that amount to a permanent war on the poor, women, immigrants, workers, public servants, Muslims, poor minorities and those adults marginalized by class and race.

Casino capitalism’s paranoiac and increasingly repressive institutional and ideological apparatuses live in fear of dissent, critical rationality and the possibility of collective struggles moved by the desire for justice and a radical democracy. This is precisely where questions about education and resistance connect to broader debates about producing critical agents capable of acting as engaged and responsible citizens in a substantive democracy.

Neoliberalism, as a dominant ideology, changed not only ways of thinking, but, consequently, practices.

Evidently, a process of transformation like the one imposed by the hegemony of neoliberal ideology does not take place without resistance – conscious or not – and here it is the role of the State (and its ideological apparatus) in the subjection of individuals.

For Fisher, there is no element that shows that the public actually embraced neoliberal doctrines with enthusiasm.

For Mark Fisher, capitalist realism is "an expression of class decomposition, and a consequence of class disintegration". The phenomenon resulting from this discontent that finds few ways to express itself that are not individual is named by Mark Fisher as the "privatization of stress", which easily converts into depression and other psychological suffering.

Although both its neoliberal and neoconservative components are opposed to bureaucracy in favour of privatised decentralisation, in practice capitalist realism involves the normalisation of bureaucracy and the creation of additional and unnecessary labour. Although pyramidal hierarchies are flattened, the increase and establishment of constant communication through technology has led to people at the same level surveilling each other. Moreover,
since the security of long-term work has given way to a more 'flexible' (or unpredictable) gig economy, the
dominant emotion is not of freedom but of stress and fear, which leads to self-monitoring, conformity, and a
tendency towards replicating already successful ideas instead of the creative innovation that capitalism claims to
incubate.

Fisher also points that these conditions expose within capitalism the kind of practice it (rightly) criticised Stalinism
for: decentralisation leads to an increased focus on auditing, so that eventually the work becomes geared towards
generation of messages and representations instead of accomplishing of the task itself—public relations become
more important than the actual function being performed; appearances trump essence. This is not all: the 2008
financial crash shows that capitalism isn't really opposed to the presence of the State by establishing a trend where
the system requires governments to bail it out in times of crises and take blame for it in the event that something
goes wrong. Accountability, therefore, is also a myth.

Even the obvious ill-effects of exploitative capitalism are capable of being turned into more grist for the mill. Fisher
argues that the "realist" culture of rap and gangster movies promoted by capitalism actually seeks to normalize
the harsh conditions of neoliberal capitalism in peoples minds. It normalizes the image of a certain type of
anthropological product, the gangster. But this person could not in fact exist outside the economic system that gave
rise to them. In that sense our images of humanity are manufactured for us, and we inevitably come to imitate these
cultural products created by capitalism as well. The circle is completely closed.

The 1960s modes of liberal revolt against the system were based on the subconscious image of a distant, malevolent
father, (literally: "The Man") who had access to unlimited resources and could solve everyone's problems but
for some insensible reason won't do it. Our modern protests, periodic carnivals which are in fact a part of the system
rather than deviations from it, continue to express this underlying sentiment. They're not about organizing alternate
structures or communities as much as continuing to out in anger against the malevolent father, usually making
hysterical demands that no one seems to actually expect will be met.

Power under capitalism somehow lacks a center, an experience that Fisher hauntingly compares to the centerless
nature of a call center. There is no one who can actually help, no one truly knows where help resides, and those on
both sides of the system are struck in a frustrating relationship structured by a remote bureaucracy of which both are
victims. As someone who, like almost all of us, lives under capitalism but also worked a considerable time in an
actual call center I absolutely understand where Fisher is coming from. If only there were really "The Man"
 somewhere that people could yell at and get help from! But the nature of power and conspiracy in capitalism, like
Capital itself, is much more amorphous. No one knows for sure the address where power lies. It's not even clear if
there is one.

The ubiquity of ‘capitalism’ also shows the importance of making concrete demands for change rather than
dreaming of utopian or dystopian alternatives. If capitalism has become synonymous with concepts like modernity
or with the idea of modern life, it becomes inevitable that it cannot be escaped – but therefore even more pressing
that it must be changed. Contrary to being the ultimate expression of the deadlock of our modern predicament, the
idea that ‘there is no alternative’ should itself be taken as an opportunity.

We are instead in a moment that Antonio Gramsci would have diagnosed as one in which ‘the old is dying and the
new has not yet been born’. The rise of the far-Right, embodied not so much by Trump as by Marine Le Pen, Nigel
Farage, Beppe Grillo and even non-politician populists like Milo Yiannopoulos, should not be seen so much as a
‘symptom’ of neoliberalism as the work of successful opportunists.

Instead, we should see the rise of the far-Right, despicable as it is, as an effective opportunism that the Left should
rival rather than dismiss as empty (as the word ‘opportunism’ implies). The Left has nothing in common with the
Right, despite the attempts of liberals to stress the similarity, but they share – as rivals – a situation of opportunity
that we must harness: a crack in capitalist realism.

Fisher suggests that capitalist realism is the first really successful totalitarian ideological system – ‘totalitarian’ in
the sense that it permeates deep into the psyche of contemporary individuals, structuring their understanding of the
possible and erecting invisible barriers and limits to thought and to the imagination. Under conditions of capitalist
realism, indeed, the idea of any practical alternative to capitalism becomes not just ‘unrealistic’ but literally
Capitally realism, for Fisher, a kind of atemporality. It announces that we have reached the 'end of history' and, in so doing, obliterates any sense of time as a constantly progressing continuum. Instead we live in an eternal present. Under conditions of capitalist realism it becomes apparently self-evident that (in Terry Eagleton’s words) ‘the future will be pretty much like the present only more so.’ The ‘futurity of the future’ is cancelled. Indeed, for Fisher, Francis Fukuyama’s famous but widely derided thesis (developed at the very beginning of the period in which capitalist realism emerged) articulated a certain fundamental truth. It was not, contra Fukuyama, that the world was converging on some stable liberal utopia of free trade and perpetual peace.

The cancellation of the future, Fisher argues further, also robs of us of the past. Without novelty and change the significance of the past evaporates into nothingness. Capitalist realism’s eternal present gives rise to a collective social and cultural malaise. The absence of future and past drains the present of all meaning. Contemporary individuals, for Fisher, inhabit a melancholy and sterile world stripped of hope. It is a deeply unhealthy state of affairs in psychological terms which gives rise to profound anxieties and neuroses at both an individual and social level.

Contra the neoliberal assertion that ‘free-market’ consumerism is liberating for individuals, neoliberal capitalism, according to Fisher, ‘installs a perpetual anxiety – there is no security: your position and status are under constant review.’ In such conditions a range of mental health problems – depression especially – proliferate. Since today’s burgeoning rates of depression and other forms of mental illness are largely socially and structurally generated they cry out, as Fisher argues, for radical social and political solutions. Yet ‘the current ruling ontology denies any possibility of a social causation of mental illness’ and insists that these are treated simply in terms of biological-chemical imbalances within specific individuals.

Capitalist realism in particular posits an even more limited framework than realism more generally. Nothing imaginary is possible unless it fits, somehow, within the logic of capital accumulation and economic growth. This particular strand of realism has, over the course of forty years, infected every aspect of social being. No cultural enterprise, no political policy, no personal aspiration, no work or leisure time, no child rearing, no elder-care, no protest, escapes its ruthless "logic."

In what seems like a paradox, it is capitalist "realism" that is an illusion. As Mark Fisher writes, "capitalist realism can be understood as a kind of dreamwork." Or, for the working-class, often a nightmare-work.

2) The curse of capitalist realism can be replaced by another, darker, curse. That is, capitalist realism can be traded for the ideologies of fascism, for the primal scream of the middle-class. At the macro-level, the curse, of course, can also be dispelled by one of two things.
1) The mass activity of the working-class itself, in effect queering and then eradicating the capitalist "Real"; i.e., the process of proletarian reform and revolution. OR
2) The dark Sabbath of fascism; in which the limits of capitalist realism are shifted, narrowed for some, expanded for others, and re-organized through an alliance of (parts of) the bourgeoisie and a petit-bourgeois movement or constituency; usually organized and activated through a hatred of Jews and other ethnic or religious groups; with antipathy to feminism, and a concordant celebration of the abstract "family," etc.

To my understanding, capitalism itself, because – he argues – it inevitably turns towards oligarchy, with tiny groups of people controlling the media and politics and finance/business and these same people wandering, aimlessly but to great personal (financial) betterment, between these "sectors. This state of affairs has only gotten worse since 2009, particularly as regards the deeper integration of popular newspapers/news channels and right wing politicians. I’m not defending the status quo, but Fisher offers no suggestion, or hint, as to how we go from what we have to what would be better. I’m sure his supporters would argue that as an academic and philosopher, it wasn’t Fisher’s responsibility to do so. But, for me, the only way the super-rich and the rich, the powerful politicians and the bankers and the heads of industry and the owners of newspapers and whoever else... the only way these people are going to let go of their power, influence, money and assets is if they are taken from them by force. Which isn’t going to happen, unless the October Revolution happens again, and it’s a lot harder to get people to rally around a cause when the advanced technological and data-driven society/ies we live in mean that the numbers of people close to starvation are
concentrated in particular parts of the world: the quality of life of working class Europeans may not be idyllic, but it is far better than was the average worker’s life there 100+ years ago.