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SAANZ 2020: The  
Isolation Edition  
Wednesdays 4 to 5:15 pm  
Oct 28th to Nov 25th

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**Session Five: November 25th - 4pm**  
**A Marxist Discussion: Fisher and Fanon**

**Chair: Matt Wynyard**

**Vanessa Arapko - University of Auckland**

**A Brief History of Capitalist Realism**

In 2009, British theorist and cultural critic Mark Fisher developed the concept 'capitalism realism' to denote 'the widespread sense that not only is capitalism the only viable political and economic system, but also that it is now impossible even to imagine a coherent alternative to it'.<sup>1</sup> Yet, his was not an original coinage. The term capitalism realism can be traced all the way back to Germany in 1963 and Japan in 1964. In this tracing however, a multiplicity of meanings come to light. Where capitalist realism in the 1960's subverted Socialist Realism, the 2000's no longer echoed its socialist counterpart. It is hence by way of historicising this term that the latter definition – the way in which capitalism truly has stamped its imprint upon the whole consciousness of the human being – is attested to, even beyond Fisher's own analysis.

1. Fisher, Capitalist Realism, 2. Emphasis in original.

**Daniel Badenhorst - University of Auckland**

**Doing Warm-Ups with Fanon: Fanon's Stretching and Warming up to Marxism**

Frantz Fanon's thought has once again become central for thinking about racialisation, capitalism and colonialism. Commentaries proliferate dealing with Fanon's critique of racist ontology, his epistemology and his existentialism. Markedly absent from this list is a serious engagement with Fanon's reception of Marxism. The reason for this is that, for many, Fanon's Marxism is a settled question. For, as Fanon himself argues, Marxism 'requires a little stretching'. Most commentators have taken this statement to indicate that Fanon's relationship to Marxism was one of comradely critique - that Marxism is good but insufficient on the question of racial-colonialism. Consequently, the question of how Fanon actually relates to Marxism remains unasked. This presentation will begin to unravel the lines of intellectual indebtedness and situate Fanon as a reader in dialogue with a range of anti-imperialist and anti-colonial thinkers throughout the global south. That is, it seeks to ask whether stretching Marxism could mean something like limbering Marxism up, readying it to run in multiple contexts and whether or not contemporary Fanon scholarship needs to warm up to what the deeply anti-colonial tradition of Marxism offered Fanon and what it could still offer us today, if only the chill of the Cold War would pass.