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**Digging Deeper Towards Capricious Management: 'Personal Traits Become Part of the Means of Production'**

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Digging Deeper Towards Capricious Management: ‘Personal Traits Become Part of  
the Means of Production’

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10 Digging Deeper: 'Personal Traits Become Part of the Means of Production'

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14 What follows examines the shifting nature of work to argue we need to look beyond  
15 the employment relationship and the work organization to understand labour. It  
16 suggests one tendency in capitalism is to generate 'all labour as productive of value'  
17 (Harvie; 2005; 161), so that we then subsume life to work. The paper also suggests  
18 that rather than being new this development is an intensification of the past. Indeed,  
19 by returning to early management writers it asserts we can see the scale of  
20 management's political ambition to subsume life to work. As such, to understand  
21 labour we need to comprehend the broader issue of capitalism's social reproduction  
22 and the manner in which it recalibrates the subject as a 'subject of value'.  
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36 Keywords

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38 Social reproduction, subsumption, subjectivity, free gifts of sociality, general intellect,  
39 'Personality Market', affect, aesthetics, cognition, immaterial labour, co-creation of  
40 value.  
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5 This paper examines early management literature examining the use of subjectivity in  
6  
7 the circuit of capital. There has been much scholarship analysing subjectivity  
8  
9 analysing aesthetic, affective, experiential, and immaterial labour within production.  
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11 This work often emphasises the experiential content of the commodity and  
12  
13 subjectivity as a new form of work (Lazzarto 1996, Vercellone 2007, Warhurst and  
14  
15 Nickson, 2007). What follows contributes to this literature by highlighting the  
16  
17 emphasis on experience and subjectivity within earlier management thought. As  
18  
19 such, it argues some of the features of capitalism which are seen as contemporary are  
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21 actually rather old because in different ways Bloomfield, Mayo, McGregor, Maslow  
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23 and organizations such as Macy's and Ford, focused on these issues.  
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30 This management attention aimed to modulate the subject. Using Deleuze, I deploy  
31  
32 the concept of modulation to reflect a 'society of control' characterised not by  
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34 disciplined enclosure in contained institutions – factory, family, school – but by flows  
35  
36 across spheres so that control never finishes nor is it simply pre-determined. Deleuze  
37  
38 (1992: 7) depicts modulation as a cityscape wherein one's electronic pass enables  
39  
40 travel through barriers of the city. In this environment, where one travels to can be  
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42 chosen but because it is controlled remotely these routes because routes can be locked  
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44 to the individual. We can choose but such choices are made within an environment  
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46 of control and because decisions can be punished or rewarded, we come to prefer  
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48 certain choices. That is, the subject's behaviour is modulated but not pre-determined.  
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55 What follows argues the goal of management is to modulate individual choices and  
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57 behaviours into valorising choices and behaviours. It suggests that through focusing  
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3 on desire, empathy, relations, skill, the creation and management of new routines, and  
4  
5 the developing of work organizations as the primary socialisation mechanism, early  
6  
7 management thought sought to modulate the subject and thus the society. Central  
8  
9 here is the work organization which enabled management produce routines, social  
10  
11 relations, and political values in ways that resonate today (Böhm and Land 2013). In  
12  
13 this production and consumption are intertwined e.g. the routine of the assembly line  
14  
15 influenced emotions, aesthetics, desires, affects, consumption patterns, subjects, and  
16  
17 ways of living. This implies two things. Firstly, the emphasis on subjectivity in  
18  
19 contemporary work is an intensification of elements of the past rather than a radical  
20  
21 break with it and secondly, an examination of earlier management theorists is  
22  
23 insightful to understanding the contemporary organization, production, and  
24  
25 subjectivity. Earlier writers chronicle the potential of future management and allow  
26  
27 us outline management's political ambition. As such, treating these as historic figures  
28  
29 is ideological because it misinterprets their ambition downgrades these writers'  
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31 intervention into a politically contentious process (on history as ideology see Susman,  
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33 1984; 27-38).<sup>1</sup>  
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41 In making this argument, the paper addresses the capitalist tendency to totally  
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43 subsume life to work by generating 'all labour as productive of value' (Harvie; 2005;  
44  
45 161) and. In doing so, it argues that to understand labour we need to understand the  
46  
47 broader issue of capitalism's social reproduction within the wider 'community' – that  
48  
49 other half of organization and exploitation (Dalla-Costa and James; 1972, 11). This  
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51 takes us away from orthodox Marxist, labour process, and critical management  
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57 <sup>1</sup> Of course, not all management scholarship does this – for an important instance of a piece that  
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59 examines management history as political, see Hassard (2012).  
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3 positions, which emphasise paid employment as the centre of production, towards  
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5 feminist and workerist analyses of social reproduction beyond paid work.  
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10 Because subjects are increasingly formed as pre-prepared employees (and consumers)  
11 and are (re)created as (un)prepared subjects of value or non-value (Skeggs 2011,  
12 2014), the paper further argues the pursuit of total subsumption creates evermore  
13 market focused subjectivities by limiting the potential for alternative social relations.  
14  
15 In different ways management writers like Mayo, Maslow, McGregor, social theorists  
16 like Mills and Kracauer, and organizations like Macys or Ford, were inching towards  
17 the subsumed subject as a harbinger of the new ‘cultural content’ (Lazaratto 1996)  
18 needed for emotional, aesthetic, affective, or immaterial labour. As we shall see, an  
19 analysis of the creation of such cultural content through new routines, highlights the  
20 beginnings of ‘the even more totalitarian’ management of our contemporary division  
21 of labour (Lazaratto 1996; 136.6) – a totalitarianism located in the concept of the gift  
22 of sociality  
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### 39 The Gift of Sociality

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41 Central to this analysis are Marx’s work on co-operation and feminist analyses linking  
42 the role of female reproductive labour to the broader reproduction of capitalist  
43 accumulation (Dalla Costa and James 1972, Weeks 2011). Both argue labour’s  
44 sociality presents capital with gifts – its shared skills of language, affect, perception or  
45 cognition - into which the individual is born and, in tandem with which, he or she  
46 constructs their subjectivity. In cooperation, labour’s sociality enhances its  
47 productivity by creating new meanings, connections, affects, forms of commons and  
48 an ‘ethical surplus’ (Arvidsson 2005, Böhm and Land 2012). This collective capacity  
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3 is central to any experiential transaction which is intensifying today e.g. the  
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5 hospitality industry (Warhurst and Nickson 2007, Dowling 2007), call centre work  
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7 (Callaghan and Thompson 2002), or models of production based on a privatised form  
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9 of open innovation e.g. the clothes company *Threadless* (Ettlinger 2014). However,  
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11 although intensifying, these gifts are not new.  
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16 Importantly, cooperative capacity is a gift because capital hires the ‘individual’  
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18 worker but reaps the value of cooperation necessary to the individual’s socialisation.  
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20 Because of this capitalist social relations must be managed in the space beyond paid  
21  
22 work to ensure the correct forms of socialisation. This is done by modulating  
23  
24 subjectivity so that although the outcomes of social relations are not determined, they  
25  
26 are inflected to ensure some actions and responses are made preferable to others. For  
27  
28 example, brand managers manipulate responses to brands and hospitality firms  
29  
30 manage autonomy so it is ‘structured’ to guarantee employees opt for the ‘correct’  
31  
32 behaviour and react differently to clients depending on gender, age, image of  
33  
34 business, etc. (Arvidsson 2005, Dowling 2007, Callaghan and Thompson 2002,  
35  
36 Hochschild 1983, Mills, 1951). Here, management ensures subjects act  
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38 conservatively by limiting the range of possible social relations (Arvidsson 2005;  
39  
40 252). This calibration of subjects within and beyond paid employment and work  
41  
42 organization is the central focus of the paper. Pivotal to it is the establishment of  
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44 ‘command over subjectivity itself’ (Lazaretto, 1996; 134:5). One way the  
45  
46 achievement of this was attempted in the early twentieth century was through work  
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48 routines. Indeed, Mayo (1937; 829-30) explicitly argued the work organization  
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50 should create new routines, practices and behaviours to overtake the nuclear family as  
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52 the primary socialisation unit. As such, alongside the family and education, the work  
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3 organisation assumes the (moral) role of developing everyday individual 'social  
4 discipline' and pre-prepares the subject for selection into employment through which  
5 they can consume. This created new cultural content and hence new subjectivities  
6 and forms of living which were valorised and then fed back into work e.g. a person  
7 recognised the importance of the automobile as a mode of transport, a status symbol,  
8 and something to be afforded through work (on this today see Lazaratto; 1996, 146.6).

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18 The paper is divided up across a number of themes. Firstly it examines how capital  
19 managed spheres of social reproduction beyond direct production early on in its  
20 ascendancy. It then analyses how the gifts of social reproduction were planned and  
21 captured for valorisation. This process develops 'new' skills located in aesthetic,  
22 emotional, affective and bodily arenas which necessitates the deployment of an  
23 intrusive planning of subjectivity. The paper develops this to argue that skill is no  
24 longer technical but largely fostered and created beyond the work organization in  
25 social reproduction and, with this, comes more capricious forms of management  
26 before finally concluding.

#### 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 Early Management and Social Reproduction

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43 Early twentieth century life was a struggle between new forms of production and  
44 consumption central to which was the altering of the subject's view of the good life  
45 (Susman 1984, Lears 2000). This struggle was about shaping new capitalist social  
46 relations which meant dispersed knowledge in society about the good life was  
47 important to the organisation. In light of this education, management planning, and  
48 science were deployed to develop particular affective, aesthetic and cognitive skills in  
49 the workplace (Illouz 2007, 2008, Mayo 1923a, 1923b, McGregor 1957; 68). For  
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3 example, deskilling reshaped worker knowledge of production processes and created  
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5 new systems of worker socialisation (Braverman 1974). Accompanying this,  
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7 education and training were reconfigured to establish new routines and modes of  
8  
9 thinking which allowed capital access workers' subjectivities through new practises  
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11 and discourses (Kracauer, 1998; 75, Mayo 1937, Illouz 2007, McGregor; 1957, 68).  
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13 Stone (1973) through a detailed archival analysis argues a key example of this  
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15 conjoining of the inside and outside of the organisation is the US Steel industry -  
16  
17 which then became the template for the ensuing corporate form. Steel created new  
18  
19 methods of recruitment, training, and promotion designed to select and develop  
20  
21 different skills to those of craft (Stone 1973, Mills 1951). These changes redesigned  
22  
23 workers' relationships to work so that rather than being a way of life as in the 'Artisan  
24  
25 Republic' of nineteenth century crafts (see Wilentz, 2004), work became a means to  
26  
27 an extrinsic end (Mills; 1951, 237). In response to the loss of work as intrinsically  
28  
29 valuable, meaningless skill differences inculcated new extrinsic ideas of progress,  
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31 career, promotion, savings, pensions, loyalty, and attachment to the bureaucratic  
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33 organization. Furthermore, College trained recruits were hired to middle management  
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35 positions because they had no affiliation with the shop-floor and so could be trusted to  
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37 make the correctly modulated organisational decisions (Stone, 1973) and amongst the  
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39 elite, the Dean of Harvard Business School Wallace Donham (1927a, 1927b), the  
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41 executive Chester Barnard (1968), President Herbert Hoover (1922), and Elton Mayo  
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43 (1933, 1949) all argued senior managers needed (re)educating so they could take up  
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45 the leadership roles necessary to securing corporate legitimacy.  
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54 Illouz (2007, 16-24) - using employment statistics, Mayo, Freud, the rise of the  
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56 feminist movements, and the growth of self-help literatures, argues the early  
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3 corporation made communication and emotional control central sources of authority.  
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5 Management used communication to capture and shape workers' cognitive, aesthetic  
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7 and affective skills. For example, through employment regimes and media forms,  
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9 management emphasised attractiveness, empathy, and communication to instil new  
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11 values of exchange, new routines, new desires, new ambitions, new loyalties, and new  
12  
13 consumption patterns. These were then used to modulate the circuits of the emerging  
14  
15 service economy, to reattach the worker to work which was inherently meaningless  
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17 through motivation (Maslow, 1998; 55-66, Sievers 1986), and capitalism's capacity to  
18  
19 reproduce itself (see Lippmann 1914, 1922, Bernays 1928, Barnard 1968, Kracauer  
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21 1998, Reisman 2001, Lears 2000). These changes entailed the shaping of dispersed  
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23 knowledge, or what Marx (1973; 704-12) termed the 'general intellect', to enable  
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25 capitalist valorisation by generating particular desires, forms of performativity,  
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27 motivations, schooling and socialisation (Meadows, 1947; 363-4, Agiletta 2000; 152-  
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29 69; Harvey 1989; 3-39, Sievers, 1986).  
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36 Thus ways of thinking were recognised as a battleground for the future and thus  
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38 management became concerned with them. Indeed, Mills (1951; 161-188) highlights  
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40 the importance of aesthetics, affect and the body in 'The Great Salesroom' wherein  
41  
42 your appearance acts as an embodied representation of the company; employee self-  
43  
44 disciplining of the body is also highlighted by in Kracauer's discussion (1998; 33-39)  
45  
46 of 'Selection' in Weimar Germany wherein candidates are selected on their  
47  
48 appearance and disposition; and 'enlightened management' divided labour into  
49  
50 separate groups to be managed differently because although "'feeble-minded" girls  
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52 find themselves quite comfortable in these mechanistic and repetitive industrial  
53  
54 situations' (Maslow, 1998; 63) other employees need alternative management  
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3 practices. Ways of living, through greater attention to its management, were made  
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5 more supportive of capitalist reproduction and accumulation – that is, particular  
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7 behaviours and beliefs were fostered (see Vercellone, 2007; 26-8, Smith 2013). Thus  
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9 while it is true the skills of communication, affect, aesthetics and cognition are  
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11 intensifying today, they are not new.  
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### 14 15 16 Planning Social Reproduction, Co-operation and Sociality 17

18 As suggested, to understand the importance of this early accessing of affect,  
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20 aesthetics, cognition, or emotion it is useful to return to Marxist and feminist  
21  
22 concepts of co-operation (Marx, 1976; Dalla Costa and James, 1972). Marx  
23  
24 centralises antagonism within capitalist co-operation (Marx, 1976; 439-54). Because  
25  
26 capitalist social relations are driven by the disciplining necessity of valorisation, the  
27  
28 organising authority of cooperation emerges to enable capital increase as capital. In  
29  
30 this process, co-operation and authority are external to workers because they are  
31  
32 organized by capitalist (and management) expertise (Marx, 1976; 449-450, Clawson  
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34 1981). Co-operation in the labour process becomes particular capitalist co-operation  
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36 because it is organized for the valorisation of capital.  
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43 Central to cooperation is the transforming of an individual into an enhanced  
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45 potentiality through collective production. However, individual contribution to  
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47 collective potentiality cannot be left ungoverned because labour's capacity to refuse  
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49 means workers have to be managed more as capital expands (Braverman 1974,  
50  
51 Federici, 2004; 133, Virno, 2004; 81-4). It is through co-operation that 'individual'  
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53 labour is at its most productive because it enables the worker strip 'off the fetters of  
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3 his individuality and develop the capability of the species' (Marx, 1976; 447). In this  
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5 process capital receives the gift of sociality.  
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10 But cooperation is not confined to the work organization. Feminist scholars  
11 demonstrate how capitalism reproduces itself through the invisibility of domestic  
12 labour (Weeks 2011; 124). They argue the community is a hidden abode of surplus  
13 labour which capital exploits as a gift. This surplus labour is the other half of  
14 capitalist organization. Using these ideas feminists developed the concept of the  
15 'social factory' wherein the outside of paid employment is managed to enhance  
16 valorisation and to reproduce the labour potential upon which capital depends (Dalla  
17 Costa and James 1972; 11). Here, all life is labour because women 'were always on  
18 duty, for the machine doesn't exist that makes and minds children' (Dalla Costa and  
19 James 1972; 29). The gift of social reproduction is put to work for capital. In  
20 building these arguments, feminists reject productivist interpretations wherein only  
21 particular types of paid work create value. Instead, they claim activities outside of  
22 paid employment, work organizations, and direct capitalist production processes also  
23 generate value (Dalla Costa and James, 1972; Harvie 2005; Weeks 2011).  
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43 In these accounts, it is labour's co-operation and its gift of sociality which is the  
44 productive agent because labour arrives at work as a social form. This pre-  
45 preparedness generates value for capital beyond that possible from the individual  
46 worker. In short, co-operation and sociality are given to capitalists as a 'public  
47 good' (Virno 2004; 37) which structures present and future subjectivities, social  
48 relations, and social reproduction. We might think of this as the 'free gift of caring'  
49 to capitalist systems (Skeggs, 2014; 12); or the way families rear children and  
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3 present them as 'public goods' (Weeks, 2011; 141); or equality and diversity  
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5 programmes which enhance organizational performance by accessing difference  
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7 (McKenzie, 2001; 65-70); or the way pre-prepared social, aesthetic, affective and  
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9 communicative skills are vital to the call centre (Callaghan and Thompson 2002) or  
10  
11 hospitality industries (Witz *et al* 2002, Warhurst and Nickson 2007). In these  
12  
13 examples, skills and knowledge developed beyond the organization are central as  
14  
15 control flows from one space to another in a continuous fashion e.g. from the family  
16  
17 to employment (Deleuze, 1992; 5). But this also means capitalist planning cannot  
18  
19 simply be located in work because it has to privatise skills from beyond the  
20  
21 organization. To do so, management accesses the diffused knowledge of society  
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23 (Susman 1984, Lears 2000, Lury 2004, Willmott 2010).  
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### 29 When Planning Accesses Subjectivity

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31 In his discussion of the general intellect, Marx (1973; 704-712) suggested the  
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33 prioritizing of planning, technology, and scientific advances objectified knowledge.  
34  
35 This increased productivity so that paid labour becomes an ever decreasing element of  
36  
37 production. Capital escaped living labour through the use of science and technology  
38  
39 (Tronti, 1965; 4). This development meant the 'social individual' emerged as 'the  
40  
41 foundation-stone of production and of wealth' and that social life came under the  
42  
43 increasing control of the general intellect through fixed capital. Autonomist theorists  
44  
45 later altered and expanded this insight to argue the social individual – which is made  
46  
47 up of people within each of whom is a collectively formed pre-individual (shared  
48  
49 language, social cooperation, affect, aesthetics, perception, or cognition) and the  
50  
51 individuated elements of the actual person - becomes the means of production (Virno,  
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53 2004; 80). In this amended rendition people become 'fixed capital' (Marx, 1973;  
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3 712) and come under the (incomplete) control of the general intellect through beliefs,  
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5 knowledge, taste, experiences, feelings, and routines. Here, socialisation into  
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7 practices, beliefs, affective reasoning, etc. is part of the pre-preparing of the means of  
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9 production – a kind of perpetual training (Delueze, 1992: 5: Marx, 1973; 707). One  
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11 consequence is the outside of direct production becomes a battleground for  
12  
13 valorisation because life is penetrated by a valorisation logic which changes the  
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15 subject and hence social reproduction.  
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21 Furthermore, the change enables labour develop its potential beyond production and  
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23 training to reinsert itself into production as a different subject. This development is  
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25 collective because through communicating with living and dead labour we are  
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27 recreated as subjects and reinserted into production and the social individual as this  
28  
29 transformed subject (Virno, 2004; 80). In so doing, workers' subjectivities are  
30  
31 enhanced as a means of production outside of direct production. One example is  
32  
33 emotional labour wherein the work form is partly located in the worker's subjectivity  
34  
35 which acts as the 'technology' for producing the service (Hochschild 1983; Witz et al  
36  
37 2002, Callaghan and Thompson 2002, Harvie 2005, Warhurst and Nickson 2007,  
38  
39 Dowling 2007, Böhm and Land, 2012). This means our subjectivities and social  
40  
41 relationships are accessed, transformed, captured and harnessed as valorising forms.  
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47 Here, the skills required for capitalism emerge beyond the factory – in the gifts of  
48  
49 sociality such as communication, affect, aesthetics, emotion, experiences - wherein  
50  
51 'personal traits become part of the means of production' (Mills, 1951; 225). This  
52  
53 shapes management's relationship to subjectivity, co-operation, and sociality. For  
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55 example, Maslow's (1996) entreaty to see work as play to foster it as the source of our  
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3 happiness. In so doing, capital/management shape and recreate political values and  
4  
5 social relations (Böhm and Land, 2012). Value becomes increasingly located in  
6  
7 generic skills captured outside and inside the factory and 'the measure of wealth is  
8  
9 then not any longer, in any way, labour time but rather disposable time' (Marx, 1973;  
10  
11 708). Disposable time reshapes the subject so his or her potential to valorise capital  
12  
13 relies on skills generated in subjectivity which are necessarily modulated to the  
14  
15 requirements of the economy. In contrast to the arguments of some theorists  
16  
17 (Pasquinelli 2009, Vercellone 2007), management here cedes little real autonomy to  
18  
19 social reproduction because although activities are not planned, they are modulated  
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21 and made ready for valorisation. We can see this in the co-creation involved in  
22  
23 branding (Lury 2004, Arvidsson 2005), the capturing of value through design in  
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25 privatised forms of open innovation (Ettlinger 2014), the dependence of the  
26  
27 hospitality industry on embodied, emotional, aesthetic and affective skills (Dowling  
28  
29 2007, Warhurst and Nickson 2007), the necessity of social and communicative skills  
30  
31 in call centres (Callaghan and Thompson, 2002), and in a range of other industries  
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33 from hairdressing to sex work (Böhm and Land 2012).  
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40 An early sign of this transformation is the generation of services and the 'personality  
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42 market' (Mills, 1951; 161-88). Here, subjectivity was managed and modulated  
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44 because it was a source of value. As a product of social reproduction the individual  
45  
46 personality is created (Virno, 2004; 37). One increasing feature of the twentieth  
47  
48 century is capital accessing this public good. The emphasis on emotional control and  
49  
50 the shift from a subjectivity located in an unchanging 'character' to viewing  
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52 subjectivity as a bundle of desires, emotions and motivations to be modulated as a  
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54 consuming and productive resource for capital, is one manifestation of this  
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3 transformation (Susman 1984, Illouz, 2007 2008, Lears 2000, McGregor 1957,  
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5 McKenzie 2001). But so are McGregor's Theory Y (1957) or Maslow's (1998; 43-4)  
6  
7 self-actualised employee. The employee is inspired to constantly empathise, desire,  
8  
9 understand, improve, up-skill, create, produce or transform so that, like a mother, she  
10  
11 is 'always on duty' (Dalla Costa and James 1972; 29). Indeed, Maslow (1998; 39)  
12  
13 explicitly references a mother's love for a child in his discussion of the potential for  
14  
15 routine work to allow for self-actualisation. In this sense, management was already  
16  
17 concerned with producing future subjectivities, social relations and political values  
18  
19 (Böhm and Land, 2012; 231). Management sought to turn the general intellect into a  
20  
21 particular valorising subset of ways of thinking (Smith 2013, Arvidsson 2005). Thus  
22  
23 managing subjectivity highlighted the future to capital – namely a vanguard economy  
24  
25 based in experience, affect, aesthetics, cognition and personality. Subjectivity had to  
26  
27 be modulated and this heralded new forms of management.  
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#### 34 Creating the Self-disciplined Capitalist Subject

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36 This emerging division of labour meant the factory, office and store became more  
37  
38 rationalised, managed and bureaucratized with lengthening lines of authority and a  
39  
40 desire to fracture labour through grade differences and divisions (Mills, 1951, Stone  
41  
42 1973, Edwards 1979). An outcome of this was the rise of services. Services required  
43  
44 a different set of management techniques and worker skills because, as one early  
45  
46 management theorist noted, 'Business may be essentially impersonal but it is highly  
47  
48 personal in services' (Bloomfield, 1915; 124). The personal experiential nature of  
49  
50 services created new management priorities. Mills (1951; 215-38) argues workers  
51  
52 were now different to craft workers because the mass industrial subject separated  
53  
54 work and life, did not understand (nor care) about the whole production process,  
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3 worked in different settings, and was certified even though such certification was  
4 unnecessary to the task (see Kracauer, 1998; 42, Mills, 1951, 161-89, Stone 1973).  
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6  
7 Nevertheless despite workers' desire to separate production and consumption, the two  
8 strongly overlapped. For example, the outside of work was heavily influenced by the  
9 factory as Adorno and Horkheimer's (1997) analysis of the repetition involved in the  
10 culture industries highlighted. Kracauer (1995; 75-88) demonstrated this link in his  
11 essay on the dance routines of the 'Tiller girls' - for a visual depiction of the meeting  
12 of work/play/production/consumption see  
13  
14 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JIZeyndTBFc> (accessed 18/07/15). In a different  
15 but related way, the market segmentation strategy pioneered by General Motors also  
16 mirrored this by tying your role in the division of labour to your car. The deadening  
17 routines of work helped create the consuming subject in search of release or status.  
18  
19 This meant some desires, releases, routines, or behaviours were privileged over others  
20  
21 - modulation in action.  
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36 Furthermore, service economies created the need for managed bodies and  
37 personalities (Bloomfield, 1915). If firms were to eliminate randomness in service  
38 delivery, as they attempted to do in manufacturing, they would need more rigorous  
39 selection, hiring and training. Services became the future of the economy and acted  
40 as the form which created tomorrow. Bloomfield (1915) edged towards subsuming  
41 the subject by arguing for new forms of rationalization – the rationalization of attitude  
42 (see also Mills, 1951; 180 – and on this today, see Callaghan and Thompson 2002,  
43 Ritzer, 1983). Personality could not be left to chance because it represented the  
44 organization – people's bodies and minds were becoming the material of the product  
45  
46 (Mills 1951; 183 – for this with today's customers see  
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3 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Be5fCPohYEU> accessed 18/07/15). Selection and  
4  
5 training became paramount in the pursuit of the ideal, self-controlled, worker-  
6  
7 personality who had the correct cognitive, affective and aesthetic skills to perform in a  
8  
9 rationalised valorising manner (Callaghan and Thomson 2002, Warhurst and Nickson  
10  
11 2007, Kracauer, 1998; 38-9). Pre-preparedness for work through the management of  
12  
13 the general intellect would ensure subjects of value.  
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18 In this process education, behavioural sciences, public opinion, propaganda, and the  
19  
20 stressing of consumption were deployed to generate new subjects (Barnard 1968,  
21  
22 Scott 1992, Mayo 1919, Lippmann 1922, Bernays 1928, Lears 2000, Donham 1927a,  
23  
24 1927b). Accessing such subjects and making them co-operate become a management  
25  
26 priority because emotion, affect, aesthetics, and cognition were central to production.  
27  
28 Hence subjectivity needs to be ‘manipulated’ (Mills, 1951; 110). This was the task  
29  
30 management set itself from the 1920-30s onwards – it wanted to access the workers’  
31  
32 ‘total situation’ so it could accommodate them to their new role (Mayo, 1924; 255).  
33  
34 This could not simply be left to workers themselves because they would potentially  
35  
36 refuse capital’s plan. It is this desire to create pre-preparedness for work that Gramsci  
37  
38 (1971; 294-7) points to when he asserts prohibition and the sexual question were not  
39  
40 moral issues in 1920s America. Rather, they were production issues because fordism  
41  
42 needed a new type of subjectivity. These struggles created the new cultural content  
43  
44 and ways of being necessary for fordism. This content is what Ford was generating  
45  
46 through its classes for immigrant workers – classes on ‘Buying and Using Stamps’,  
47  
48 ‘Pay Day’, ‘Going to the Bank’, Building a House’, Beginning the Day’s Work’,  
49  
50 ‘Shining Shoes’, ‘A Man Looking for Work’, and ‘Finishing the Day’s Work’.  
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Workers were not simply learning about production. They also learned ‘self

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3 discipline through regular habits of saving and work. They learned to invest in and to  
4 purchase property and to become responsible citizens' (Meyer; 1980, 75). Routines,  
5 values, and ways of living delivered this cultural content through the 'totalitarian'  
6 organization (Edwards, 1979; 148). This created new subjectivities and fed into  
7 society's diffused knowledge as modulation.  
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18 Hence the general intellect, where individuals emerged from interaction, was  
19 'scientifically' planned to ensure the skills it generated were capitalist skills and the  
20 social relations it produced were capitalist social relations. This is evident in  
21 McGregor's (1985; 68) Theory Y where modulated employees know 'that the  
22 acceptance of responsibility (for self-direction and self-control) is correlated with  
23 commitment to objectives'. Depending on the capacity of these modulated choices to  
24 assist valorisation, subjectivities were deemed responsible 'subjects of value' (or not)  
25 in ways that resonate with contemporary economies (Skeggs, 2011; 501-3). One's  
26 subjectivity, body, disposition and attitude determine whether or not you are a subject  
27 of value whose labour is productive (Harvie 2005) or a subject of no value whose  
28 labour is unsuitable for capitalist valorisation. This happened inside paid employment  
29 (e.g. one had ambition) but also outside of paid employment (e.g. one arrived pre-  
30 prepared and cognisant of the fact business was 'highly personal'). New subjects  
31 were not born, they had to be created. Modulating subjectivity was an early necessity.  
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52 Management and Irrational Workers in 'the Factory of Smiles and Visions'<sup>2</sup>  
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58 <sup>2</sup> Taken from C. Wright Mills (1951; 167)  
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3 Reflecting this need to construct this subject, Mayo argued labour's lack of  
4 cooperation highlighted its irrationality. To access labour's full potential workers  
5 needed to be managed away from irrationality towards the new corporate capitalism.  
6  
7 He suggested people are not naturally sane (Mayo, 1923b; 122) and that the  
8 wrenching of nineteenth century society left some unable to cope with the new  
9 individual-societal relationship required which expressed itself as irrationality i.e. as  
10 poorly modulated subjects (see also Donham 1927a, 1927b, Lippmann 1914, 1938,  
11 Scott 1992, Maslow 1998; 43). Such irrationality was stoked by left political ideas  
12 which were  
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15  
16 'obviously subversive of morale; it is impossible to find interest or to take pride  
17 in his work if he believes himself to be deluded and enslaved. If these doctrines  
18 gain ground our civilisation cannot live. We must solve the problem of  
19 industrial peace or be crushed by circumstance.'

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32 (Mayo 1922a; 16).

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34 As such, management's core task was convincing workers capitalism was good. To  
35 achieve this, it shaped political values and social relations into particular forms. By  
36 so doing, the worker is recreated as a rational subject of value who embraces the new  
37 society, consents to its form and works co-operatively. That is, to see capitalist co-  
38 operation as the natural form of co-operation. If co-operation is to be valorised  
39 command of worker subjectivity becomes paramount. Indeed, he (1924; 258) accused  
40 Taylor of only focusing on the body whereas management needed to understand the  
41 'emotions and ideas imposed' on labour by education and work. Management must  
42 dig deeper to further access the subject through new organizational routines (Mayo,  
43 1937).  
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3 Other early management writers also developed these links. For example, Maslow  
4 (1998, 42) argued for the creation of B-values (perfection, playfulness, self-  
5 sufficiency etc.). He prioritized the work organization as a mechanism to deliver the  
6 life of the artist, of peak experiences, and of creativity to the worker. This would  
7 absorb workers' subjectivities into organizations and transcend any tension between  
8 the worker and capitalism thereby making the worker healthy (Maslow, 1998; 37-42;  
9 Brouillette, 2014). The well managed work organization would give the unimportant  
10 worker a role, health, and self-esteem (Maslow 1998; 27). Furthermore, to be  
11 alienated from oneself was to have a neurotic relationship with society. A healthy  
12 individual was 'flexible and realistic' (Maslow, 1998; xxiii) and moved easily  
13 between growth and defensive motivation. Maslow argued organizations needed  
14 better management to ensure safe, autonomous routines which produced a modulated  
15 healthy subject-citizen who would not be enticed by communism (Brouillette; 2014,  
16 69). The well managed work organization delivers a controlled subject who  
17 contributes within and beyond the organization. A virtuous circle of individually  
18 modulated subjects, organizations and diffused knowledge would enable society  
19 escape conflict. Equally, Kracauer (1998; 35-6) noted that German management  
20 scholars advocated taking a 'total view' of the employee within and beyond the firm.  
21 Early management writers attempted to break down the barrier between work and  
22 non-work in order to shape the general intellect in particular ways.

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49 In this view, the unreconciled worker is pathological – incapable of capitalist co-  
50 operation. Such subjects should be recreated and modulated into a form that willingly  
51 offered gifts 'from beyond the point of production' (Willmott, 2010). The job of  
52 management is to re-educate and a reconcile workers to their roles so they willingly  
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3 present 'spontaneous cooperation' (Mayo, 1949; 120) to their co-workers, employers,  
4 and customers and, through sharing the goals of the organisation, achieve self-esteem  
5 (Maslow, 1998; 64). These willing subjectivities would thereby give the (now safely  
6 capitalist) gift of sociality. They would create profit through their creative, emotional,  
7 aesthetic and affective willingness - all of which would draw on the knowledge of the  
8 general intellect. By modulating potentiality, the foundations of today's economy  
9 were laid in a previous era.  
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20 Mayo (1924) advocated studying workers inside and outside the factory to better  
21 shape the conscience, to educate and to accommodate them to their co-operative  
22 position in work organizations. The creation of new routines located in the sub-  
23 conscious was needed so people behaved in an unthinking (capitalist) fashion. For  
24 Mayo (1937; 829-30) work organizations should be the socialising institutions of  
25 society – more so than families, states or Churches. The routines of work  
26 organizations would save us because  
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37 '.... It must be insisted that the intelligent development of civilisation is  
38 impossible except upon the basis of effective social collaboration and that such  
39 collaboration will always be dependent upon semiautomatic routines of  
40 behaviour made valuable by personal association and high sentiment. The most  
41 intelligent adaptation will remain ineffective until transformed from logic and  
42 the abstract into the human and actual routine with deep emotional attachment.  
43  
44 Here then is the problem for the sociologist and administrator that I propose to  
45 illustrate as best I may from personal experience.'  
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56 (Mayo, 1937; 336)  
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5 Maslow (1998; 1-2) too saw managed work organizations as tools of 'utopian and  
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7 revolutionary technique' capable of delivering a subject who could see meaning in  
8  
9 menial tasks because they allowed the individual participate in a project bigger than  
10  
11 him or herself (Maslow 1998; 39). Mayo and Maslow were altering the cognitive and  
12  
13 affective maps of both the specific worker and the social individual through 'deep  
14  
15 emotional attachment'. Through the worker, management sought to shape the social  
16  
17 individual so that co-operation alters from many varied potentials to become many  
18  
19 capitalist potentials. Management theory attempts to make the general intellect, the  
20  
21 capitalist general intellect. Mayo and Maslow understood the planned society – the  
22  
23 total subsumption of society to capital – needed to pay attention to pre-preparedness,  
24  
25 socialisation, and the beliefs of the 'community' (Dalla Costa and James, 1972; 11).  
26  
27 Here the worker could be accommodated to work, capitalist co-operation, a  
28  
29 (subservient) role in society, and consumption so that management could 'conquer the  
30  
31 still vacant territory of the employees' souls' (Kracauer, 1998; 78).  
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39 Mayo (and others Barnard 1968, Lippmann 1914, Hoover 1922, Donham 1927a,  
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41 McGregor 1957, Maslow, 1998) sought to collapse the distinction workers had  
42  
43 created between work and life – i.e. the thing the Taylorist division of labour had  
44  
45 encouraged workers to generate as a protective coating. By ignoring this transition in  
46  
47 capitalism we underplay the extent of the political reach of early management.  
48  
49 Although Mayo is the most explicit, he is by no means alone - for example, McKenzie  
50  
51 (2001) highlights how from the 1930s onward a variety of management schools of  
52  
53 thought attempt to access the employee's interiority. Through work, early  
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3 management thinkers sought to modulate the skills created in the general intellect and  
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5 thereby feed into the general intellect, shape it, and further shape social reproduction.  
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10 The Personality Market, Total Subsumption, and Capricious Management

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12 The managed routines of work organizations were important to social reproduction  
13  
14 and hence 'personality' is rationalized in and out of the workplace to deliver a better,  
15  
16 more predictable service. Here new norms of work were created and regulated and  
17  
18 workers – as consumers of themselves - made to see that particular market potentials  
19  
20 were better than others (on this today, see Callaghan and Thompson 2002, Warhurst  
21  
22 and Nickson 2007, Dowling 2007). But in this economy an unmanaged life could  
23  
24 lead to unpredictability in the 'factory of smiles and visions' and thereby threaten  
25  
26 valorization. This need to screen out non-capitalist logics gave rise to early  
27  
28 management's rationalizing of the 'total situation' of production and reproduction.  
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34 In light of this, the general intellect was shaped for value extraction because the  
35  
36 personality market required its skills if it was to be profitable. In this rendition, the  
37  
38 attitudes, values and skills learned in the co-operation of the 'inside' and 'outside' of  
39  
40 work are both central as a gift to capital (Warhurst and Nickson, 2007; Maslow 1998;  
41  
42 42). But this cannot arrive as unmanaged potential because it may be dangerous.  
43  
44  
45 Prior learning enhances the gift of cooperation by pre-preparing people for work and  
46  
47 lessening the need for training into valorisation processes (Callaghan and Thompson  
48  
49 2002, Warhurst and Nickson 2007, Maslow, 1998; 20-42). Here, the general intellect  
50  
51 is modulated to unleash more of the excess of cooperation. As such, capitalist social  
52  
53 relations mould this gift by prioritizing some of labour's different potentials over  
54  
55 others and reinforcing those potentialities which serve the acquisitive drive of  
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3 possessive individualism (Arvidsson 2005). As with learning to consume in particular  
4 ways in the branded market place, labour learns how to work before it performs work.  
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7 As such, management and selection feed back to the general intellect through this  
8 foregrounding of certain potentialities. After all, this is what selection is about  
9 because 'it is not enough to feel the call, you must be chosen' (Kracauer, 1998; 33)<sup>3</sup>.  
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16 However, selection, training, or promotion also become more capricious when the  
17 division of labour is located in personality and hence arbitrary (Virno, 2004; 40-1). In  
18 the personality market there are increasingly no objective technical criteria as to why  
19 John and not Mary should be on reception today, organise the welcoming for the  
20 international clients tomorrow, and attend a training course the following day. Here  
21 professionalism, craftsmanship, or specific skills are redundant because in this work  
22 setting 'All workers enter into production in as much as they are speaking-thinking'  
23 (Virno, 2004; 41). Because everybody can communicate and everybody has a  
24 personality, the reasons for choosing X rather than Y becomes a problematic  
25 management question - the contemporary concern with 'lookism' as a form of  
26 discrimination reflects this (Warhurst and Nickson 2007; 104). In short, although we  
27 all have speech, cognitive, aesthetic, and affective capacities, few of us are surgeons  
28 or mechanics. In this market economy the sharing of the cognitive, affective,  
29 aesthetic, or communicative abilities of the general intellect undermines a division of  
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53 <sup>3</sup> We see this perhaps with our students who are understandably eager to volunteer, take an internship,  
54 act as a champion of the degree, the department or the University in a bid to demonstrate this pre-  
55 preparedness for work. Nevertheless, as precarity has become the norm for large elements of the  
56 population their need 'to feel the call' has waned which has given rise to renewed media and  
57 government emphasis on the moral necessity of work – in short, there may never be any work for 'you'  
58 but 'you' must still desire work however degraded if you are to be a productive human being (Skeggs,  
59 2011).  
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3 labour located in specific-technical skill (Lazzarato, 1996)<sup>4</sup>. Furthermore, because  
4  
5 this market is founded on accumulation located in the sharing and expanding of  
6  
7 collective ties, it only achieves its accumulative effects after individualising collective  
8  
9 knowledge through competitiveness, the commodity form and the mode of  
10  
11 reproduction located in individual private property.  
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16 At the core of this market is the fact that sharing increases personal vulnerability  
17  
18 (Mills 1951, Kracauer 1998, Virno, 2004; 41, Warhurst and Nickson 2007). The  
19  
20 vehicle for selection, promotion or redundancy is subjectivity – a subject that ‘needs  
21  
22 to be chosen’ as a subject of value. But when the product is no longer separated from  
23  
24 the producer it takes on the appearance of ‘servile labour’ (Virno, 2004; 68) – think of  
25  
26 eating out or a hotel visit, the way you are served helps determine the ‘quality’ of the  
27  
28 experience (Dowling, 2007, Warhurst and Nickson 2007). This ‘servile’ work shares  
29  
30 similarities with craft work e.g. the product and producer are inextricably linked, both  
31  
32 sets of workers express and develop themselves at and through work, and  
33  
34 consumption and production are often simultaneous (see Mills, 1951; 220-24; Witz *et*  
35  
36 *al* 2003). However, the personality worker is not protected by specific skill. The  
37  
38 craft refusal to share knowledge strengthens the division of labour and hence limits  
39  
40 vulnerability (Nelson, 1995; 126-35). In short, specific skill protects workers. The  
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42 personality market, which today drives much of Western work, undermines such  
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44 protection.  
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52 In this sense Fleming (2014, 36-39) is right to suggest the rise of the general intellect,  
53  
54 the weakening of the division of labour, and the increased emphasis on sociality  
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56 <sup>4</sup> This is not to say technical skill no longer exists but increasingly in the advanced economies it is  
57 located in science, professions, technology, procedures, routines or rules rather than the general  
58 population.  
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3 create 'surplus regulation'. Today, in contrast to the concept that we are beyond  
4  
5 measure (Hardt and Negri 2000), this means the individual is obsessively  
6  
7 micromanaged, measured, and regulated because the person and the job become one  
8  
9 and your subjective 'aura' is central to service delivery. One can see this in the  
10  
11 scripts of the call centre (Callaghan and Thompson 2002) or the (self) policing of the  
12  
13 body in the hospitality industries (Warhurst and Nickson 2007). This makes  
14  
15 management capricious in its search for ways to regulate the subject from which it  
16  
17 wants so much contradiction – tailoring one's self-actualising personality to company  
18  
19 routines whilst being your 'unique' self; being proactive and knowledgeable but  
20  
21 accepting of orders and hierarchy regardless of knowledge; sharing knowledge yet  
22  
23 thinking individually; or being loyal to the firm whilst embracing the precarity of the  
24  
25 labour market and the priority of the firm over oneself. In ways similar to the co-  
26  
27 creation of the brand (Arvidsson 2005), when personality – itself a product of the  
28  
29 general intellect - is the co-creative force, it is necessarily shaped in asymmetrical  
30  
31 power relations with management (Dowling, 2007, Lury 2004, 1-16).  
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38 This is not new. We see this vulnerability in the early and mid twentieth century.  
39  
40 Kracauer (1998, 38) highlights the importance of looks, of joining in, of appearance,  
41  
42 of emotion, of affect, and of how employees seek to give off the right impression (for  
43  
44 the equivalent in the USA, see Bloomfield 1915, Mills 1951). This is intensified today  
45  
46 as social and communicative skills, aesthetics, or equality and diversity located in age,  
47  
48 gender, race, sexuality, class, disability, accent, attractiveness, empathy or warmth are  
49  
50 evaluated and made to perform or not (McKenzie 2001, Callaghan and Thompson  
51  
52 2002, Witz *et al* 2003, Warhurst and Nickson 2007). But this is capricious because  
53  
54 personality traits today may not be valued tomorrow, market assessments of readiness  
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3 today may not be the same tomorrow, or management demands today may not be the  
4  
5 same tomorrow. All of which creates uncertainty, anxiety and compliance in the  
6  
7 labour force or what Maslow (1998; 39) praised as 'creative insecurity'. Such  
8  
9 management is about shaping future political values and social relations (Böhm and  
10  
11 Land, 2012).

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16 It is true to say that although these tendencies existed in the past one's 'skills' were  
17  
18 also made redundant more slowly. Technological, organizational or social change  
19  
20 was less rapid in a society built on the 'myth' of expertise (Susman 1984 7-27;  
21  
22 Harvey 1989). In contemporary social reproduction taste may make one's personality  
23  
24 redundant, in demand, and redundant again with increasing rapidity (Graw 2011,  
25  
26 Lucas 2010). When the universal skills of the general intellect overtake the specific  
27  
28 skills of particular work processes, they asymmetrically deliver to labour personal  
29  
30 precarity and to capital, the free gift of the social individual.  
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### 36 Conclusion

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38 What the paper presents is a rather bleak picture of a contemporary world without  
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40 resistance. This is not true – resistance exists today (e.g. education, hospitality, or  
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42 transport may hold the future of refusal and struggle Silver, 2003, Dowling 2007).  
43  
44 Rather, its point is that today's economy is an intensification of elements of the past  
45  
46 and this retrospective glance allows us speculate about what the future might hold.  
47  
48 Unfortunately, it speculates that subjectivity will be pushed towards ever greater  
49  
50 endorsement of capitalist social relations. As we saw, when the general skills of  
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52 diffused knowledge move centre stage the division of labour appears more arbitrary  
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54 and more asymmetrical. Thus although there is choice and agency – to be, and often  
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3 to willingly be, this or that subject – these are heavily channelled in particular  
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5 directions. Importantly, the shift from specific technical skills to the universal skills  
6  
7 of the general intellect increases labour’s servility. As personality becomes our  
8  
9 source of livelihood it is reshaped to suit the market. In an environment of economic  
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11 speed-up, increased obsolescence, and faster changing organizational processes  
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13 management becomes more capricious. By stressing some potentials and not others,  
14  
15 management shapes the subject in ever more invasive ways to indirectly mould the  
16  
17 general intellect itself. Society thus faces the paradoxical situation wherein ever  
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19 increasing collective and diffused knowledge is shaped and accessed as a gift by  
20  
21 capital, which in turn makes individuals more vulnerable. Thus a rise in overall  
22  
23 knowledge – perhaps even a knowledge economy – leads to very different and  
24  
25 unequal experiences of work and reward depending on a seemingly arbitrary division  
26  
27 of labour (in the advanced economies). In sum, rather than being positive, collective  
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29 expanding knowledge emerges as negative.  
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