

Algorithmic Typography

Experiment #1877F2

On this page, every character of a set of 10 characters is typeset using a different grotesque font. ¶ It's a bit janky, so if you see Times New Roman, then ****try reloading the page three times,**** or thereabouts. If it doesn't change, then something broke. ¶ This experiment was inspired by Nick Shinn's Neology and the typography of HTRACLA which used six Neo-grotesques to similar effect. Links below.

Capitalist Realism

Excerpt from WIKIPEDIA

Definition

Arguably and widely regarded as Mark Fisher's most prolific idea, capitalist realism is an ideological framework for viewing capitalism and its effects on politics, economics, and public thought. The name itself is a play on the term "socialist realism". Fisher wrote extensively on the subject under both his pseudonym "k-punk" and his own name. He frequently gave interviews on the subject with political bloggers and thinkers that expanded on his definition of the concept.

According to Fisher, the quote "it is easier to imagine an end to the world than an end to capitalism", attributed to both Fredric Jameson and Slavoj Žižek encompasses the essence of capitalist realism. Capitalist realism is loosely defined as the predominant conception that capitalism is the only viable economic system, and thus there can be no imaginable alternative. Fisher likens capitalist realism to a "pervasive atmosphere" that affects areas of cultural production, political-economic activity, and general thought.

Capitalist realism as I understand it cannot be confined to art or to the quasi-propagandistic way in which advertising functions. It is more like a pervasive atmosphere, conditioning not only the production of culture but also the regulation of work and education, and acting as a kind of invisible barrier constraining thought and action.

Capitalist realism propagates an idea of the post-political, in which the fall of the Soviet Union both solidified capitalism as the only effective political-economic system and removed the question of capitalism's dissolution from any political consideration. Within the frame of capitalist realism, mainstream anti-capitalist movements shifted away from promoting alternative systems and toward mitigating capitalism's worst effects.

Capitalist realism does not assert that capitalism is a perfect system, but instead that it is the only system that can operate in a means compatible with human nature and economic law. By promoting the idea that innate human desire is only compatible with capitalism, any other system that is not based on the personal accumulation of wealth and capital is seen as counter to human nature and, by extension, impossible to implement.

Fisher argued that the bank bailouts following the 2008 economic crisis were a quintessential example of capitalist realism in action, reasoning that the bailouts occurred largely because the idea of allowing the banking system to fail was unimaginable to both politicians and the general population. Due to the intrinsic value of banks to the capitalist system, Fisher proposes, the influence of capitalist realism meant that such a failure was never considered an option. As a consequence, Fisher observes, the neoliberal system survived and capitalist realism was further validated:

The only powerful agents influencing politicians and managers in education are business interests. It's become far too easy to ignore workers and, partly because of this, workers feel increasingly helpless and impotent. The concerted attack on unions by neoliberal interest groups, together with the shift from a Fordist to a post-Fordist organisation of the economy – the move towards casualisation, just-in-time production, globalization – has eroded the power base of unions [and thus the labor force].

Fisher regards capitalist realism as emerging from a purposeful push by the neoliberal right to transform the attitudes of both the general population and the left towards capitalism and specifically the post-Fordist form of capitalism that prevailed throughout the 1980s. The relative inability of the political left to come up with an alternative economic model in response to the rise of neoliberal capitalism and the concurrent Reaganomics era created a vacuum that facilitated the birth of a capitalist realism system.

The collapse of the Soviet Union, which Fisher believed represented the only real example of a working non-capitalist system, further cemented the place of capitalist realism both politically and in the general population, and was hailed as the decisive final victory of capitalism. According to Fisher, in a post-Soviet era, unchecked capitalism was able to reframe history into a capitalist narrative in which neoliberalism was the result of a natural progression of history and even embodied the culmination of human development.

Despite the fact that the emergence of capitalist realism is tied to the birth of neoliberalism, Fisher is clear to state that capitalist realism and neoliberalism are separate entities that simply reinforce each other. According to Fisher, capitalist realism has the potential to live past the demise of neoliberal capitalism, though Fisher posits that the opposite would not be true. Capitalist realism is inherently anti-utopian, as it holds that no matter the flaws or externalities, capitalism is the only possible means of operation.

Effects

According to Fisher, capitalist realism has so captured public thought that the idea of anti-capitalism no longer acts as the antithesis to capitalism. Instead, it is deployed as a means for reinforcing capitalism. This is done through media which aims to provide a safe means of consuming anti-capitalist ideas without actually challenging the system. The lack of coherent alternatives leads many anti-capitalist movements to cease targeting the end of capitalism, but instead to mitigate its worst effects, often through individual consumption-based activities such as Product Red.

With regards to public views on capitalism, Fisher coined the term 'reflexive impotence' which describes a phenomenon where people recognize the flawed nature of capitalism, but believe there are no means of effecting change. According to Fisher, this inaction leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy as well as a negative toll on their mental health.

Fisher identifies a widespread popular desire for a public sphere that operates outside of the state and free from the undesired "add-ons of capital". However, he claims that it is the state alone that has been able to maintain public arenas against the capitalist push for mass privatization. Popular neoliberal thought supports the destruction of public spheres in favor of the privatization of public institutions such as education and health based on the assumption that the market best determines public needs.

Realism

The 'realism' aspect of capitalist realism and its inspiration—socialist realism—is based on Jacques Lacan's distinction between the Real and 'realities', such as capitalist realism, which are ideologically based understandings of the world that reject facts that lie outside of their interpretations. Fisher posits that an appeal to the Real which is suppressed by capitalist realism may begin to deconstruct the pervasiveness of the ideology. Fisher points to areas such as climate change, mental health, and bureaucracy that can be highlighted to show the weaknesses and gaps in capitalist realism.

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[record.pdf](#)

Also, links don't like my experiment. Here they are instead.

[How to run a city like Amazon](#), [Wikipedia:Capitalist realism](#), [Font Library.org](#), [Lettering.js](#), [Neology](#)