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Desperate Success:

Managing the mumpreneur

'social mobility [is] a politically driven distraction that diverts our attention from the real problems that need to be addressed: problems of increasing social and economic inequalities that require redistribution not social mobility'[i]

—Diane Reay

'What is required, above all, is to overcome financialised capitalism's rapacious subjugation of reproduction to production – but this time without sacrificing either emancipation or social protection.'

--Nancy Fraser

Doing it all

'Mumpreneur', 'mumtrepreneur' or 'mompreneur', depending on your geographical location and preference, is a relatively recent term. It has been regularly used over the past decade to signify a mother who establishes her own business from the kitchen table whilst her children crawl beneath it.[ii] There have been many articles discussing the rise and expansion of this new social type in the press (eg Morrison 2013; Smith, 2011), sometimes featuring startling statistics such as '65% of mothers want to launch their own businesses from home' (Russell 2014). Established prizes for outstanding examples of mumpreneurialism now include the yearly 'Mumtrepreneur Awards' in New Zealand, and the 'Mumpreneur Awards' and the *Daily Mail* 'Mumpreneur of the Year' Awards in the UK.[iii] Online and offline services and networking events are directly marketed by and to them, such as the M:UK and CEO Mums website magazines (Ekinsmyth 2010). A plethora of guidebooks have emerged to show their readers how to become a mumpreneur, such as *Mum Ultrapreneur, Kitchen Table Tycoon* and *Just Do It: Rules to go from the school run to the board room* (Odev and Weeks 2010; Rigney 2014; Naik 2008; Karmel 2015). Ranging from 'cute', infantilising pink, through butch-femme corporate balancing of shoulderpads, phone and buggy, to holistic earthtones, the bookcovers of mumpreneurialism signal that the phenomenon is not confined to one singular socio-aesthetic genre. The enterprising maternal also surfaces in popular women's fiction: via 'henlit' novels, that branch of women's popular fiction aimed at the chicks of 'chicklit' who have now grown into 'mother hens' (Sanders 2004, Littler 2013), in 'memoirs' like *The Mumpreneur Diaries* (Jones 2009); and across an array of glossy women's magazines, in articles showcasing the tribulations of mumpreneurs and offering up their stories as examples to emulate (Eikhof, Carter and Summers 2013).

Whilst what mumpreneurs produce is varied, there is an overwhelming emphasis in media profiles on their role in generating lifestyle products and services that are consumed by women and parents, such as skin cream, cupcakes, wedding services, children's clothes and potties. Mumpreneurs do of course have predecessors, and earlier incarnations. Their representation in popular culture include Allison Pearson's 2002 novel about work-life balance, *I don't know how she does it* and the film *Baby*

Boom (1987) both of whose heroines downsize from corporate jobs to home enterprises making dolls houses and apple sauce, respectively (see Littler 2013). It is, nonetheless, a term that has had a noticeable surge in use since the 2008 financial crash. As Diane Negra and Yvonne Tasker astutely highlight, the gendering of the post-2008 recession, at this time of 'tough measures', is both significant and overlooked (Negra and Tasker 2014); and indeed, as a variety of reports have shown, it is women who have been hit hardest financially (Pearson and Elson 2015). Negra and Tasker discuss the emergence in women's magazines of the figure of the 'recessionista', the savvy female consumer who knows how to be thrifty yet stylish (Negra and Tasker 2014: 4). The mumpreneur has a family resemblance to the recessionista, and her contemporary popularity clearly owes something to the same context the recessionista has emerged from. Yet there is also an obvious core difference in that one key theme which surfaces again and again across the array of mumpreneur articles, how-to guides and memoirs is the idea of mumpreneurialism as a solution to the problems of combining work and childcare. As the back cover blurb from Anita Naik's *Kitchen Table Tycoon* (2008) asserts: 'Many mothers are quitting their day jobs and starting up on their own, eager to cut out the nursery fees and see more of their kids'. The mumpreneur is presented as a meritocratic means of solving an array of problems, problems exacerbated by the recession: of the expense of childcare and of the gendered inequalities and inflexibilities of much paid work. It promises even more freedom to climb the ladder of meritocracy as long as you put up with the substantial difficulties. '[N]ow you are the boss' says *Supermummy: The ultimate guide to business success* 'you can promote yourself straight to the top of the ladder' (McGee 2009: 35).

This chapter analyses the figure of the mumpreneur to focalise a discussion of the role of gender and entrepreneurialism in neoliberal meritocracy. The chapter has three interlinked sections. To begin with, it considers representations of the mumpreneur in relation to the wider context of social reproduction, particularly in terms of how the relationship between gender, work and childcare remains dramatically unequitable. It discusses the attempted temporary crystalisation of gendered drives for 'self'-realisation through entrepreneurial discourses of work and their pressured articulation to coping strategies which bypass the potential for collective co-operation raised by second-wave feminism. It argues that neoliberal meritocratic discourse has been extended through the contemporary moment of capitalist crisis via a trope I term *desperate success*. Secondly, the chapter considers what mumpreneurialism reveals about the gendering of entrepreneurialism (as a category theorised in academia as well as a lived gendered reality). To do this it discusses recent work on neoliberalism which it relates to what is now often marginalised work on gender and enterprise coming out of cultural studies in the 1980s and 1990s. Thirdly, the chapter considers the specificity of the contemporary 'post-post-Fordist' conjunction between gender and enterprise by following the mumpreneur online and discussing its relationship to self-branding. The chapter ends by considering what discourses and alternatives might prove useful resources for finding routes out of the mumpreneur's pragmatic yet constrained worldview.

Child labour

The dynamics of social reproduction, or the question of how a society reproduces itself and patterns of in/equality, was a problematic repeatedly analysed by second-wave feminism: a movement which regularly treated the issues of paid and unpaid labour as questions to be considered together, as pieces of a social puzzle which would need some substantial reorganisation in order to be in any way fair (James 2012; Oakley, 1974). Particularly central was the issue of childcare: the question of who should look after the children, and what the dynamics of this care and unpaid labour were to look like in relation to paid work in the public sphere (McRobbie 2013). Yet almost half a century later, this central problematic of childcare, the issue that second wave feminists were so active in highlighting as perhaps THE major obstacle to gender equality -- remains, as Beatrix Campbell put it, 'dramatically unresolved' (Campbell 2008).

Nancy Fraser's classic essay 'After the Family Wage' (1994) supplies some useful tools for disaggregating the charged dynamics around this issue. This article considered the implications of 'the crumbling of the old gender order', centred as it had been on the normative idea of a family wage during the Fordist welfare state, in which the dominant model was men earning a stable income whilst women undertook unpaid labour looking after children and the home. Fraser's aim was to consider what gender justice might look like in a new post-industrial age of unstable employment, family diversity and women in the public workplace in increasing numbers. She argued that two main models exist which attempt to redress the problematic relationship between gender, childcare and employment. The first is the 'Universal Breadwinner' model, in which working mothers strive to emulate male employment patterns. The second is the 'Caregiver Parity' model, in which women are remunerated for being full-time stay-at-home mothers. 'After the Family Wage' surveys the strengths and weaknesses of each type by breaking their components down into a range of categories and analysing the extent of their 'gender justice': poverty, exploitation, income, leisure-time, respect, marginalisation, and androcentrism or gender norms (Fraser 1994).

Fraser concluded that neither model is ultimately very satisfactory. So instead she proposed the 'Universal Caregiver' model - in which both men and women are structurally enabled to share the load - as a fairer solution. A contemporary example of this paradigm would involve both parents being able to work part-time, spreading the load of work more thinly, without being discriminated against in terms of career advancement and being able to afford housing. Its emphasis on sharing work throughout the wider society resonates with Ulrich Beck's idea of solving unemployment and overwork by spreading work around more equitably and combining social protection with diverse working patterns (Beck 2000) as well as with recent initiatives in Sweden to introduce a six hour working day (Matharu 2015).

However, as Fraser has argued more recently, 'progress' towards the gendered equitability of the Universal Caregiver model is not much in evidence in the Global North (Fraser 2014; 2015; 2016). Instead, even wealthier women are incited to copy the Universal Breadwinner model and offload domestic tasks onto the less wealthy:

> I don't see any progress at all really. And in fact this idea of universal care-giver is really a kind of socialist feminism that requires re-thinking the whole split between production and reproduction -- which in my view is absolutely

definitive of capitalist societies. So it'd take a very profound structural change to begin that. Instead we have the hegemony of a liberal feminist model, which doesn't grapple with this issue at all: and in effect just tries to make privileged women lead lives that are socially male, while abandoning other women (Fraser 2014)

The now notorious example of such a liberal feminist model is Facebook COO Sheryl Sandberg's book *Lean in*, in which she encourages women to deal with this complex of issues by embracing corporate working culture and succeeding in the workplace rather than leaving it and returning to the home (Sandberg 2013). The critical opposition to such liberal feminist corporate norms is pithily encapsulated in the title of UK writer Dawn Foster's book, *Lean Out* (Foster 2015). As Angela McRobbie argues, such discourse overwhelmingly operates to *extend* the inequalities of corporate culture rather than rein them in (McRobbie 2013). To translate this opposition into Fraser's terms, liberal feminist discourse, like Sandberg's, merely extends the 'Universal Breadwinner' model to an elite group of financially advantaged women -- a constituency known in Norway as 'golden skirts' -- leaving domestic household labour as a feminised role for poorer women (James 2015).

Interestingly, the discourse of the mumpreneur tries to reconfigure production and reproduction differently from that promoted by Universal Breadwinners like Sandberg. It attempts to meld 'work' from both the private and public sphere into a new configuration. Work from the (masculinised) public sphere is brought into the space of the home. Yet there are a range of problems here; and they include the notion that self-employment is an automatically empowering, meritocratic alternative, which in the majority of instances is far from the case.

Desperate success

The mumpreneur is symptomatic of the contemporary world of work and its increasing number of self-employed workers. In the UK at present, self-employment rates are higher than at any time over the past 40 years, comprising 15% of the workforce; in the US three out of ten jobs are held by the self-employed and the workers they hire (Office for National Statistics 2014; Pew Research Centre 2015). Both figures have risen since the 2008 recession, since when there has also been a growth in 'forced' or 'sham' self-employment, and a expansion of precarious labour through companies subcontracting out, rendering previously permanent staff positions ones offered on a temporary basis, sometimes on zero hour contracts, a practice rife in 'creative' industries such as publishing.[iv] Since 2011 the UK government has encouraged the growth in 'individual entrepreneurship' though the New Enterprise Allowance (NEA) available to unemployed people who become self-employed.[v] Meanwhile the glamorisation of 'the independents' of the creative industries, and of the 'industrialisation of bohemia' (Oakley and Leadbeater 1999) has continued alongside revelations of precarious working conditions (Ross 2003; Gill and Pratt 2008; McRobbie 2015).

Self-employment offers the promise of breaking from the Fordist 9-5 working day. It offers flexible hours, portfolio working and the idea of *control* and agency over working lives: over both the means of production and of self-realisation. But

notoriously the ascendency of right-wing neoliberal governments in post-Fordist times and beyond has meant that these more fragmented modes of work have frequently been accompanied by an erosion and loss of the forms of security won during the high point of the social democratic Welfare State, including pensions, sick pay and holiday pay (Adkins 1995; Beck 2000; Bauman 1998). Subcontracted employees are no longer required to receive the same employee benefits and protections as permanent employees. Self-employment has therefore also come to be associated with the rise of 'the precariat'. As Guy Standing argues 'the precariat' is not simply composed of the working-classes but has expanded to include middle class workers (Standing 2011), the growth in temporary lecturers in academia being one example (Chakrabortty 2016). This uncertainty has even affected the very legal status of work: the binary divide in labour law between the image of the subordinate employee and the dynamic entrepreneur has now become blurred and manipulated with the growth of highly precarious employment, as the idea of entrepreneurialism has been manipulated in ways that lead to deeper cracks in the very idea of standard employment relationships (Bogg 2015). To use those two ugly but highly useful neologisms, self-employment – including mumpreneurs -- is a phenomenon now more often shaped by 'flexploitation' rather than the 'flexicurity' it ostensibly offers (Ross 2010). Nevertheless, through this blend of government policy and cultural and media discourse, glossy media features, workplace subcontracting and incentivisation to those with limited possibilities, individuals are increasingly encouraged to become entrepreneurs.

Alongside the cost of childcare, flexibility is repeatedly raised as a core incentive for becoming a mumpreneur:

> Many mums leave those successful careers behind to have children and then struggle to return to the workplace – due to high childcare costs and the incompatibility between their new life as a mum and the inflexible long hours often expected as an employee (Karmel 2015: 2)

The issue of flexible working hours, so often cited by mumpreneurs as a reason for embracing self-employment, is produced by the *inflexibilities* of much permanent and/or full time employment. In the UK, for example, employees have the right to *request* flexible work, but not to get it. There is no legal onus on a company to provide a percentage of jobs on a flexible or part-time basis. Furthermore, many professions, particularly those in the creative industries -- such as film and TV work -- expect employees to work lengthy shifts as a matter of course, leading to an exodus of women of childbearing age in particular (Wing-Fai, Gill and Randle 2015).

'High childcare costs' have been a key issue for parents and carers outside the Nordic countries (where the strong tradition of socialised childcare makes it both well paid and relatively inexpensive). In the UK, the expansion of free provision for two year olds has been increasingly subsidised by the parents paying nursery fees rather than the government as nurseries have had to put up fees to cover their post-recession high costs (Family and Childcare Trust Survey 2015). As Angela McRobbie writes, the long social democratic tradition of public nursery provision as a key feature of feminist discourse and as a wider social good -- a benefit that improves the health and well-bring of children from poorer families whilst enabling women to work -- has been attacked since the Blair years, when 'banal phrases like work-life balance' were

bandied around, replacing an emphasis on state funding and thus 'opening the pathway for the present day demonization of welfare' (McRobbie 2013: 127-8; see also Riley 1983, Littler and Winch 2015). In the US, since the 1980s, a renewed cultural emphasis on intensive mothering has been accompanied by an astonishing demonization of collective daycare provision, surveyed in fascinating detail in *The Mommy Myth* where Susan J. Douglas and Meredith Michaels pick apart sensationalist media reports lambasting the 'dangers' of putting children in daycare (Douglas and Michaels 2004). The stay-at-home and downscaling mom has achieved a new idealised prominence in the past two decades at exactly the same time as neoliberal policies have sought to cut back on state daycare provision. Such analysis is illustrated by Diane Negra's persuasive account of the glorification of feminine domesticity over the last few decades as a form of 'retreatism' from the problems of the public sphere (Negra 2009: 130).

Within this context the mumpreneur, who is predominantly assumed to be a figure doing her own childcare, or reproductive labour, is frequently packaged as an enticing meritocratic solution which offers a promise of resolving problems of restrictive work and expensive childcare whilst also providing glamour and personal fulfilment. ('Are you ready to carve out that new and rewarding life as a mum in business?' asks Annabel Karmel 2015: 9). Nonetheless, it does similarly reinforce the traditionally gendered role of the woman as the primary domestic carer. We do not hear of 'dadpreneurs' mixing their family life with domestic-based entrepreneurial activity. The masculinity of the entrepreneur is the unnamed norm. The twee address of the mumpreneur thus works to reinforce the role of woman as what Rebecca Asher in her book *Shattered* calls the foundation parent – of how, even in most nominally equal arrangements, women are usually the first point of contact for schools, those addressed by food manufacturers, those doing more housework (Asher 2011). Mumpreneurialism rarely disrupts the conventional nature of such androcentricism by encouraging men to get more involved with childcare (as explored in Burrows 2013). Instead it reinforces the pattern that women should somehow manage both spheres. It continues to position mothers as the primary childcarers, who are home-based, but also seeks to render that state economically productive. As Emma Dowling has discussed, there is a systematic imperative to extend markets into previously unremunerated zones of social reproduction in the pursuit of neoliberal profitability (Dowling 2016), and the mumpreneur fits neatly into this model.

In this combined context, with women often bearing the burden of childcare responsibilities alongside precarious economic security and what Hochschild termed the 'third shift' of domestic administration in the home (Hochschild 2001) -- those who are incited to become mumpreneurs face a meritocratic deficit in terms of both recognition and redistribution. In 'real life', mumpreneurs often report difficulties in balancing home/work life and overworking at home (Ekinsmyth 2013: 353-8). In mumpreneur guidebooks the sheer *difficulty* of being encouraged to strive individually to offset these structural inequalities when the odds are stacked heavily against you is palpable. For instance in the guidebook *Kitchen Table Tycoon* there is a whole chapter devoted to how women simply *must accept* that they are going to be very stressed and very overworked:

> If you're going to work from home you need to be prepared to be stressed
> most of the time, because running a successful business out of your home and

scheduling your work around your kids is difficult, and there's no getting away from that. (Naik 2014: 200)

The attempt is to encourage the reader to 'conduct their conduct' by managing these massive forms of overwork, treating it as a necessary sacrifice to the gains of individualised achievement and flexibility-to-come. The problem of managing childcare and work is to be absorbed by the individual: and the 'individual' *mother* even more than an 'individual' family.

Working hard to activate your talent is positioned as the only route to mumpreneurial success. For instance, Annabel Karmel -- who has a substantial following amongst UK parents due to her popular recipes for children and babies beginning to eat – recently published a guidebook simply and authoratively entitled *Mumpreneur*. This book repeatedly uses the neoliberal meritocratic discourse of there being 'no barrier' to opportunity:

> Whatever background you come from, however little money you start off with, there is no getting away from the value of talent, hard work and vision. If you have passion for something and plenty of entrepreneurial spirit, you can do it (Karmel 2015: 15)

However, the vast majority of women Annabel Karmel interviews in her book, when closely examined, tend to already have sizeable amounts of private capital with very privileged backgrounds (and are often white). Thomasina Miers, for instance, the founder of Wahaca, a chain of Mexican restaurants in Europe, attended the very expensive private girls school St Pauls (and is listed in Debretts, the guide to the UK aristocratic establishment). Liz Earle, who co-founded a skincare company bearing her name, had a father who was a high-ranking admiral in the navy. Both are feted in *Mumpreneur* as one of a range of celebrity members of 'Annabel's Kitchen Cabinet', a motif through which public sphere government is transposed into a cutely re-feminised private sphere, of 'domestic battle stations' (Karmel 2015: 23; 179). Likewise, Carol Ekinsmyth's empirical research with UK-based mumpreneurs notes that 87% of her respondents had relied on personal wealth or savings in order to self-fund their start-ups. (Ekinsmyth 2010: 109).

The types of work foregrounded as 'mumpreneurial' often involves producing consumer goods conventionally targeted at women, whether body lotion or baby clothes, thereby linking together discourses of feminised pleasure in consumption and pleasure in production. Mumpreneurial production is made possible through women's knowledge and work as consumers (see Pettinger 2015). Fulfilling enjoyable work is to be found by generating consumer lifestyle products: to be 'closer' to the imagined centre of that milieu. In the henlit novel *Goodbye Jimmy Choo*, for example, two newly-countryside-based mumpreneurs set up a business selling a rural wonder skin cream based on one of their distant French relative's recipes, calling their company *Paysage Enchanté* and selling their product for a large profit in upscale metropolitan skincare emporiums (Sanders 2004). For these henlit characters, just like the women portrayed in lifestyle magazines like *Eve*, the synchronicity and congruence between the branded producer and the consumer products they produce and/or sell is crucial. (In the novel this is played out through comic scenes about excessive image management, as the mumpreneurs dress up as 'rustic peasants' in a way far removed

from their everyday lifestyle). The vast majority of businesses run by mumpreneurs featured in magazines tend to be home-oriented, caring-related or directed at a female consumer (Lewis 2010; Eikhof *et al* 2015). For Patricia Lewis, such reportage both reduces business potential and is a regressive discourse as it endorses or assumes women adopting full domestic responsibility within the household (Lewis 2010). Indeed, in 1963, for Betty Friedan small-scale home-based entrepreneurial projects like crafting was part of *The Feminine Mystique*, 'small businesses which open and close with sad regularity', and which, as Stephanie Taylor points out has a continuity with much 'mumpreneurial' activity today (Friedan in Taylor, S. 2015: 184). The domestic-oriented nature of these enterprises are not without contestation: Mumpreneur UK, for example, has recently argued that the term should *not* be pigeonholed as restricted to baby and child-related businesses[vi]. Yet the highly pronounced nature of the association remains, indeed is built into the phrase itself.

Success in mumpreneurialism is mainly strived for in a tenor of liberatory desperation. In the 2000s the glossy women's magazine *Eve* sold the mumpreneur as an aspirational and liberated position in its regular monthly feature, 'Women Doing Their Own Thing' (Eikhof *et al* 2015). Being a mumpreneur was framed as a potential pursuit that was for any woman a realistic and accessible option, one requiring little training apart from 'personality and passion' (Eikhof *et al* 2015). For Eikhof *et al* such framing endorses a bypassing of business skills which is problematic both in terms of gendered routes into mumpreneurialism and in general.[vii] (Indeed, the magazine *Eve* itself folded shortly after this run of mumpreneurial articles). In her book *The New Entrepreneurs: How Race, Class and Gender Shape American Enterprise,* an ethnographic project based on interviews with a range of US-based café owners, Zulema Valdez notes the extent to which all her interviewees continually emphasised their *success*, even when their businesses closed shortly after the interviews (Valdez 2015). A similar tenor of desperate insistence on entrepreneurial success is detectable in the Facebook self-employment descriptor (offered by a drop-down box) to describe work status: 'Self-Employed and loving it!'. Such an affect is shared by mumpreneurial discourse, in which the possibility of solving the combined problematic of childcare and inflexible work will be resolved through her individualised acumen. There is frequently an insistence that it has to, it will, it *must* all work out perfectly, for there are precious few other solutions to the childcare / work problematic presented by the current context. The tenor of mumpreneurialism is often one that could be characterised as an insistent form of *desperate success.* That this form of neoliberal meritocratic struggle takes place against a more than difficult backdrop is indicated by how, in Karmel's guidebook, a lengthy section is called 'How to persist against all odds' (Karmel 2015: 250).

Such desperation in the narratives of mumpreneurialism indicate, despite themselves, the weight of responsibility and lack of options in an increasingly shrivelled social context. In 2015 *The Daily Mail* launched its 'Mumpreneur of the Year' search by profiling four women. Alongside mumpreneurs who had created wedding furnishing accessories, cleaning fluid and zippered babygros, was 'Mona Shah, 45, founder of Harry Specters chocolate'. The article outlines how Harry Specters chocolate company was largely set up by Mona and her husband to provide employment and work experience for people with autism, after they worried about the employment prospects for their autistic son. In the UK, only 15% of people diagnosed as being on the autistic spectrum, and of working age, are employed (NAS 2015). Harry Specters

chocolate company employ six people part time who are on the autistic spectrum, and 'provides work experience opportunities for 40 young people with autism' (Sturgis 2015).

This business is laudable in providing opportunities for some young people with autism (a lifelong learning condition) who want to engage with potentially interesting work (NAS 2015). At the same time its status is clearly a small-scale survival strategy. There is no regulatory onus on employers to have any kind of quota system, to take a proportion of their staff who are differently abled; such policies were abandoned in the UK in the 1995 (Innesti *et al* 2016). Support and day care services up and down the UK for the differently abled and disabled have faced severe cuts as local councils with reduced budgets have been forced to slash expenditure (Hedley 2010). In this highly precarious context of reduced provision, people are forced to adopt individualised solutions.

As we have seen, the role of individualised entrepreneur in actuality is predominantly a role occupied by the white upper-middle classes, which is presented to the middle, lower-middle and at times the working classes for emulation. Desperate success is augmented by class. Susan Luckman notes how mothers partaking in what she terms 'home-based micro enterprise' are positioned as middle-class, white heterosexual women who are 'simultaneously of the home and of the global marketplace' (the case she writes about, crafting, often figures 'an unrealistic image of seemingly blissful hipster domestic perfection'; Luckman 2015). Yet despite this upper-middle class focalising, its logic resonates throughout the class spectrum. Julie Ann Wilson and Emily Chivers Yochim have incisively analysed how mothers in the US post-industrial rust belt engage with consumer thrift and flexible enterprise, terming this phenomenon 'mamapreneurialism' (Wilson and Yochim 2015; 2017). Here the 'enterprise' spans the intensive clipping out of coupons for money-off products and participating in a franchise scheme to promote products at the school gates and via social media. These activities are not the same as inventing and establishing a new business, and connect to much longer histories of housewives working with commercial franchises like Tupperware and Avon; and yet their work of managing activity in the home (what Arlie Hochschild calls a 'third shift') in order to engage in what Yochim and Wilson term 'mamapreneurialism', or 'mothering through precarity', have obvious resonances with the examples I have been discussing here (Hocshchild with Manchung 2012; Yochim and Wilson 2015).

Entrepreneurialism is deeply and extensively problematic: it channels all life activity into a mode of competition, extending inequality and validating the environmentally destructive model of economic growth. But it also needs further picking apart. Whilst in some ways it is easy for academics to carp from the sidelines about people colluding in their own oppression, we also need to think hard about mechanisms, modes and strategies of disentanglement as well as entanglement, processes of construction alongside excavatory analysis. It is also therefore useful to dwell a little on what is meant by 'entrepreneurialism' and to move a step beyond some of the more asphixyating accounts of neoliberal governmentality. This is not to say we should not understand the extent, or depth, of its savagely atomising, viciously impoverishing effects: to understand its depths, how low it can go, to stare it in the face. But treating it as an unrolling logic of inevitability gives it more power. It is salutary to remind ourselves that these are unrolling logics which have *become*

powerful but which are not *inevitable*. The need to simultaneously understand its depths and identify some of its moments of instability: to consider its appeal and how its appeals might be redirected.

In this case I suggest one means of doing this is to consider what entrepreneurialism has become *articulated to* (in the Laclau and Mouffe sense of connecting to and with) and how this articulation is gendered (Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Hall 1987; Slack 1996). The following sections therefore consider the gendering of the entrepreneur within the gendered rationalities of neoliberalism, in order to try to extend and to help open up alternative directions for this figure we call the mumpreneur and all those connected to her.

Entrepreneurial Man

Clearly we can understand the mompreneur in terms of the percolation of neoliberalism into the domestic sphere. This after all is one of neoliberalism's key features: extending the ethic of competition into the nooks and crannies of everyday life, or what Foucault describes as the extension of marketised dynamics throughout the social body (Foucault 2010; Brown 2015). It is however particularly important to consider what is meant by 'entrepreneurialism' as entrepreneurialism has historically functioned as a potent and double-edged drive, one both facilitating creative energies and their capitalist capture. It is useful to consider these trajectories alongside the gendering of entrepreneurs and the gendering of neoliberal theory. One suggestive source here is Dardot and Laval's Foucauldian account of neoliberalism's intellectual and political geneaologies, *The New Way of the World* (2013). Much like Wendy Brown's *Undoing the Demos,* it takes inspiration from and is a lengthy exegesis of Foucault's *Birth of Biopolitics* lectures. Delivered in France in 1978-9 but only translated into English in 2010, these are the lectures (despite the somewhat misleading title of the book) in which Foucault analyses the 'origins' of neoliberalism.

The New Way of the World foregrounds the centrality of the entrepreneur, enterprise and competition to everyday life, and the role of entrepreneurialism as a guiding principle of neoliberalism. As Foucault, who they are elaborating upon, argued, this is what makes neoliberalism different from classical liberal thought: competition isn't natural, it needs to be worked at. Dardot and Laval trace how these ideas percolated from Austrian economists and sociologists Ludwig von Mises and Frederick Hayek through to their synthesisation in the UK and US by both them and their students, including Israel Kirzner, and the subsequent adoption of their ideas by management gurus including Peter Drucker. These writers

> aim to show how a certain dimension of humanity – entrepreneurship – is constructed in competition, which is a the potentially universal principle of conduct most essential to the capitalist order (Dardot and Laval 2013: 102)

Dardot and Laval highlight this geneaology of neoliberal entrepreneurialism in a chapter titled 'Entrepreneurial Man', which analyses the formulations and centrality of the figure of the entrepreneur for neoliberal theory and neoliberalism. (For Von Mises, for instance, '[i]n any real and living economy every actor is always an

entrepreneur' (Dardot and Laval 2013: location 2570). It is however unclear as to whether Dardot and Laval's chapter title is also a reflexive commentary on how man stands for all the genders. Given that it does not explicitly foreground or discuss this issue, or the question of gender, at all, it seems to indicate not. But such lack of clarity also leaves the issue of the gendering of the political rationality of neoliberalism a somewhat glaring undiscussed absence.

Dardot and Laval's gendered formulation of 'Entrepreneurial Man' is also interesting for other reasons. The authors pick apart key characteristics of entrepreneurialism, such as how it entails being a vigilant, alert, self-constructing subject:

> [For Kirzner,] 'The entrepreneurial element in the behaviour of market participants consists…in their alertness to previously unnoticed changes in circumstances which may make it possible to get far more in exchange for whatever they have to offer than was hitherto possible. […] For von Mises, as for Kirzner, entrepreneurship is not only an 'economizing' behaviour – that is, geared to profit maximisation. It also contains an 'extra-economising' dimension of the activity of discovery, of detecting 'good opportunities' (Dardot and Laval 2013: 111)

Dardot and Laval foreground the years of theorisation, argument and percolation which were involved in creating the entrepreneurial rationality of neoliberalism. They lay bare the idea that *through competition, you might be able to get more,* which is the basis of the marketised mantra of meritocracy, and paves the way for our contemporary moralising neoliberal discourse that it's your own fault if you don't. And they foreground how the characteristics of discovery, being alert and being resourceful become channelled into a logic of competition.

We can I think note that these are characteristics are also important to co-operation (Sennett 2013). They are attributes that people want to have to extend their capabilities, to realise their potential, or what Marx called their 'species-being': to flourish (Marx and Engels 1976; Wright 2010; Hesmondhalgh 2016). These characteristics are connected to corporate entrepreneurialism through this chain of equivalence, formulated in Entrepreneurial Man's economic laboratory. But they do not have to be taken this way.

Magical femininity

Where can we find Entrepreneurial Woman in theoretical literature? Problems caused by sexism and neoliberalism are not just a problem in everyday life but also in academia and political theory, where texts that are often presented as being particularly significant, weighty analyses of neoliberalism also often happen to be ones with no or little reference to gender. In this context it is both important and useful to refer to suggestive earlier work on entrepreneurial culture, to connect these to key works on postfeminism and to more recent work on gender and entrepreneurialism from a range of disciplines including organisation and gender studies. This can help a consideration of just how 'new' the meritocratic mumpreneur is: both to historicise her as a social type and to help track the changing nature of the formation of gender and entrepreneurialism of which she is a significant part.

Back in 1986, Swasti Mitter noted that women working at home was on the rise. Mitter focused on Bangladeshi women in London sewing and doing piecework at home as post-Fordism took hold and the garment industry shut many of its factories, laying off men and white women and subcontracting the labour to cheaper exploited zones overseas and the fourth world zones in Europe (Mitter 1986).[viii] The rise in what became termed 'flexible managing' and the creation of pools of domestic-based insecure and disposal labour was the early stages of a longer process in which, as Lisa Adkins more recently put it, 'the subcontracting associated with post-welfare states is a strategy via which women's work is actively being transformed into precarious work' (Adkins and Dever 2015). On the one hand these tendencies can be understood as both being part of the long post-Fordist moment: the patterns developing in the 1980s are recognisably of the same epoch. On the other hand there are now different intensities and modulations which I want to discuss here in relation to earlier examinations of the cultural relationship between gender and enterprise.

To do this we can turn to cultural studies. Whilst it is often the male-authored or edited collections on Thatcherism that receive the most prominence in discussions of cultural studies work on the political conjuncture or conjunctural analysis (eg Hall *et al* 1978, Hall 1988), important feminist work has notoriously challenged and extended it. For instance, the 1991 edited collection *Off-Centre: Feminism and Cultural Studies* contained a sizeable amount of work explicitly concerned with the gendering of enterprise. It is useful to consider these pieces, now often occluded, in some depth here both because some of the tools they offer are useful and because of the continuities and breaks with this earlier stage in post-Fordist culture.

For example, Janet Newman's incisive chapter on 'Enterprising Women' in *Off-Centre* followed the emergent figure of the entrepreneurial woman across the pages of advice manuals from the 1980s. This figure, writes Newman, is part of the ideological onslaught of Thatcherism, constituted through endorsing the qualities of free market enterprise, and standing against collective provision. The chapter tracks the appeal of these manuals to someone who does not want to follow tradition but could succeed and find their own niche 'in the marketplace of the world of work'…'if you have enough self reliance, financial nous, competitive spirit and the determination to overcome the barriers you might find on the way' (Newman 1991: 241). 'Enterprising Women' foregrounds how these ideas become trenchant by offering such sheer galvanizing potential, noting that they speak to a missing dimension often ignored in feminist analysis of work - 'women's experience of the structures and cultures of the workplace and business world' (ref). Predating the slew of Foucauldian-inspired work on the management of the self within neoliberalism by well over a decade, Newman argued that the ideology on offer is one in which clever managing and purchasing will bypass structural social inequalities, and thus

> The whole of life is thus constructed within the discursive practices of managerialism; and the potential contradictions between different elements of women's lives and identities can be resolved – if only women work hard enough and manage well enough they can have it all (or nearly). (Newman 1991: 250)

Estella Tincknell's chapter in the same collection considers the same issue of how entrepreneurialism and femininity were being fused. 'Enterprise Fictions' examined the popularity in the 1980s of entrepreneurial heroines who 'make it' from rags to riches, focusing on the heroine of Barbara Taylor Bradford's bestselling novel-turned-hugely-popular TV series, *A Woman of Substance*, who starts out as a servant and ends up as the wealthy owner of a department store. Tincknell reads this narrative as an aspirational fantasy actively working to popularise the ideology of the individual bourgeois woman who can 'make a space for herself within capitalism', one which 'recognises class conflict but not class struggle' and bypasses the mutual help of the second-wave feminist movement, evading 'any sort of discussion of the obstacles in the way of aspiring female entrepreneurs'. What such fictions offer instead is

> the assurance that magical femininity will be the key to individual success in a world which demands that only one woman at a time can sit at the boardroom table. (Tincknell 1991: 272)

The analysis of the novel is therefore read in terms of a Thatcherite vision for women which does not trouble the sexism of existing social structures, but makes 'success' a matter of what Tincknell usefully terms 'magical femininity'. This is a matter of dressing well, using the right attitude and feminine authority, and in the process reinvigorating 'the mythology of the unique individual and its promise of self-fulfillment' (Tincknell 1991: 262). [ix]

Both chapters examine the uses and attitudes toward consumer goods (in the form of media artefacts and business books as well as their representation of the landscapes of consumption) to explore how the highly individualised, right-wing figure of the enterprising, consuming female was gaining cultural and political currency at this time at the expense of a more collective feminist vision of the social order. They indicate the importance of the discourse of the consuming woman who manages her way out of her class position and social difficulties to the neoliberal ideological project from the 1970s. Despite some hugely imaginative and important work (e.g. Rowbotham, Segal and Wainwright 1979), it also indicates the wider failure of the political left to offer a popular mainstream version of social democratic feminism in relation to this vision of liberation through individual hedonistic consumerism and a managerial, entrepreneurial self.

How such formations spoke to younger women pursing careers in the cultural industries has been extensively analysed by Angela McRobbie in a series of multifaceted pieces since the 1990s, writing which also drew on her earlier influential work on gender, consumption and individualization (eg McRobbie 1978, 1991). McRobbie foregrounds how creative workplaces often presented themselves as more like clubs than companies, are organised through 'network sociality' and incite self-exploitation through their appeals to passion for work. She traces how the insistence of the labour market on flexible, entrepreneurial subjects has meshed with a wider gender settlement, producing an array of gendered types ranging from the phallic 'top girls' disavowing feminism and adopting aspects of 'masculine' behavior, through to the more recent strand of corporate liberal feminism that ostensibly takes 'feminism into account', offered by the likes of Sheryl Sandberg and her acolytes (such as the chicklit author/UK Conservative MP/US media commentator Louise Mensch). (McRobbie 1999, 2000, 2008, 2009, 2015).

In part what characterises all these writings is their close attention to the congruence between work and consumption for the success of entrepreneurial discourse. Magical femininity is an affective property built through a constellation of desires; it is repeatedly presented as easily obtainable if the individual simply puts her energies in the right direction. This is also the promise offered to the mumpreneur, in terms of how entrepreneurial working from home becomes offered as a 'magical solution' to the problems of post-Fordist work (Luckman 2015) and as a feminised affect which downplays skill and accentuates 'passion'. For instance, in the *Daily Mail* profile mentioned earlier, Mona Shah is presented as the woman behind the chocolate-production. However, articles in the business press see the company positioned somewhat differently, as a more equal partnership between Shah and her husband, combining her experience in making chocolates and experience with the knowledge he gained doing an MBA (Moules 2015). Ostensibly offering an empowering feminist image by virtue of Shah's singular efforts, the *Daily Mail*'s type of mumpreneur media profiling therefore underplays the material and business skills needed to launch enterprises (Eikhof et al 2013) whilst the 'magical femininity' of the mumpreneur continues to be framed as simply produced by the activation of her affective passion. Indeed, such a sizeable lacuna between affective empowerment (as *the* singular virtue) and the acquisition of the necessary skills to carry it through is a slippage deeply characteristic of liberal, neoconservative feminism more broadly. However, a key difference between these 1980s and 2010s moments is the extent to which the individual women are now incited to be *self-branding* microcelebrities.

The mumpreneur and the branded self

'Self-branding' has become a generalizable cultural imperative that extends way beyond those setting up businesses. As Alison Hearn argues, today most teenagers are encouraged, particularly through social media activity, to establish an 'improved self'. Online self-representation becomes a promotional vehicle designed to sell you as an active agent (Hearn 2008: 205):

> The branded self is a commodity-sign: it is an entity that works and, at the same time, *points to itself working, striving to embody the values of its environment'* (Hearn 2008: 201; my italics).

'Striving' rather than 'skiving' has also, as we have seen in previous chapters, become a contemporary keyword, one often imbued with a moral charge and a glow of righteousness. Alison Winch notes that striving is also a charge created *between* women, through what she terms the gynopticon or 'girlfriend gaze', under which 'what is rewarded and acclaimed is striving for perfection. Indeed those who are effortlessly perfect are bitchily vilified in the mainstream media as they do not evidence the success and necessity of the neoliberal work ethic.' (Winch 2015: 234). This formulation also draws from Ros Gill's extensive work on the sensibility of postfeminism 'in which notions of autonomy, choice and self-improvement sit side-by-side with surveillance, discipline and the vilification of those who make the 'wrong' choices' (Gill 2007: 163). The intensity through which women are incited into this subject position (in contradistinction to a masculinity which is constructed as *not needing* to be constructed) leads Gill to pose the question

To a much greater extent than men women are required to work on and transform the self, to regulate every aspect of their conduct, and to present all their actions as freely chosen. Could it be that neoliberalism is always already gendered, and that women are constructed as its ideal subjects? (Gill 2007: 164).

Sarah Banet-Weiser persuasively makes the case for such neoliberal selfhood marking a shift from post-Fordism, and vividly illustrates this transition by tracing the historical strategies the cleansing product brand Dove has used to sell its products to women. In 1957, Dove privileged white femininity and addressed a 'unified' Fordist subject through advertisements featuring a white model posing in the bath. After the emergence of post-Fordist niche marketing, in the 1980s Dove developed ads in which different 'ordinary' women addressed the camera as 'themselves.' Today this empowerment agenda has mutated into Dove's 'Self-Esteem Project', which involves consumers engaging by, for instance, voting, uploading videos to YouTube, and participating in 'activist' outreach work by encouraging teens to use online Dove workbooks to create their own 'healthy self-esteem' (Banet-Weiser 2011). Through such activity, which is heavily dependent on prosumption and immaterial labour, corporations strive to extend the reach and depth of their brand and become 'social actors'. Women are positioned as the ideal neoliberal subjects to be enlisted into such activity.

Such a diagnosis of the contemporary promotional use of social media as marking a 'break' from post-Fordism finds a further reverberation in recent statements by the industrial economist and influential early theorist of post-Fordism Robin Murray (Murray 1989).[x] Murray makes the case that there has been a major shift to 'post-post-Fordism' (Murray 2015) marked by the emergence of the platform economy and the dominance of digital platforms alongside -- and in many cases over -- content. In an attention economy, he argues, capital needs to control platforms, and capitalism's main work becomes focused on attempting to capture it; but not only cannot everything can be captured and codified, and 'in one sense the means of production have been internalised within labour and cannot be entirely appropriated from labour' (Murray 2015: 195). This reading therefore foregrounds the political *potentiality* of the worker/prosumer alongside the wider extension of corporate power facilitated by a digital platform economy.

The shift to the platform economy of post-post-Fordism is apparent in how forms of mumpreneurial self-branding have mushroomed in the blogosphere, with some estimating the existence of 4 million 'mommy bloggers' in the US. As Jessica Taylor cogently argues, mommy blogging, often specifically a pursuit of white middle-class women, simultaneously involves capitalism attempting to harness maternal sociality as it moves online, women trying to extend their sociality and generate income; and 'reproductive labour becom[ing] a site for potential investment not just in children or in members of the household but in a creative self' (Taylor 2015: 115). The US 'Queen of the Mommy Bloggers' Heather Armstrong (who has 1.53 million followers and the profile description 'I exploit my children for millions and millions of dollars on my mommyblog' on Twitter) announced in 2015 that she was stopping her blog, *Dooce*, because of the pressure from advertisers to brand her family:

> "At the beginning, it was, 'We're just gonna put the logo at the end of the post. Write something around this.' … And then it was, 'Well, actually, we need you to show pictures of the product". And then it was, 'We need you to show the product.' And then it was, 'We need your kids involved in the post.'" (Dean 2015)

Armstrong posted images to Instagram with the hashtag #NotAnAd" to indicate her rebellion against corporate control. (Later, she partly resumed her blog, branched out into podcasts, and now marks advertisements on Twitter more clearly, with the hashtag #ad). Such actions were reminiscent of the actions of Essena O'Neill, the Australian teenager with 612K Instagram followers who in 2015 spectacularly dethroned her own social media construction. O'Neill replaced her previous photo captions with revelatory phrases documenting the banality and effort involved in staging apparently spontaneous and carefree glamour, such as 'Not real life. Only reason we went to the beach this morning was to shoot these bikinis' (Speed 2015). The examples of both O'Neill and Armstrong do undoubtedly indicate how public acts of breaking with 'brand me' can paradoxically garner more publicity. They follow, to some extent, the journalistic structure Richard Dyer discusses in relation to celebrity as the staged exposure of a 'real' persona (Dyer 1980). At the same time they also reveal the pressures to create a congruent brand which is inhabited by the 'self': and the faultlines, the splinterings, breaks and moments of profound resistance, whether micro or macro, to such corporate-sanctioned versions of selfhood.[xi]

Similar fissures are also apparent in the chicklit mumpreneur novel *Goodbye Jimmy Choo*. Here, the mumpreneur heroines launch skincare product *Paysanne Enchanté* and on the advice of their PR friend extend the brand to themselves and their home in Provençal/Amish fashion, adopting a rustic look for their altering their interior to remove gadgets, dressing their children in breeches, and themselves in white blouses and flouncy skirts; and altering their conduct by giving up smoking and drinking. The novel's *denouement* happens when a photographer captures images of one of the mumpreneurs in her garden smoking, drinking alcohol and dancing with her daughter wearing a postfeminist pink t-shirt with 'FCUK' on it whilst her son plays GameBoy.[xii] Mumpreneurial activity is depicted as necessarily being heavily imbricated with self-branding and self-presentation: she has to not only sell the product but represent it, embody it, live its brand in her daily life. In the novel, this is depicted as a false presentation, the exposure of which means the end of the business. It is also necessary: at the ending the main characters retain the pots of money that they've made – it was all 'worth it'. Though despite this, the contradictions and psychological expense of manufacturing such entrepreneurial, 'meritocratic' selves seep through and become foregrounded.

Disaggregation and alternatives

The mumpreneur promises a meritocratic solution to the overwork culture, the inflexibility of institutionalised labour, inadequately funded and socialised childcare, and the costs of recession within neoliberalism, all wrapped up in a package of glamour and self-realisation. The problems of overwork and potential failure that come with being a mumpreneur are often mediated as enjoyable chaos, part of a frenetic journey towards difficult but very probable triumph. Yet the mumpreneur

primarily operates through a register of *desperate success*. The guidebooks urge the potential mumpreneur toward complete affective and psychological commitment: 'The best (and only) way to sustain yourself over all the obstacles is to feel passionate and fanatical about what you are doing' writes Annabel Karmel (2015: 6). Wannabe mumpreneurs are regularly prepared for the losses, loneliness and exhaustion that lie ahead. 'I don't think anything of going to bed at 2 or 3 am and then getting up again and doing the school run, trying to grab a nap in the day, sleeping in cars' says Myleene Klass (Karmel 2015:6). Mumpreneurs are incited to offset such desperation, and to propel themselves up the ladder of success, through passion. 'Are you on the passion ladder?' asks the mumpreneur website, *CEO Mums*.[xiii]

The solution and terms of reference offered by the mumpreneur are neoliberal: they are organised around marketing an entrepreneurial branded self and generating profit. They perpetuate the patriarchal model of woman as primary carer who is primarily in the domestic sphere whilst making her 'productive' in a capitalist sense.
How could we imagine these varying neoliberal corporate imperatives being reconfigured differently, more progressively, around motherhood and work? There are always many ways into an issue. To conclude here I will consider some potential points of leverage.

The mumpreneur's relationship to capitalist discourse often stands on something of a faultline. It can consist of interesting creative activity that is attempted to be captured, scaled up and funnelled into a capitalist mould. These 'small enterprises' often take an anti-monopoly, anti-corporate stance. Such points of self-identification are often strong and clear, if also fleeting, in the guidebooks and momoirs. At the end of the 'memoir' *The Mumpreneur Diaires,* for instance, Mosey Jones proudly reflects: '[s]ix months down the line and I still haven't taken back the corporate shilling….' (Jones 2009: 307). One route beyond neoliberal meritocracy in this case, then, is by orienting such activity further away from corporate discourse, against becoming exploitative organisations based on a corporate model. Here opening up the possibilities for and desirability of mumpreneurial activity forming co-operatives instead becomes an interesting area of potential. A lot of the current vibrant discussion around co-ops (Murray 2010; Sandoval 2016) is focused around 'the young' but it has great potential to connect more extensively to this constituency. In addition it is important to emphasise the distinctions between the smaller organisation and the monopolistic, predatory exploitations and corporate tax avoidance of the large corporation (Gilbert 2015).[xiv]

Another crucial faultline is between childcare and work, and here there is ample potential to move closer to Fraser's 'Universal Caregiver' model and share the load of both. As mentioned before, there are very different childcare patterns according to country.[xv] Maternity pay should be paid and extended so that parents aren't pressured back into work; paid paternity / partner leave needs to be *expected* to be taken; not just the right to *ask* to work flexibly, or part-time, but the right to *have* it; and tighter legislation needs to exist to stop employers demoting staff when they become parents. The cultural conversation around differently gendered multi-tasking needs to be enlarged and institutionally embedded. Rebecca Asher's book *Shattered* includes a raft of practical policy suggestions on this front, including ensuring partners attend meetings during pregnancy with midwives so their role as a caring parent is embedded early on in the process. Gideon Burrows' book *Men Can Do It!* proposes a

range of solutions for tackling the reasons why men don't do enough childcare, including changing masculinities, and arguing that 'men should not only get the good stuff out of childcare; they also need to take the hit for equality to really be achieved.' (Burrows in Littler and Winch 2016; Burrows 2013). This debate also connects to the rich history of socialised co-operative childcare (McRobbie 2015; Riley 2003) the importance of which for so many children and parents is hard to overestimate.

None of these issues are isolated but are part of a wider social tapestry. For instance, parents overwork not only because of a lack of employer flexibility -- although this is obviously a crucial factor -- but also because of the associated issues of the cost of living. (In metropolitan centres this is often, crucially, the cost of housing). This is why 'social reproduction' is such a useful term: because it enables these issues, which are joined up in everyday life, to also be joined up in theory. Social reproduction, at its best, involves forms of co-production which are open, egalitarian and creative. As such it connects to wider debates on 'postwork', which suggest reconsidering the primacy we give to paid employment relationships and reconceptualising what human productivity and creativity means, as well as prioritising social care rather than the exploitations of financialised capitalism (Fraser 2016; Weeks 2011; Srnicek and Williams 2015; Mason 2015). The crisis of care, as Nancy Fraser puts it, involves reinventing the distinction between reproduction and productionwithout sacrificing liberation or social protection (Fraser 2016).

These suggestions are ways into reconfiguring the zones, the discourses and components which together form the assemblage of/around the mumpreneur. The means of making these changes is of course highly debatable and contextually specific; and the way these issues are connected together into chains of equivalence – and how, and by whom -- depends on context, will, and available resources. But these better solutions at micro and macro levels both have generalizable elements and contextual specificities. In terms of the specificity of this chapter's example, the key task here is to reorient the mumpreneur, and the relationship between gender and the corporation, not to *lean in* to neoliberal meritocratic discourse so that we are pushed into its contours, but to lean on it so hard it is flattened, so its implicit resources can be reorganised around our collective needs.

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[i] Diane Reay, 'The Cruelty of Social Mobility: Individual success at the cost of collective failure' in Steph Lawler and Geoff Payne (ed) (forthcoming) *Everyone a winner?* Abingdon: Taylor & Francis.

[ii] Mompreneur is most commonly used in the US; mumpreneur in the UK; mumtrepreneur in New Zealand.

[iii] https://www.mumtrepreneurawards.co.nz/ ;
http://www.mumpreneuruk.com/awards/mumpreneur-awards/;
http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-3040629/Wholl-Mumpreneur-year-major-new-trend-women-juggling-motherhood-setting-businesses-like-four-looking-inspiring-stories.html Accessed 1 December 2016

[iv] 'Self-Employment and Society' Day Event, City University London 2015. Particular thanks to Rachel Cohen for pointing me towards the appropriate statistics.

[v] The scheme was a revival of an earlier scheme developed in the 1980s under the Thatcher government.

[vi] http://www.mumpreneuruk.com/the-mumpreneur-debate/ Accessed 1 December 2016

[vii] Eikhof *et al* noted that whilst mumpreneur activity was very much portrayed as an aspirational fantasy, its protagonists tended to 'transition into sectors with typically high levels of occupational segregation across all forms of employment, lower prestige and earnings' (Eikhof 2013: 558). Promoting such domestically-centred, 'under-capitalised' forms of entrepreneurship, they argued, was activity that 'could be expected to entrench and increase existing gender inequalities in entrepreneurship' (Eikhof 2013: 558-9).

[viii] The piece-work seamstress has a longer history, and was a powerful symbol of economic exploitation in the nineteenth century, as represented in Hood's famous poem "The Song of the Shirt" (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Song_of_the_Shirt). Accessed 1 December 2016

[ix] This also resonates with Phil Cohen's work on 'magical solutions' which Susan Luckman refers to in her article on entrepreneurial home-working as offering a 'magical solution' to the problems of the post-Fordist sexual contract (Luckman 2015).

[x] Murray's influential 1989 article 'Benetton Britain' sketched the nature of post-Fordist production/consumption patterns. It outlines the movement, from the 1970s, toward a multiplicity of intersecting practices by manufacturers -- of which Benetton

was paradigmatic, just as Ford was for Gramsci in 'Americanism and Fordism' – such as the use of 'consumer-led' focus groups, computerised orders, and shifts towards the production of small batches of consumer goods that could be made quickly using ultra cheap, contracted-out, exploited labour far away from corporate HQ and retail sites (aka 'just-in-time production' or 'flexible specialization') (Murray 1989).

[xi] Afterwards, Armstrong said she missed producing her blog, as it provided her with a relief and it was something she was proud of ('I made this. I'm proud of it'. Dean 2015). She re-activated the blog on a part-time basis.

[xii] See Ros Gill (2007) for a discussion of postfeminist aesthetics including pink FCUK t-shirts.

[xiii] http://ceomums.co.uk/are-you-on-the-passion-ladder/ Accessed 1 December 2016

[xiv] In the UK for example in 2016 the opposition leader Jeremy Corbyn stood on a platform for 'small businesses, co-operatives and social enterprises'.http://corbynforbusiness.com/ Accessed 1 December 2016

[xv] The US, for example, has no paid parental/partner leave, whereas the UK has two weeks which can be shared with a mother's maternity leave.